



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

**DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS**

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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**Third Session**

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2016**

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House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2016**

**Sixty-second General Assembly**

**Third Session**

**1:00 P.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy

**DEPUTY SPEAKERS**

Mr. Gordon Wilson, Mr. Keith Irving

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

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition. I have two petitions, both with the same operative clause or prayer. One is a youth petition with 44 signatures, and the other one is an adult's, 183 - the operative clause being:

We ask that the House and AVRSB - Annapolis Valley Regional School Board - intervene on our behalf to reinstate the Grade 6 Kings County Academy Instrumental Music Program. We the undersigned disagree with this decision to cut this program. Enrollment is up and DoE has increased funding to schools. Instrumental music taught early is key to improving literacy and mathematics outcomes, team work and inclusion. The program has since inception been successful and supported by the community and parents. We wish to continue our town's tradition of exceeding expectations in the area of creative arts in school. This decision will impact the quality of instrumental education and participation right up through grade 12.

Mr. Speaker, I have affixed my name.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

**GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, in the gallery today we have two guests from the Strongest Families Institute: Dr. Patricia Lingley-Pottie, President and CEO, and Kati LaVigne is Director of Operations. I would like them to stand and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 91**

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

Whereas Strongest Families Institute is an award-winning non-profit that offers mental health supports for children and youth when and where they need it, with no wait times; and

Whereas the program offers coaching by phone and online for anxiety and behavioural difficulties; and

Whereas Strongest Families Institute has recently been awarded a grant worth nearly \$149,000 to make its anxiety program accessible to more young people;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House thank Dr. Patricia Lingley-Pottie and the team at Strongest Families Institute for the work they do to help families get mental health support for their children.



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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 92**

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

Whereas Foster Family Appreciation Week is a time to express our most heartfelt gratitude to foster families caring for vulnerable children and showing them that their futures can be bright; and

Whereas foster families not only give their time and their hearts to children in care, but they do it with amazing pride and enthusiasm; and

Whereas being a foster parent takes courage, and strong foster families are fundamental to building a stronger Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly recognize the tremendous dedication and commitment of all Nova Scotia foster families who give so much of themselves to care for children.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 93**

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

Whereas 58 years ago on October 23, 1958, an earthquake-like tremor struck the Springhill mine, trapping 175 miners more than a kilometre underground; and

Whereas 75 of those miners lost their lives, devastating families, loved ones, the community of Cumberland County, and the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas we mark this day with solemn tribute and recognize the lasting impact that workplace accidents have on the history of our province;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House honour the memories of the miners lost and reaffirm our shared commitment to not only reduce workplace fatalities, but to eliminate them completely.

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. 36 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 63 of the Acts of 2011, an Act to Amend Chapter 4 of the Acts of 1994-95. The Gaming Control Act. (Hon. Mark Furey)**

**Bill No. 37 - Entitled an Act to Exempt Nova Scotia Residents of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (Maritimes) from Paying Vehicle Registration and Driver's Renewal Fees. (Ms. Karla MacFarlane)**

**Bill No. 38 - Entitled an Act Respecting Clean Air. (Ms. Karla MacFarlane)**

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 Kings North.

#### **KENTVILLE TOWN - CFIB RECOGNITION**

MR. JOHN LOHR: I'm pleased to acknowledge the Town of Kentville, which was recently honoured by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business as one of Canada's Top Places to Start and Grow a Business in 2016. The October 2016 report for mid-size cities with a population of less than 150,000 rates Kentville fourth after Collingwood, Rivière-du-Loup, and Penticton. Kentville's rank in 2015 was 31<sup>st</sup>. No other East Coast city was in the top 10 for either large or mid-size cities.

Please join me in congratulating the Town of Kentville for this major achievement.

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

### **LIBERAL GOV'T.: ELECTION PLATFORM - HEALTH PROMISES**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: The Liberal Government promised a doctor for every Nova Scotian in their election platform, and reaffirmed that commitment in the most recent Speech from the Throne. Last evening, in this very Chamber, the member for Clare-Digby announced that this promise may not be met until five to 10 years down the road.

Mr. Speaker, is this the new promise for the next Liberal Party platform, a doctor for every Nova Scotian in the next five to 10 years? ER closures have increased under the Liberal Government. The Premier has broken his promise to Nova Scotians, and the member for Clare-Digby simply wants to move the goal posts to try to meet the promise.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

### **FRESH AIR FILMS (BRIDGEWATER) - COMMUN. DEDICATION**

HON. MARK FUREY: For several summers, families have been gathering at Shipyards Landing in Bridgewater on Friday evenings, armed with blankets and lawn chairs, indulging in popcorn and cotton candy, and watching a movie on the big screen. There have been evenings where finding a spot to sit has been a challenge. Old friends can meet and catch up, and new friends can be made. All of this is courtesy of Fresh Air Films, a group of local volunteers who set up the big screen once a week and who approached local businesses to help fund the costs so families have an opportunity to participate by

donations only. This is community spirit and a commitment to bringing neighbours closer together.

Thank you to the volunteers of Fresh Air Films for all your hard work and dedication to your community.

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

**BABIN, DERRICK: LADY ISABEL ABERDEEN AWARD - CONGRATS.**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: The Lady Isabel Aberdeen Award is the highest award given by VON Canada. It's bestowed, by the board of directors, on an individual who has rendered service of great distinction or of singular excellence at the local and national level as a staff member or volunteer.

On September 23, 2016, at the annual general meeting of VON Canada in Ottawa, Derrick Babin of Sluice Point, Manager of the Tri-County VON, received this award for his outstanding contributions that have directly affected the organization's ability to bring to action their mission statement "Health Starts at Home."

Please join me in congratulating Derrick Babin for receiving this prestigious award, and wish him continued success in all his endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**WOLFVILLE NURSING HOME - BUDGET CUTS**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Not only has this government cut provincial funding for long-term care facilities by \$6 million over the last two years, it has also failed to open up a single new nursing home bed - this, despite the fact that wait-lists for each and every one of these facilities is increasing by the day. Nova Scotia's population is aging at a frightening pace, and we're decades away from the peak of that trend. The fact that the members opposite have no plan to address this reality is just as frightening - perhaps another specific cut to another specific facility will convince this government to change its course. This year, this government approved almost \$51,000 in cuts to the Wolfville Nursing Home, a facility with 67 seniors who have paid their dues to this province. This is not sustainable, realistic, or fair.

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

**FAIRVIEW COMMUN. ASSOC. - FAIRVIEW FAM. FEST. (ANNIV. 10<sup>th</sup>)**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: I would like to recognize the Fairview Community Association on hosting their 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Fairview Family Festival.

During this event, they hosted over 800 families and community members who were able to play a variety of games, participate in events, and hang around for a bite to eat. Lisa Sullivan, the manager of Freeman's Pizza, and Councillor Russell Walker were dedicated chefs on the barbeque for the event, feeding their community, while local business owners and many volunteers from the Halifax Regional Police Department and members of the United Way were also there lending a hand.

There were also many displays and performances from the community's lovely, diverse population that offered attendees a sample of the many cultures from around the globe that make up our community. The event finished off with a marvellous fireworks show and a showing of the movie E.T.

I would like the members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating the Fairview Community Association on hosting an extraordinary event that was able to bring our community together.

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

#### **BAIN FAM.: BIG BRAS D'OR COMMUN. - SERV. THANK**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember nearly 70 years of Bain's General Store in the Big Bras d'Or basin. Over the years a series of Bains stood behind the counter, with Keith being the last. The store was closed in 2004 and the building was demolished.

Bain's General Store was the hub of the community and a place where news and gossip was shared and members of the community gathered to help one another.

I would like to thank the Bains for years of service to the community, and for providing a place for many hunting, fishing, and political discussions over the generations.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

#### **OCEAN VIEW MANOR - BUDGET CUTS**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, many nursing homes and residential care facilities in Nova Scotia have been forced to do more with less because of the government's cuts. The news stories have been constant since this government took office. Manager after manager has made the painful decision to reduce operational spending on nutrition and recreation programs for our seniors in care. Countless others have been forced to reduce staff levels.

Only so much can be done before the care that these professionals provide begins to suffer. For the members opposite who are turning a blind eye, here is another specific

cut to a specific facility. This year this government approved over \$63,000 in cuts to Ocean View Manor, a facility with 176 residents who deserve quality care. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

**WALSH, DR. KEVIN/JAEPPEL, DR. MATTHIAS  
- CAMP BRIGADOON FUNDRAISING**

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize doctors Kevin Walsh and Matthias Jaepel for their outstanding dedication towards Camp Brigadoon on August 14, 2016, during the BIG SWIM. What was supposed to be a big swim across the Northumberland Strait had a last-minute course change, due to high winds as Kevin and Matthias swam approximately 12 kilometres, from Cape Jourimain to Murray Beach.

The pair raised more than \$5,700 towards the BIG SWIM's overall total of \$152,000, to help children attend Camp Brigadoon. Brigadoon Village is a non-profit recreational facility on Aylesford Lake in the Annapolis Valley, which delivers camp programming to children, youth, and families living with chronic illness, chronic conditions, or special needs.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Dr. Kevin Walsh and Dr. Matthias Jaepel for participating in such a worthwhile cause and wish them the best of luck next year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**ABERDEEN REG. HOSP.: STERILIZATION UNIT - RETURN**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, the recent news that the sterilization unit at the Aberdeen Regional Hospital does not meet accreditation standards and that this service will now be outsourced to Colchester Hospital raises concerns that this government is not just amalgamating administration, but also starting to amalgamate some services.

Mr. Speaker, in the past 10 years the Aberdeen Health Foundation has invested hundreds of thousands of dollars into the sterilization unit yet no one from the Nova Scotia Health Authority approached the foundation to ask if it was willing to assist financially to have the sterilization unit updated to meet current standards.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Minister of Health and Wellness to examine all the available options and return this valuable service to the Aberdeen Regional Hospital. Thank you.

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

**LIBERAL GOV'T.: DOCTOR SHORTAGE - ADDRESS**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, 90,000 Nova Scotians are without a family doctor...

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne has the floor.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, 90,000 Nova Scotians are without a family doctor, yet the Premier continues to suggest that this government is on the path to meet the target set out in 2013. Last evening, we witnessed the member for Clare-Digby announce that the goal of a doctor for every Nova Scotian may take up to five and even 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, promises are only as strong as the person who makes them. It gives me no joy to report that the Liberal Government has wasted - I repeat, wasted - three years of their mandate failing to address our doctor shortage.

Mr. Speaker, it seems as if they have spent more time playing with Frisbees and beach balls than they have getting to work on keeping their election promise. Thank you.

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

**UPPER HAMMONDS PLAINS: LT.-GOV.'S AWARD**

MR. BEN JESSOME: The Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award recognizes the strength, diversity, and positivity that our communities throughout the province have to celebrate. In any given year, a committee chooses four applicant communities that best exemplify the traits in the award's criteria.

It is with great pride that I ask all members of the House of Assembly to congratulate the vibrant community of Upper Hammonds Plains, one of this year's award recipients. An historic community established in 1815 as a settlement area for Black refugees from the War of 1812, Upper Hammonds Plains has grown and flourished over the years and is home to friends who are proud to share their rich history and relentless hospitality.

Upper Hammonds Plains is home to the Can Jam Festival, Emmanuel Baptist Church, the first all-Black fire department in Canada, and countless groups and individuals continuously finding ways to add value in Hammonds Plains-Lucasville and throughout the world.

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

**COOK, EMMA - YOUNG CITIZENS HERITAGE PROG.**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw attention to Emma Cook, an 11-year-old from Harmony Heights who is one of 12 Nova Scotians selected to compete in the Young Citizens heritage program, with the hope of becoming one of the 26 students chosen to compete at Canada's History Youth Forum in Ottawa this Fall.

For her subject, "A History of Maple Syrup Production in Canada," Emma drew on a family history of maple syrup production, a visit to local industry, and other research, preparing a video, a written report, and a display that includes a miniature sugar camp.

Emma is a wonderful example of the students of today who will be the leaders of tomorrow. Please join me in wishing her every success in the national competition.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES: BUDGETS - EXPECTATIONS**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, it seems long-term care facilities can do no right by this government. The Premier has been critical of a non-profit long-term care facility in Halifax Needham for having a surplus, while the Minister of Health and Wellness said yesterday that his department will be working with nursing homes so that, and I quote, "all nursing homes can operate . . . without a deficit."

Is it the Premier and the Minister of Health and Wellness's position that these facilities, which involve complex operations and thousands of residents and staff, will be in the government's sightlines if their budgets are not at an even balance each year?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**SALTBOX BREWERY (MAHONE BAY) - OPENING CONGRATS.**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Every community is looking for small new businesses to help strengthen the local economy. We as a government are doing all we can to support small businesses, like cutting red tape, making sector-specific investments, and helping small businesses hire new grads. When these businesses open, they should be celebrated, both for the financial aspects they bring and the courage of the people behind the business. It is not an easy thing to do.

Saltbox Brewery is one of the newest businesses in Mahone Bay, and it opened to much fanfare in mid-September - so much so that they ran out of almost all product during their grand opening. The people behind the brewery have invested a lot of time and money in creating a brand and a quality product, and they have wasted no time in becoming part of the community, already beginning to give back before the brewery was technically open.



I wish to congratulate the owners and operators of Saltbox Brewery for choosing Mahone Bay as their home of business, and I wish them every success in the future.

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

**“MAKO MY DAY!” SHARK FISHING DERBY (4<sup>th</sup> ANL.):  
VOLS./PARTICIPANTS - THANK**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the volunteers and participants in the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Mako My Day! shark fishing derby held in Louisbourg this August. This year the event raised \$12,000, \$9,000 of which will go to the intensive care unit family waiting room at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital; \$2,000 to the Coastal Discovery Centre in Main-à-Dieu; and \$1,000 to Christmas Helpers in Louisbourg.

All of the 22 sharks caught were studied by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and the meat was donated to the Two Rivers Wildlife Park to feed the animals. I stand here to congratulate the volunteer committee that puts on the event each year and all the participants, including Captain Arnold Wilcox and his crew of the *Unforgettable U* for winning the derby with a 101-pound mako shark.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**SAINT VINCENT’S NURSING HOME - BUDGET CUTS**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: This government’s cuts to long-term care are being felt across the province - \$6 million has been slashed from the budgets of nursing homes and residential care facilities in Nova Scotia over the past two years. As members of this Legislature, we know the impacts of these cuts far too well. We hear from seniors and their families in our constituencies and in neighbouring districts every day.

But perhaps the members opposite have not been listening, so here’s a specific cut to a specific facility. This year, this government approved \$128,000 in cuts to Saint Vincent’s Nursing Home, a facility with 149 desperately-needed beds. This is shameful, Mr. Speaker. Seniors deserve respect and dignity, not cutbacks that diminish the quality of their life.

I hope all members in this House join the New Democratic Party’s call to restore all funding to long-term care.

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

**IVEY, CRAIG - N.S. GOLF ASSOCIATION VOL. OF YR. (2016)**

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Craig Ivey from the Seaview Golf & Country Club for being chosen 2016 Nova Scotia Golf Association Volunteer of the Year.

Mr. Ivey has been a board member at the Seaview Golf & Country Club for 18 years and has served as House Chairman, Match Captain, and on entertainment and fundraising committees. For the past 10 years, he has been actively fundraising for the club's junior golf program. Through his fundraising initiatives, dozens of Seaview junior members have the opportunity to travel and compete in junior championships across Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. Ivey for all his hard work and dedication, and I wish to congratulate him for receiving this award.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**MILNE, MARGARET/JOLLYMORE, JOSEPHINE:  
PARKINSON'S SUPER WALK - ORGANIZATION**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, once again, Margaret Milne and Josephine Jollymore organized the annual Parkinson's SuperWalk, with more than 80 people taking part. The 10<sup>th</sup> annual walk raised over \$15,500, just shy of last year's total.

Another very encouraging sign was the number of high school students who participated in the walk. That's a great indication that this walk will carry on.

On behalf of all those who suffer from Parkinson's, the folks behind the scenes, and the walkers, I extend thanks and gratitude for a job well done. The future of those who suffer from Parkinson's disease is a little brighter because of your efforts. Thank you.

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

**WYNN PARK VILLA - BUDGET CUTS**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Wynn Park Villa is a family-owned, long-term care facility in Truro. It has three generations of family, along with many skilled professional support service staff working to make the facility as family-oriented and homelike as possible for its residents.

This year, this government cut Wynn Park Villa's budget by \$58,000, negatively impacting residents and staff. While the Speech from the Throne claimed that long-term

care continues to be a priority for this government, cuts like this one to Wynn Park Villa in my hometown counter this claim.

Mr. Speaker, as the days go by, more and more Nova Scotians are waking up to the understanding that this is a government that cannot be taken at its word.

MR. SPEAKER: Just before we move on to the next Member's Statement, I want to take a minute to remind everybody not to speak to constituency members directly but rather, direct your comments through the Chair in the third person. I've heard a number this morning that are reaching out directly to constituencies or people listening at home. So again, messages go directly through the Chair.

The honourable member for Kings South.

#### **CENT. KINGS RURAL HS: FT. MCMURRAY HS - SUPPORT RECOGNIZE**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize students and staff of Central Kings Rural High School for rallying together to support a high school in Fort McMurray, Alberta, impacted by wildfires in the community.

Grade 12 student Amy Ivany volunteered to coordinate the Operation Gator Aid fundraising project as the senior high student leader. The idea stemmed from a discussion on natural disasters during a class taught by geology and global geography teacher Mr. Steve Wohlmuth.

Through a series of fundraisers, the students collected money and supplies to help students who lost homes, school supplies, clothing, and other necessities. Mr. Wohlmuth saw the project as a way for students to be evaluated on something more than test scores.

On behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, I congratulate and thank Amy Ivany, Steve Wohlmuth, and the Central Kings Gator Aid project team for their efforts at helping a far-off community impacted by a natural disaster. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

#### **MACQUARRIE, CHARLOTTE - COBEQUID ARTS COUN. LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, bringing arts and culture to the Truro area has always been a passionate endeavour for Charlotte MacQuarrie. For her commitment and dedication, Ms. MacQuarrie will receive the first annual Lifetime Achievement Award from the Cobequid Arts Council. In 1978, she was a founding member and first President of the Cobequid Arts Council. As a member of this council, she worked on numerous projects, including the creation of the J. Arch Fraser Bandshell, and later the Marigold

Cultural Centre. These stages led the way for numerous concerts to be held, including the Nova Scotia Symphony, Natalie MacMaster, and Rita MacNeil. Ms. MacQuarrie was also pivotal in bringing string instrument programs into our community schools.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Ms. MacQuarrie on receiving the Cobequid Arts Council Lifetime Achievement Award and thank her for her commitment to our province's cultural life.

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

### **NURSING HOMES - FUNDING RESTORE**

HON. DAVID WILSON: I have another cut to a specific long-term care facility that I would like to bring to the attention of the members opposite.

This year, this government cut the Villa Acadienne provincial funding by over \$32,000. These cuts affect the day-to-day lives of the 85 residents who call that facility home, along with its passionate and hard-working team of professionals. These are real figures with real implications for Nova Scotia seniors. They deserve to be heard and acted upon. Unfortunately, this government does not have a plan to address the growing need for more long-term care.

I echo the call of my colleagues and ask all members of the House to join the NDP in its work to restore funding to all nursing homes and residential facilities that have experienced cuts at the hands of this government.

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

### **BREMNER, BUD: VOL. SERV. - THANK**

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Bud Bremner is a constituent of Sackville-Beaver Bank who was highlighted in the Metro News recently. I would like to add my voice in extending the thanks of not just our community but the Province of Nova Scotia to Mr. Bud Bremner for his long-term volunteer service and commitment to the youth of Nova Scotia.

Forty-seven years ago, Mr. Bremner started the Bedford-Sackville minor football program and, for 45 years, has served as president of the football association. As he so humbly states, I don't want to take the credit because countless volunteers have made the association successful. Please join me in thanking him for his outstanding contributions to our youth and also to our province.

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

**NURSING HOMES (N.S.): STAFF - DEDICATION THANK**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Townsview Estates in Truro is a residential care facility with over 50 beds. This year, the facility had its budget cut by at least \$27,900 by this government. Mr. Speaker, I have to say that workers are afraid there will be more cuts. This is what we're hearing.

This government has not created a single new long-term care bed since it took office, despite the increasing need driven by the demographics of an aging province. With no new beds being created, there is added pressure on existing facilities to deliver care. Yet these existing facilities are being asked to do more with less. Shame. Other nursing homes in my riding also received cuts, including the Mira, where my 97-year-old grandmother went and spent the last days of her life before she died of pneumonia.

I want to offer my appreciation to all staff at nursing homes in Truro and around this province. Their hard work and their dedication to improving the quality of life . . .

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

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

**CONROD, MARY & ALBERT: BUS. SUCCESS - CONGRATS.**

MS. JOYCE TREEN: In celebration of Small Business Week, I want to recognize two residents of Eastern Passage. Mary and Albert Conrod run three successful small businesses: SeaSide Casual Wear, A&M Sea Charters, and Eastern Passage Bed and Breakfast. With more than 20 years of experience, they go out of their way to accommodate everyone. They have great staff that are knowledgeable and friendly (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage has the floor.

MS. TREEN: When visiting any one of these businesses, you will receive excellent customer service and heartwarming hospitality. With the success of their businesses, Mary and Albert are always giving back by donating their time as well as items to community events. I ask all members of this House of Assembly to congratulate Mary and Albert on the success in their community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**PAUL, ANDREA: HUMAN RIGHTS COMMN.  
- REAPPOINTMENT CONGRATS.**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: It gives me great pleasure to rise today and congratulate Andrea Paul, Chief of the Pictou Landing First Nation, on being reappointed to the Human Rights Commission. Chief Paul has been a commissioner since 2013. As Chief of the Pictou Landing First Nation, she acts as the band's spokesperson, chairs the council meetings, and oversees the band's finances. She has demonstrated leadership in her community, the province, and the region and has exceptional passion and enthusiasm for community development and social justice. She's a valuable and important member of the commission, and I am proud of her successes and also proud to call her a friend. Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, am I permitted to do an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Thank you. I want to draw the member's attention to the east gallery where we have some special guests today. With us, and I'd ask if they could stand to be recognized: Angela Berrette, Executive Director of Saint Vincent's Nursing Home; Emily Samson, administrator for Dykeland Lodge in Windsor; Dion Mouland, President and CEO of Ocean View Manor; and Anthony Taylor, administrator for Oakwood Terrace. I ask all members to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

**C.B. FLOOD - COMMUN./GOV'T. SUPPORT**

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a member of one of the most severely impacted communities of the Thanksgiving flood. The Sydney community has seen homes and community centres severely damaged, displacing many families and community organizations in our area. There is a journey ahead for all of us. Throughout the flooding, our communities have rallied together to offer food, shelter, compassion, and any supports possible. Our government agencies, first responders, and community organizations are working extremely hard to help everyone affected. Neighbours have helped neighbours to ensure all who need help have received it.

To everyone in my community, there are good people on the ground working day in and day out to help you. My caucus colleagues and all levels of government are here to support you, and I am here to help you.

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

**STEELE, KAYLA/MACDONALD, ELIZABETH:  
N. SYDNEY VOL. FD - VOLUNTEERING CONGRATS.**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Kayla Steele and Elizabeth MacDonald who have been members of the North Sydney Volunteer Fire Department for the last number of years. These two women have worked well as a part of a squad devoted to serving their community as first responders. It's a rewarding and demanding job, and the two highly recommend this type of volunteering to other females across Nova Scotia. It is my extreme pleasure to recognize these two young women on their decision to volunteer to make their community a better and safer place to live.

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

**MANZER APIARY INC.:  
INNOVACORP I-3 TECH. START-UP COMP. - CONGRATS.**

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Manzer Apiary Inc. who finished second in Zone 3 of Nova Scotia's Innovacorp I-3 Technology Start-Up Competition, a competition to support early-stage, knowledge-based companies and to encourage entrepreneurial activity. The Manzer beehives started with one of the Manzer brothers needing a solution to a problem. He had planted a plum orchard, but it would not yield any fruit. So Owen Manzer built a beehive, a top-bar beehive instead of the conventional box-shaped beehive.

Along the way, as more new ideas evolved, the brothers had to solve some design problems. Their addition of ventilation to the beehive design seems to have solved the last of these. Since this adjustment, the loss of bees over the winter has fallen to zero compared to 20 per cent to 35 per cent in lost hives for experienced beekeepers.

With this competition under their belt and the beehive currently being tested at Acadia University, Brian and Owen are looking to the future to expand the production and sale of their beehives.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS:  
PICTOU CO. DOCTOR RECRUITMENT/RETENTION - PRIORITIZE**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, Pictou County has a doctor crisis. There are thousands of residents who do not have a primary health care provider. This is not a new issue; it is one that has been repeatedly raised with the Minister of Health and Wellness, and yet, we are no further ahead in Pictou County. There are people in Pictou West who have cancer and are having treatment, yet they are still unable to gain access to a general practitioner. Who will provide them with the support and care they so desperately

need as they continue to navigate the frightening world of a serious illness? I urge the Minister of Health and Wellness to make doctor recruitment and retention for Pictou County a top priority for his government.

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

**FORRESTALL, CURPHEY: MURAL COMPLETION - CONGRATS.**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Curphey Forrestall for making his mark on Fairview in an artistic way. Curphey, son of famous local artist Tom Forrestall, started working where his father left off: finishing his painting that depicts the history of the western part of our province's biggest city, Halifax.

In spite of being slightly overwhelmed with the size of the project, he was able to power through it and paint a mural that is a vital centrepiece to the Fairview-Clayton Park community. The mural depicts a forested scene, a train and older historic buildings, some of which still stand in our community today.

I would like the members of this Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Curphey Forrestall on finishing his masterpiece and using his talent to contribute to the beauty of our neighbourhood. Thank you.

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

**BROOKFIELD 4-H CLUB: PROV. SHOW - PARTICIPANTS CONGRATS.**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, the 4-H Provincial Show is an annual event where 4-H'rs come together to celebrate the end of a show season through friendly competition and camaraderie. Among the clubs participating in this year's Pro Show was a strong contingent from the Brookfield 4-H Club, competing in tug-of-war judging and beef clipping.

Members of the second place standing tug-of-war team included Cody, Connor, and Erin Richardson, Tessa Harris, Alena Moxsom, Taylor Lowe, and Cole McCallum. Each year members are selected from Pro Show to represent Nova Scotia at the Royal Show, this year being held in Toronto. This year Emily Moxsom from the Brookfield 4-H Club was chosen the Nova Scotia 4-H representative in dairy. Congratulations, Emily.

I'd also like to extend congratulations to all participants at the 4-H Pro Show for this year's successful showings.

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



**PROSPECT RD. CRAFTERS MARKET (7<sup>th</sup> ANL.) - ATTEND**

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Prospect Road Crafters Market being held on October 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Prospect Road Community Centre in Hatchet Lake. Originally started as the Prospect Road Craft Crawl, the event was held for 14 years in the homes of the artists and crafters from communities along the Prospect Road. Since 2010 the event has been held at the community centre, where it has become a seasonal highlight featuring the skills and talents of our local artisans.

Under the leadership of Ken Beazley, chairman of the organization, a small army worked tirelessly to make the event successful each year, and I would like to recognize them here: Barb Walters, Treasurer; Bev Blackburn, Registration; Kathy Turner; Don Purcell; Denise Sooley; Jane Stewart; Sadie Burns; Lillian McFadden; Yvonne Rousseau; Linda Beazley; Nora Strapps; and Amy Hockin.

I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in sending best wishes for another successful year to the crafters, and I encourage you to attend the event to get a head start on your Christmas shopping. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**BOND, ANNA: PAT LORD AWARD - CONGRATS.**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, over 30 years ago money from the Children's Aid Society endowment was transferred to the Aberdeen Hospital Foundation. This year Anna Bond, an adoptee from Romania, is the recipient of the Aberdeen Health Foundation's Pat Lord Award. This scholarship is for Pictou County adoptees enrolled in post-secondary education who have demonstrated extensive involvement in their school and community.

Pat Lord, for whom the award is named, was responsible for Anna's adoption so there is an emotional element in Anna receiving this award. Anna has always regarded education as a privilege and so has pursued it with every opportunity.

Anna has both a Bachelor and Master of Music and is in the final years of her music education at Memorial University. Congratulations, Anna.

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

**HORYL'S FAM. DELI - ANNIV. (80<sup>th</sup>)**

MR. DAVID WILTON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize a local small business that has been in operation in New Waterford for four generations.

Horyl's Family Deli, currently owned and operated by Frank Horyl Jr., was operated by his grandfather back in 1932. Originally the business was run out of a storefront in the family home. With recipes passed down through generations, Horyl's has grown from a small family business to a well-known organization that employs 15 people.

Horyl's has become a staple in Cape Breton homes. With the use of fresh meats and spices, it's a taste of home. Although Horyl's does not ship outside Nova Scotia, families have been known to load up on suitcases full of Horyl's products when they travel to visit families that have moved away.

Please help me congratulate the management and staff of Horyl's Family Deli on over 80 years in business, and wish them many more years of success.

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

#### **PORT MORIEN COMMUN. FAIR - ANNIV. (70<sup>th</sup>)**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the community fair in Port Morien.

The 70<sup>th</sup> fair was a sensational outing - the weather was spectacular, the parade was beautiful, and all the attractions and events brought smiles to all who attended. I can't speak about the fair in Port Morien without mentioning Margie McQueen, whose smiling face and easygoing personality have made this fair such a success for many years. A special thank you to the outgoing committee, who will be handing over the reins to a group of younger community members who are eager to continue bringing this great fair to the community for many years to come. I stand here today to congratulate the Port Morien Community Fair committee on another extremely successful year. I cannot wait to see what they have in store for next year.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

#### **MCCLUSKEY, GLORIA: PUB. SERV. - THANK**

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Recently, friends, colleagues, family, and politicians of all stripes celebrated the accomplishments and career of long-term Dartmouth politician Gloria McCluskey. Gloria, or Lady of the Lakes, as she is affectionately known, has been a tireless and vocal advocate for the City of Dartmouth. Involved in municipal politics for almost three decades, Gloria was the last Mayor of Dartmouth before amalgamation in 1996. After a retirement of eight years, Gloria came back to municipal politics in 2004 because, quite simply, she felt Dartmouth was getting the short end of the amalgamation stick.

Over the years, Gloria has led the development of everything from a community pizza oven to a skateboard park. In between, she's answered thousands of emails and phone calls, and attended countless community meetings. To all she meets, she brings sincerity and a commitment to listen, to help, and to do the right thing. She has been a fearless woman leader in the world of politics in Nova Scotia. I know for a fact that young women aspire to follow in her footsteps in public service.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Gloria for her years of dedication and public service in her beloved Dartmouth, and to personally thank her for her stewardship and mentorship in my own political experience.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

**MELIA, COLIN/SCOTT, JONAH: C.P. ALLEN HS  
UNDERWATER ROBOTICS TEAM - ASSISTANCE THANK**

HON. KELLY REGAN: During the Spring session, I shared with the House the stellar success of the Charles P. Allen High School underwater robotics team. After the statement, we heard from some of the team members, who told us their success was directly attributable to their coaches, Colin Melia and Jonah Scott. Mr. Scott would stay with the team at school late into the evening as late as 11 o'clock at night, and even gave up his birthday to work on the robot with them. Mr. Melia would leave his day job and race to the school to coach the team. I can tell you after my session with him on virtual reality, his enthusiasm is infectious. The team ended up competing at the international level in Houston. I want to thank these two men for going above and beyond for the Charles P. Allen robotics team to give them a memorable computer science experience.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth. (Applause)

**SITLAND, LYNN - SWIMMING VOL. AWARD**

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I would like to thank my colleagues for that warm reception. On September 30<sup>th</sup>, Swimming Canada held its awards reception at the Canadian Swimming Congress in Toronto. Lynn Sitland of Yarmouth was the recipient of Swimming Canada's volunteer contribution award, in recognition of over 35 years of officiating. Lynn has taken on many administrative roles for the Yarmouth Y Whitecaps and Swim Nova Scotia, and now acts as the chair of the Swim Nova Scotia officials' committee. Please join me in congratulating Lynn Sitland, a long-time friend of our family's, on this impressive achievement and in thanking her for her many years of dedication to the sport of swimming in Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**AL ZHOURI FAM.: COMMUN. SPIRIT - CONGRATS.**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: The Al Zhouri family came to Antigonish from Syria in January of this year, and already they have launched a new small business, Al Zhouri Sewing and Alterations. Almost from the beginning, Rabiyyah Al Zhouri had been selling baked goods and displaying her sewing work at the Antigonish Farmers' Market. She received encouragement to begin to realize her dream of expanding her business, and she is receiving rave reviews for her work. Rabiyyah's other love is cooking, and she's becoming well-known for that too. She dreams of one day opening a restaurant that would offer a full Middle Eastern menu.

All of the Al Zhouris are settling into life in Antigonish. Rabiyyah's husband, Toufic, is working in construction, which was his business in Syria. The three Al Zhouri children are attending school, and two are also working part time. They have made many friends in Antigonish, and we wish them much success in their new home. I encourage all members to join me in congratulating the Al Zhouris on their hard work and community spirit, and wish them well with their new business in welcoming Antigonish.

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

**SIMMONS, CARLO/SIMMONS PAVING CO. - BUS. ACHIEVEMENT**

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Carlo Simmons, vice-president and director of operations for Simmons Paving Company, an ISO 9000-certified company, for successfully operating the longest running paving company in Nova Scotia owned by an African Nova Scotian family. Carlo operates the company in the tradition of his father, Wilfred Sr., and his mother, Gloria, who founded the company in 1975. Carlo attributes the success of the company to his focus on trustworthiness, financial aptitude, honesty, and dependability.

I applaud and congratulate Carlo on his significant achievement in business, and for successfully operating a company that has thrived for more than four decades.

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

**HANN, DEBORAH/JOURNEY TO WELLNESS - SUCCESS WISH**

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, in honour of Small Business Week, I would like to focus on Journey to Wellness, a local business run by entrepreneur Deborah Hann. Deborah started her business in 2010 with the goal of making a difference by offering fitness classes and personal training. In 2011, she expanded to an online program and has clients throughout North America.

Deborah is making a difference in our community by strengthening relationships between her clients and making active living and healthy eating a new lifestyle. Deborah says, "I love knowing that I am helping people reach their goals." This year, Deborah has had one of the most successful years with her clients achieving amazing results in their health, fitness, and confidence. Please join me in wishing Deborah Hann and Journey to Wellness continued success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

#### **"TELL AMERICA IT'S GREAT" CAMPAIGN - CONTRIBUTE**

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring attention today to a new online campaign called Tell America It's Great, which was started by a group of friendly Canadians who felt that during the tumultuous election campaign, America could use some cheering up.

The campaign consists of videos or messages being posted online to the Tell America It's Great website, as well as on social media by Canadians who want to remind America of all the reasons it's great. From music, movies, and sports, to innovations in science and technology, space travel, and medicine, to food, culture, and even retail stores and social media platforms, the list of America's positive influence and impact is impressive.

When you stop to consider it, you start to realize just how much good they bring to our everyday lives. In fact, I'll bet that if you take a few minutes to think about it, you'll have a list of your own in no time. If you do, I hope you will share it because with all the negativity being thrown around out there, we could all use a little positivity right now.

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

#### **BEANIE'S BISTRO: SUCCESS - CONGRATS.**

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Small Business Week here in our province and across the country, I would like to recognize one of our own. Beanie's Bistro, located in the historic Village of Sherbrooke, is joyously owned and operated by the husband and wife duo of Max and Barbara MacDonald. Both Cape Breton natives, the MacDonalds moved to the St. Mary's area in 2013 and Beanie's was born - named after Max's grandmother, whose reputation for great cooking and entertainment was known far and wide from Port Hilford.

It is small businesses such as Beanie's and entrepreneurs like Max and Barbara who are the very roots of our rural communities. I commend them on their success and accomplishments, and wish them many more years of the same.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

### **TOTS' ACAD.: VOLS. - THANK**

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, it takes a village to raise a preschool. Tots' Academy has been blessed with a caring community that makes this statement true. The preschool was in need of a permanent outdoor shelter - a gazebo - and a boardwalk leading to it for the children's outdoor activities. There was no money in the budget to accomplish this project. Over the years the dads of the preschoolers have done maintenance such as fence mending, spreading loads of pea stone, and much more.

But stepping up to the plate, the dads contacted local businesses. Materials and labour were donated by the following businesses and organizations: Elmsdale Lumber, Elmsdale Rona, Shubenacadie Home Hardware, Dartmouth Kent's, and Goodfellows. The fathers met the construction challenge and the building work was done the first weekend in August.

Volunteers and community spirit are what make East Hants strong. When a community comes together, amazing things can be accomplished - even in a weekend. I would like to thank all those involved.

MR. SPEAKER: I would just like to take a minute to remind everybody to again not refer to constituents directly, but direct your comments through the Chair. Also, not to use Members' Statements as a commercial for community events; that's important as well. I'd also remind members not to cross between the Speaker's dais and whoever is speaking on the floor.

### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

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

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

#### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: CAN. HEALTH TRANSFER - DEPT. USAGE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, as we're trying to understand the whole issue of the Canada Health Transfer and what's going on in our health care system, on one side we have the federal minister saying she doesn't know where the money that's being received by provinces is going. On the other hand, the Nova Scotia Health Authority had to borrow \$7 million from their restricted funds to make payroll when the Department of Health and Wellness owed them over \$70 million.

In addition, the Auditor General has identified an \$85-million budget shortfall for urgent infrastructure funding. And now, because of failed negotiations, our Minister of Health and Wellness says we must make \$26 million in cuts to our health care budget.

My question for the minister is, what has the department done with the funds that it receives from the Canada Health Transfer?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: To respond to the member's question, and to let all Nova Scotians know, every cent of the over \$900 million that comes from Ottawa through the health transfer goes into the operations, the \$4.2 billion to run our health care system. We all know that it only makes up about 20 per cent of running the system. This is why it's of great concern to all Nova Scotians that we continue to work with the Premier and with the Prime Minister to keep the escalator at 6 per cent.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: We know that cutting \$26 million, even though it's a small percentage of that total health budget, is still a phenomenal amount of the programs available to Nova Scotians, whether it's finding doctors, whether it's going into long-term care, or whether it's trying to find ways to make our emergency rooms more effective.

The federal minister is asking that that be attached to innovation and to trying to find good, new health care solutions, not to trying to do the things we've done before. Nova Scotia's Auditor General has called our health care system "not sustainable," and major changes are needed. Costs and demands for services continue to rise with no relief in sight.

My question to the minister: Will he admit that there is a problem in our deteriorating health care system, and will he secure proper funding for Nova Scotians with the innovation that the federal minister wants?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, of course I'm pleased to convey to the House and to all Nova Scotians that the federal minister, Dr. Jane Philpott, joined me and the Premier to announce MyHealthNS, which is a personal electronic health record that's going to be a great boost to Nova Scotians. It will give us direct information from doctors and reduce the number of visits required to physicians and other primary care providers, and get more people in front of doctors when they need to be seen.

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

### **PREM.: LONG-TERM CARE - CUTS EXPLAIN**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: My question is for the Premier. We know that Nova Scotia's population is aging, and we know that wait times for nursing home beds range from 62 days in Shelburne to 1,083 days in Richmond. Last year this government cut \$3.6 million from the operating budgets of long-term care facilities. This year, they

made more than \$3.4 million in cuts to long-term care facilities, and yet in the Throne Speech, government said long-term care is one of their priorities.

If the priority is for this government, can the Premier explain why he's decided to balance the budget by cutting long-term care?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question and thank all those across our province who work in long-term care and look after our parents, our grandparents, and our siblings when they require that service. We believe that we have enough money on the table that allows those services to be provided.

Yesterday the Official Opposition raised the issue of a nursing home here in town. We have an auditor who's gone in to take a look and see if there's a difference of opinion on where that money is being spent to come through - if there are changes or adjustments required, I've made it clear that we'd be happy to make those adjustments.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, when the government made these cuts, a letter was sent from the Department of Health and Wellness, directing facilities to maintain programming and staffing levels, despite a 1 per cent cut in funding for the second year in a row. The letter dated April 20, 2016, says, "Services and programming to residents should not be negatively impacted and service delivery staffing levels should not be reduced." I will table that.

Mr. Speaker, how did the Premier expect long-term care facilities to absorb a cut of more than \$6 million without impacting staff, food and programming?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. We have continued to work with our partners across the province when it came to make sure that our seniors have the proper care in place. We sent in nutritionists to make sure the food that is being served to citizens is of the quality that all of us would expect, and all of them there make sure it's happening and continue to work with them.

If there are issues, as I said to you earlier, Mr. Speaker, we're happy to hear from those nursing homes to work through those challenges but we believe there is enough funding on the table to deliver those services without impacting services to seniors.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, long-term care is about more than just quality of care, it's about quality of life. This government's cuts have resulted in lower quality food in nursing homes. However, with the Premier's fundraising dinner coming here in November, it costs \$300 per person to sit at that table, but he expects nursing homes to feed seniors for far, far less. Some homes have also had to look at increasing fees for services like wheelchair repairs.



Mr. Speaker, what is the Premier's plan to ensure Nova Scotians have timely access to long-term care with both high-quality of care and quality of life?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, unlike the Leader in the House of the New Democratic Party, I believe that seniors across this province are getting quality of food. If he believes there are seniors in this province who are not, he should let our government know and we'll go into that nursing home to confirm whether he's right or whether the hardworking people across this province who are feeding our seniors are doing it in an appropriate way.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, as the honourable member would know, governing is about making choices. He decided to drive the labour bill up in this province by \$700 million embedded in the cost of delivering services. We want to invest in services for seniors, for classes across this province, to make sure that not only are we treating people fairly but we're treating all Nova Scotians fairly.

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

#### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: HEALTH CARE SYSTEM - STATUS DESCRIBE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: The minister just mentioned his EMR project, the electronic medical record, in the previous answer to my previous question. That's great but to the 100,000 Nova Scotians who don't have a family doctor it really doesn't mean much to them, they really need a doctor or they won't be able to use it.

The grim reality is clogging up emergency rooms, causing congestion in hospitals, and producing anxiety amongst patients and health care professionals. Janet Knox, the CEO of the Nova Scotia Health Authority, told the Standing Committee on Public Accounts that the system isn't in crisis.

My question to the minister is, what word does the minister use to describe our health care system that is overwhelmed with the lack of family doctors?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: As the member opposite knows, just since July 1<sup>st</sup> we've been able to recruit about 45 additional doctors. We had an announcement about 23 nurses, made up of RNs, family practice nurses, nurse practitioners, and in joining with doctors, that group alone, of nurses and doctors, will, in fact, look after 14,000 additional Nova Scotians.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Well, I could thank him for that answer, but what he also knows is that that number doesn't make up for the number of doctors that have either retired or left this province for better prospects in other provinces.

Janet Knox said that Nova Scotians are more unhealthy than the average Canadian; in fact, she said Nova Scotians live an average of one year less than Canadians, and have two fewer years of good health than Canadians. More than 100,000 Nova Scotians don't have doctors and they have few places to go for routine checkups or treatment for chronic illnesses. That means Nova Scotians will get sicker and more unhealthy.

My question to the minister is, when will the minister admit that our health care system is in crisis, and produce a plan that is really going to fix it?

MR. GLAVINE: What I'm able to tell the member opposite and all Nova Scotians, especially when I hear the stories from other ministers across the country, is that we have an outstanding system here in our province, and we continue to improve it year over year.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: NURSING HOMES - CUTS QUANTIFY**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the Health and Wellness Minister to explain the confusion about the breakdown of the Liberal cuts to nursing homes and residential care facilities that was obtained through the freedom of information request. The minister said that what was provided in the document was an accurate picture.

If this is the case, will the minister explain why the document said funding for, for example, Saint Vincent's Nursing Home was cut by \$65,000 when in fact it was actually cut by \$128,000?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: We know that there are different streams of money that go to nursing homes. We also know that out of that global budget, nursing homes are able to make decisions about how they will operate their facility. I've been in probably about 70 of our 132 nursing homes. I know that day-to-day, while there are challenges, I think we need to acknowledge the outstanding work of administrators and staff, and the quality of life that we have in our nursing homes.

MR. DAVID WILSON: We're asking the government to be open and transparent. Just a few days ago, I received another letter from the minister and his department which only added to the confusion. The letter said the information the department shared was complete and accurate. However, it goes on to say that the information that was shared only disclosed a detailed impact list for funding earmarked as 1 per cent, excluding the other budget reductions. Why are they not being open and transparent? Which is it? Will the minister explain how the information provided could be considered complete if other budget reductions weren't included in those figures?

MR. GLAVINE: I think the member opposite, a former Health Minister, knows exactly that the 1 per cent will affect a couple of different streams of funding to nursing

homes. What I'm pleased to say is, and this started last week - I asked the department to reach out to all 132 nursing homes, the for-profit and the not-for-profit, to give us a very accurate picture of how they were able to handle the reduction and furthermore, what their challenges have been and what they will need to meet their budgets in the coming year.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - NURSING HOMES: VACANCIES - DETAILS**

HON. PAT DUNN: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Continuing care professionals say that the provincial vacancy rate in long-term care has doubled from where it was three years ago. In 2013, the average time it took to fill a vacant nursing home bed was seven days. As of April 2016, it takes an unbelievable 14 days to fill a bed. As of today, there appear to be approximately 1,253 patients waiting for long-term care. My question to the minister is, will the minister admit that this government is moving in the wrong direction when it comes to filling vacant beds?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: What I'm pleased to say is that the wait-list for nursing homes across the province has been cut by almost 50 per cent in the last three years. My first report to the House was that collectively (Interruptions)

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

MR. GLAVINE: Collectively, our 132 nursing homes had 2,650 people waiting to get into a nursing home. Obviously, with the \$59 million invested in home care, some people were able to take their name off the list because they were accessing home care for the very first time, and they're doing very fine at home. But when they need to be on a list, they will certainly get on a list.

In terms of the 14 days, that is totally inaccurate. The average time to turn over a bed in a nursing home has again been dramatically reduced. Do we have some outliers? Yes. But we have some now that are turning over a bed in about five days.

MR. DUNN: Members of the Continuing Care Association estimate that the cost of this Liberal failure is about \$70 million. The human cost to seniors and their families is impossible to estimate. The increased vacancy rate also increases the congestion in our crowded hospitals.

The question to the minister is, how does the minister justify \$70 million of waste in the system?

MR. GLAVINE: Maybe you can help me out with providing some details around that because I know that every dollar in our budget is being worked to the best advantage

for the care that Nova Scotians need. What I'm pleased to say today is that we are approaching now with less than 1,000 hours of unserved home care, about 1,250 people on a nursing home wait-list, and the lowest number in hospital beds in the last decade waiting to be placed in a nursing home or back home.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - C.B. ISLAND: DOCTOR SHORTAGE - PLAN**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness.

It has been about four months since about 1,000 people gathered in Sydney to talk about the doctor shortage in Cape Breton - 10,000 people without a doctor. Thousands of people are afraid, frustrated, and angry.

My question for the minister is, will the minister tell the House and the people of Cape Breton Island what his plan is for people without a doctor in Cape Breton Island? Not the five- or 10-year wait down the road, but today as the people who have no doctor today need someone right now.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I thank the member for the question because since that meeting he knows that the wait time for a doctor and the number of patients has, indeed, gone through an improvement. Just yesterday we announced for the North Sydney area Dr. MacDonald who will take on 1,000 patients - several thousand will be able to access through the new collaborative care in Sydney, adding a doctor to Glace Bay. The member opposite knows that improvements have been made, but we won't get there overnight.

MR. MACLEOD: What this member knows is that there have been 30 doctors who have left Cape Breton; what this member knows is that one doctor on the Northside had 2,000 patients - and he thinks that one doctor that's taking on 1,000 patients is going to replace that?

This government, that minister, and that Premier, do not admit there is a problem with health care in the Province of Nova Scotia and certainly with the doctor shortage in Sydney. So the question is, when are they going to act for the people now - not five and 10 years down the road - people today who don't have a doctor, people who need someone right now?

MR. GLAVINE: I thank the member opposite for the question. He knows that I have empathy with every Nova Scotian who doesn't have a family doctor or, what I like to call, a primary care provider. We all know that in this province more and more Nova Scotians are very satisfied when they go and get the care from a nurse practitioner. What

the member also knows is that since July 1<sup>st</sup>, we have been able to recruit about 45 doctors and some have gone to Cape Breton, and others will go to Cape Breton.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: HOME SUPPORT WAIT-LISTS - DETAILS**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the government recently announced that all home support wait-lists for the VON have been eliminated through the province. While we understand the government is trying to address the needs of Nova Scotians - particularly the seniors - it is important to note that home support services are only one aspect of home care. Home support services include personal care, respite, and essential housekeeping. Can the minister explain if the wait-list for home care nursing services - such as dressing changes, catheter care, intravenous therapy, and palliative care - if their wait-lists have been eliminated?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and again, the member opposite who, as former Minister and Health and Wellness, knows how critically important it is to have patients go home with nursing care, and in almost the entire province it is VON nursing, and in fact we have the lowest number in hospitals waiting to go home means that we are providing just-in-time nursing for those patients who need a higher level of care.

MR. DAVID WILSON: So, we take that as a no, Mr. Speaker, from that answer. It's important to understand that home care services are meant to supplement the help people already receive from their family, their friends, and their community. However, there often comes a time when it's no longer possible, or even appropriate, for seniors to remain in their own homes. But this government has not opened a single new long-term care bed and have cut millions from nursing home budgets. What is the minister going to do to help seniors who are waiting years - more than 900 days in some cases - to access long-term care?

MR. GLAVINE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and as the member opposite knows as a former minister that the problem didn't arrive just three years ago. We know that the Home First program is working exceptionally well. Other provinces are taking a look at the policy that allowed us to get to just-in-time home service, and also, absolutely, we need high-quality nursing homes for when individuals need that level of care, and we now have other provinces that have clearly stated - as the federal government will put \$3 billion into home care - it will be home first, and many provinces will adopt our policies that have put us in the place where we are today.

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

**EMO - C.B. FLOODS: SERVICES - AVAILABILITY**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and my question through you is to the Minister responsible for the Emergency Management Office.

As we know, it's been a little over a week since the floods damaged thousands of homes in Cape Breton, leaving many people without a home. Families are overwhelmed, and don't know where to turn for help, and although friends and family have been very helpful and organizations have helped out and reached out, people are still unsure of where to turn. So, my question for the minister is, will the minister please update the House as to what services are available to those people who have lost so much in the Thanksgiving Day flood?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and we are so well aware of the devastation that has happened to people's lives, to their property, the disruption that people are experiencing, and we want them to know that, along with all the MLAs I know on Cape Breton Island, their government stands fully behind them.

We have initiated and expedited a disaster relief program, so that will see millions of provincial dollars flow into the affected area. Each individual household will be able to apply for up to \$200,000 in financial support, and we will start seeing those dollars move out. We are working with the United Way to ensure that the immediate emergency needs of people are taken care of, whether that is lodging, food, or any other expenses that are needed, and if those dollars are depleted through the United Way, we will, and have committed to, flowing more to them.

MR. MACLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that answer. There is no doubt that the need is great. With winter on the way, it's very important that families get settled in safe, warm homes. The weather is predicting another devastating rain storm this weekend. So, my question for the minister is will the minister tell the House how many staff members from the Emergency Management Office are on the ground in Cape Breton, and how long people can expect to wait to have their applications processed?

MR. CHURCHILL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The application processes are being expedited. This process has never worked as quickly as it is now, and our intention is to ensure that that continues and that the money flows efficiently to those who need it, who need the dollars to help rebuild their lives.

Mr. Speaker, we are investing additional dollars into human resources so we have more boots on the ground in Cape Breton. We have sent information packages out to all the MLA offices, and to the municipalities, with a fact sheet and a step-by-step list of things that people need to do during this situation. We know how stressful it is and we want to make sure people have the best information possible and know that their government and

all MLAs are standing behind them, and will continue to stand behind them through this process.

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

**EMO - DISASTER ASSISTANCE: DEDUCTIBLE - EXPLAIN**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the Minister responsible for the Emergency Management Office. Thousands of people have been impacted by the floods in Cape Breton. Nearly 1,000 people now have registered as flood victims through the Cape Breton Regional Municipality helpline. They are looking at the form for disaster relief, but the form requires a \$1,000 deductible. I don't have that form here.

Can the Minister for the Emergency Management organization please provide the people of Cape Breton Regional Municipality with an explanation about the \$1,000 deductible for the disaster assistance for residential properties?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in the previous answer, we have actually upped the cap of eligible dollars for people to apply to their private homes and the damage, we've increased that cap from \$80,000 a household to \$200,000 a household.

Of course we do not want there to be any obstacles - administrative, financial, or otherwise - to slow down the process of these individuals getting that money, which is why we are eliminating that \$1,000 deductible for the people on Cape Breton Island. (Applause)

MR. ORRELL: I thank the minister for that answer. We know there's more weather on the way for tomorrow that could see more localized flooding. People are worried, there is already mass confusion and chaos about how to even apply for the funding. Will the minister commit to getting that information he just tabled here about the \$1,000 deductible directed to the people in Cape Breton in need?

MR. CHURCHILL: The National Disaster Relief Program, that \$1,000 is a federal figure, but provincially we are going to eliminate that requirement so that nobody on Cape Breton Island will be required to pay that deductible. Now that the cap has been increased to \$200,000, we expect that to be very helpful for people who are trying to rebuild their properties and their lives.

Mr. Speaker, if the member has any specific concerns related to this process, please direct them towards my office. We will do everything we can to make sure people have the information they need and that this process moves as quickly and as efficiently as possible so people can begin rebuilding their lives.

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

### **STATUS OF WOMEN - HOME CARE CUTS: WOMEN - EFFECTS**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women. My caucus and I have significant concerns about the emphasis this government has placed on home care services while cutting funding to seniors' homes. Home care services are meant to supplement the help people already received from their family, friends, and community and often this means reliance on unpaid caregivers, most of whom are women.

My question for the minister is, has she or her department analyzed her government's reliance on home care while cutting long-term care in order to determine the impact this decision has on Nova Scotian women providing unpaid care?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. It actually came up at a federal table not two months ago about unpaid care, that women across the country are often responsible for - maybe it being an older daughter, or an unmarried daughter, that certainly was a topic as well.

What I do know is we have not had any discussions coming through or being funnelled through the advisory council. There have been no calls from women or groups that are concerned about any situations within home care.

I do know, speaking with elderly women in this province, that they want to stay in their homes and they want the home care to be in their home. Where we've alleviated those wait-lists, their needs are being met. We have not done an analysis because it has not come to our attention.

MS. ZANN: I thank the minister for her response and I wonder if she might ask her government to take a look at that as well. Mr. Speaker, it is estimated that the labour of unpaid caregivers in Canada is equivalent to about \$25 billion a year to the health care system. When women provide unpaid care they are more likely than men to be responsible for care that's more intense, more frequent, and generally more stressful. With our aging population, many women are concerned, and I am hearing from them in my office, about increasing expectations for them to take on additional caregiving roles.

So my question for the minister: As the government places more emphasis on seniors staying in their homes longer, what actions will the minister take to ensure that this does not place an unfair burden on women to provide unpaid care?

MS. BERNARD: One of the things that I have brought to this position in my role as Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act is that for



the first time in the history of the province, we actually have gender-based analysis within the Department of Community Services and the Executive Council; that started a year ago. We have training that happens across the board in terms of government on what the effect is on women.

That analysis is in the infancy of being done across government departments. It's a huge project because it's never happened in the history of Nova Scotia. I'm pleased to bring it to Nova Scotia, and it has been well received by senior civil servants within the bureaucracy.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: ACUTE-CARE SPACES - OVERCROWDING ALLEVIATE**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: The number of seniors occupying acute-care beds in our hospitals is a real problem. I know it is at the Aberdeen in Pictou County. These seniors deserve to receive the proper care at home or in a facility that's tailored to their needs. Furthermore, acute-care beds are meant to keep those with the most complicated issues in need of constant medical attention. The fact is the government cannot place seniors in a more comfortable, appropriate setting results in overcrowding of ERs and unnecessarily long stays in a hospital.

What is the Minister of Health and Wellness doing to free up space in hospitals so that seniors awaiting placement can receive the appropriate care?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: This is an area where, over the past three years, a significant improvement has been made. At one time, we had about 150 patients at the QEII alone waiting to be placed back home or in nursing homes. We are now down to about 150 for the entire province. In terms of the Aberdeen, at any one point in time we can have a few more in an acute-care bed than certainly what our goal is, and working towards that is being realized. If there is a concern at the Aberdeen, I'm sure I'll hear about it.

MS. MACFARLANE: There is a big concern in Pictou County, and that's what I'm trying to express right now. The cost per day of a long-term care bed in a nursing home or residential care facility is \$300 versus \$1,100 a day in an acute-care bed in the hospital, and I'll table that. Not only are these seniors not comfortable or able to socialize and start a new home, it is very costly to the taxpayer. Seniors paid their taxes and have contributed their whole lives to have the care and comfort they deserve. The government should have the foresight to plan ahead.

My question to the minister is: How many acute-care and emergency room beds are currently occupied by individuals awaiting transfer to a more appropriate facility, and when will they make that transfer?

MR. GLAVINE: I'll certainly provide the member opposite with the number, as of today, who are at the Aberdeen waiting for placement either in long-term care or to go home. As the member opposite knows, more and more are going home because there's no wait-list for VON nursing. In terms of other supports, as the member opposite knows, the wait-list for home care in Pictou County has also been eliminated.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: CROHN'S/COLITIS - MEDICATION CHANGES**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. It's recently been made public that Health Ministers from across the country have agreed to switch Crohn's and colitis patients from their current medication to a generic. There is no cure for these diseases; thus, medication is not one-size-fits-all. Many patients go through countless bouts of trial and error before they find something that works.

My question for the minister today is, does the minister plan to force patients and doctors to switch carte blanche from their existing prescription to another prescription - cheaper or not - knowing that it could have a negative impact on their health?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: If I haven't said this publicly, maybe the Legislature is a good place to make this statement. I reached out to one of Canada's experts who happens to be here at the IWK, Dr. Otley. We will have a no-switch policy - those who are currently on Remicade will stay on Remicade.

MR. HOUSTON: Thank you. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - LONG-TERM CARE: FEE INCREASES - NOTIFICATIONS**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. An individual in my riding is concerned about the increasing costs of long-term care for their father. The Department of Health and Wellness is supposed to provide 30 days' notice of any increase in fees for clients in long-term care. Today is October 20<sup>th</sup> and new rates are expected to go into effect November 1<sup>st</sup>; however, notices of assessment were late being processed this year and in some cases have not yet been received.

My question for the Minister of Health and Wellness is, if clients have not received letters from the department, are they still expected to pay increased fees for long-term care on November 1<sup>st</sup>?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I'm pleased to give the member opposite more good news - there will be no increases this year.

MS. MANCINI: That will be very interesting and happy news for my constituent. But over the past two years this government has made significant cuts to long-term care. My constituent was paying \$998 per month for long-term care. As of November 1<sup>st</sup>, he will be paying \$1,220, which is an increase of over \$200 per month.

Any increases in fees have a huge impact on families. Most Nova Scotians are not like those who recently paid \$1,500 for a ticket for a fundraiser with the federal Minister of Finance. That \$1,500 is my constituent's total monthly income. Can the minister please explain why the government is paying less for long-term care and clients are paying more?

MR. GLAVINE: What I was alluding to, of course, in my first response was that there will be no general increase in fees for this year, but we all know that there can be - obviously everybody's assessment comes back each year. There can be a change in that personal assessment where additional income was realized in one way or another. That could obviously change. As we know, there are different rates for residents in nursing homes. I would have to look at the individual case to determine if there is some anomaly that is going on.

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

#### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - COUPLES: PLACEMENT - PRIORITIZE**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness, and I hope he's still on a roll. (Laughter)

Last summer, Edgar and Theresa MacPhee were forced to move into different nursing homes. At that time the minister said he was very sympathetic and would look into their file. More than a year later we have another couple, Etienne and Delima Sampson, who are facing the same problem. While they have waited to get into the same nursing home, they've missed Etienne's 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday, their latest wedding anniversary, and also the death of a grandson.

Couples in their 80s and 90s don't have the luxury of time. My question is, what is being done to accommodate couples in the same nursing home?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Thank you to the member opposite for what I consider to be - personally that I started about 10 years ago advocating that regardless of the level of

care, husbands and wives, partners, remain together in a nursing home. During my time in office, as the member stated, we have looked after those cases that have come along. Unfortunately, sometimes, they are brought forward through the media because they are time-sensitive and so on, and perhaps the department hasn't dealt with them.

In the case of the Sampsons, we need to realize that one is in a nursing home and the other is not in a nursing home at this point in time. Mrs. Sampson was in a nursing home - she's on a list to get transferred back to Richmond County.

MR. HARRISON: I had the luxury of my sister coming home and looking after my parents at home - very, very fortunate - but a lot of couples don't have that luxury, that's for sure. Has something actually been put in place where putting those couples in the same nursing home is a priority?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for the question. I guess in terms of a policy, we are working towards that goal as cases come along. What I can tell the House today, and all Nova Scotians, is that this will be addressed with great clarity in the new continuing care strategy.

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

#### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: FUNDING - EMERGENCY REQUESTS**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Documents obtained by our caucus show that this government eliminated all non-emergency capital funding for nursing homes and residential care facilities in February 2016. A letter sent to the long-term care facilities by the Department of Health and Wellness stated that given the current fiscal environment, only emergency requests will be reviewed at this time.

This position was reaffirmed, Mr. Speaker, for 2016-17 in a memo on May 12, 2016. Does the minister believe it's acceptable to balance the books by putting at risk the state of our nursing homes across the province?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I am pleased to convey today is that when there are emergencies in homes across the province, the request is made to the department, and if there are any homes that haven't had that determined that it is an emergency requirement, then I would certainly, personally, as minister, look into those situations.

MR. DAVID WILSON: There's a trend with this government around cutting funding for infrastructure, not only in long-term care but in other health facilities. In May a Global News investigation found that this government had underspent the hospital infrastructure budget by 50 per cent, or \$72 million over the past three years. A month later, in June, the Auditor General raised concerns about inadequate funding for hospital

infrastructure. When will the government lift the restrictions on capital funding for nursing homes in this province?

MR. GLAVINE: With the current work that the department is doing in contacting every nursing home on an individual basis to assess current operational needs, needs that perhaps are short-term in regards to one of their appliances, or long-term structural needs, we'll have some of that coming at us very quickly as we prepare for budgets next year.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

### **TIR - E. MARGAREE ROAD: SLOPE FAILURE - REPAIRS CONFIRM**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: My question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. A slope failure on the East Margaree Road has become such a problem that traffic has been reduced to one lane, and traffic lights have been put up for safety of motorists. Previous attempts to fix the road have not been successful because the slope continues to erode.

Earlier this year, the minister commented that the government would fix it this year. Can the minister confirm that the road will be fixed this year?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Without question, when the member and residents from the area brought this to our attention, it became a priority for the local area, our department, and the staff that are on the ground there.

We are committed to fixing it and if time requires or allows, we'll be doing it this year. There's no financial constraint on that project, we are going to do it, we have to do it, it's necessary and we're going to do it as soon as possible, so if we can do it this Fall we certainly will.

It's a very significant project, the road has to be realigned, so there's design requirements that we have to proceed with. As well, we have to cut away the slope and basically completely realign the road. We are committed to it, I can tell the member and his residents, the people he represents. We'll get it done as soon as possible. We truly hope that it will be this year.

MR. MACMASTER: It has certainly been frustrating for local residents and people travelling through the area. It will be welcome news for the people of East Margaree to hear this. The minister hasn't framed up the exact time by which the project will be completed. Can he provide some details, perhaps when the tender will go out for this construction?

MR. MACLELLAN: I can certainly get that information today, and I can report back to the member in the House by the end of the hours here in the House, by the end of the day today.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: ALLY CENTRE  
- FED. FUNDING WITHDRAWAL**

HON. DAVID WILSON: The ALLY Centre in Cape Breton has received funding from the federal HIV and Hepatitis C Community Action Fund for over 24 years. Just a few weeks ago, we learned the federal government's decision to withdraw funding from the ALLY Centre. Among other critical services, the centre runs a needle exchange program across the island. Cape Breton has some of the highest rates of hepatitis C in the country, and one quarter of the cases here in Nova Scotia; 70 per cent of those cases are attributed to people sharing equipment to inject drugs. I would like to ask the minister, will the Minister of Health and Wellness please explain what this government plans to do to prevent the potentially devastating effect on Cape Breton of losing these services?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I'm pleased to say that I have visited the ALLY Centre, and it's a good time and place to commend the staff there who do exceptional work. Their compassion and professionalism is really to be commended. They're working with some very, very difficult cases. With the loss of federal funding, we now have to do a review of what their needs are in the short term and in the long term. It is a very, very important service to that community.

MR. DAVID WILSON: It is the responsibility of the Nova Scotia Government to protect the health and well-being of its citizens. The ALLY Centre was one of two sites in the province to receive funding for a pilot-project program to provide naloxone and anti-overdose kits. Cape Breton Island has the highest rate of opiate overdoses per capita in Nova Scotia. These kits are key to preparing for a possible public health emergency caused by the increase that we see across the province of fentanyl use. I'd like to ask the minister, how will the government ensure that the loss of federal funding does not negatively impact the naloxone being run out of the centre on Cape Breton Island?

MR. GLAVINE: What I want to convey here is that we know in Nova Scotia we have to be proactive regarding fentanyl and carfentanil possibly coming here into the province. In order to be proactive, I have given the task to Dr. Strang to look into all of the areas regarding methadone and suboxone, naloxone - that whole area - to make sure that we are doing enough to protect those very vulnerable citizens.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: ORAL CANCER MEDICATIONS - FUNDING**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I've asked this question, I would say, for the last five or six years, of different ministers in this House. I know I've asked the Minister of Health and Wellness here about this one as well. It revolves around the issue of oral cancer medications - basically oral medications that you can bring home to treat your cancer, rather than receiving the intravenous kind. My question to the minister is, has he reviewed it, and will he be funding at-home cancer medications?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: To be fair to the member opposite and all Nova Scotians, a few seconds will not allow me to explain what is actually taking place in regard to the review. I'll be pleased to report . . .

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

**GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

**PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 22.

**Bill No. 22 - Halifax Regional Water Commission Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to move this bill forward through second reading. To clarify for the sake of the House, there are three main changes that are included in this proposal.

One, we are clarifying that HRM Council has final authority on the business plans that are developed by Halifax Water. That is to ensure that the business plan of the Halifax Water Commission is in line with the desire and strategies of council.

We are also moving the Halifax Water Commission to a competency-based board. Previously, the majority of seats on the board were made up of members of council.

Council has wanted to change that so that members of council can sit on that board, but it will be a competency-based board, so members of the public can also fill those seats.

The third major change in this is related to privatization and engagement with another private utility. We have made it very clear in the Act enshrined in the law that there will be no engagement with a private utility, to ensure that water, which is intended for the public good, remains in the hands of the public.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I do anxiously await the comments of my colleagues opposite, and I move that the bill now be read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for his comments. When I went to the bill briefing, I originally thought it was more or less just a housekeeping bill and felt very comfortable supporting the bill.

Basically, the Halifax Regional Water Commission Act, the changes to it - there are really four different aspects in it. The first is clarifying the ownership and talking about the corporation without shared capital investments. The second one basically improves board composition, which would alleviate some administration tasks - which is good, once again.

The third thing would clarify existing powers of the Halifax Regional Water Commission. I believe originally the mayor always had to sit on the board; now he doesn't, but he could be one of the four members out of the HRM Council who would sit on the board. And the last was the new approvals by HRM Council, which lists a number of housekeeping points as well.

But as I dug a little bit deeper into this bill, and once I sat down with my caucus and considered the bill, the question that always came first to the table was, how does this piece of legislation affect people? Does it make life easier? Is it easier on the pocketbook? Does it improve services?

With Bill No. 22, I have to say I'm hard pressed to find a way it makes life easier or better for the people of HRM, especially those individuals who are residents of Hammonds Plains - and by the way, I have received a number of calls from some of those residents.

I asked myself, does Bill No. 22 actually improve services? Absolutely not. Does the bill give people an easier way to interact with their government? No. Does Bill No. 22 give citizens a stronger voice at the Water Commission? Absolutely not. Does the bill solve issues for people in the HRM, like the ditch tax? No.



We look at the ditch tax, which is particularly frustrating to the residents of Hammonds Plains. That's approximately 15,000 people in that area, who all of a sudden, without any type of consultation, without any type of warning - there was no mail-out to them, there was no phone call, there was no way of addressing them - they just automatically put \$39 on their tax bill. If you dig deeper, it's known as the "ditch tax."

People who have never paid the Halifax water bill are now being charged the Halifax Water ditch tax. As we know, many of these individuals, these taxpayers, are people who have their own wells and their own septic systems, and they pay hundreds or thousands of dollars a year to ensure that their water is treated properly. They pay to have their septic tanks emptied, and that is all at their own expense above what they pay in taxes, so the people in Hammonds Plains feel like they are being charged twice. It's unacceptable; they pay high property taxes; and they assume that if there is a ditch in front of their property that that would be included in their property taxes, not that they would have to receive another tax bill.

So we all know that the cost of living in Nova Scotia is going up and people are finding it harder and harder to make ends meet. They see the ditch tax as a money grab, and they definitely don't feel they're getting any value from it. So residents, especially once again in the Hammonds Plains area, are frustrated. We've heard from many of them in that area and they feel they are not being listened to. They even formed a Facebook page - and I would suggest that anyone in this Chamber go and review that Facebook page and read some of the comments and the frustration that these 15,000 people are feeling.

So, once again, this bill is a housekeeping bill. It certainly has brought some administrative changes that would help those that are administering the paperwork, but it certainly has brought nothing to the taxpayers of Nova Scotia. I believe that's where the bill falls down, so perhaps if the government wants to come back and actually take this opportunity with this bill to add a few things that would actually help taxpayers, I would definitely consider supporting it, because as I mentioned the four things that they have highlighted are good things, but it certainly has a factor of not containing the things that taxpayers of the Hammonds Plains area are really looking for.

If I just take a moment and read actually - there was an interesting comment in *allnovascotia.com* - and I will table this after I read it - but basically Peter Polley writes:

"I would suggest that you request to attend the next Halifax Water board meeting and see what the response is regarding the ability for members of the public, stakeholders and the press to attend. I recently asked to attend one and was told that - unfortunately - Halifax Water board meetings are not allowed to be public . . . I would call upon the Liberal government to make Halifax Water board meetings public so that all members of the public and stakeholders can attend. Most people are unaware of the 'elephant

in the room' with Halifax Water's MULTIBILLION-DOLLAR long-term capital plan."

This gentleman claims that he has been ". . . more engaged than anyone as an outsider in the Halifax Water world, but there remain a large number of questions - simple common-sense questions asked repeatedly by stakeholders - that are not being answered." He suggests that he would ask that a number of people contact the Office of the Minister of Municipal Affairs ". . . and their local MLA immediately to express their desire to make the Halifax Water board meetings available to be attended by the public and stakeholders." They absolutely have the right, and they should be able to attend these meetings. They're paying a tax, and I can't believe that we're not allowing them to come into these meetings and actually be able to comment.

So I would ask the minister to consider thinking this bill over and seeing what else maybe you can add definitely to help these residents and, if nothing less, to allow them to at least attend these meetings and voice their concern. I mean, that's only fair. So I will table those comments of that gentleman.

Once again, the four original things that were outlined, changes with this bill are definitely good things, and I'm happy to see those things, but it does basically lack the opportunity for the public, the taxpayers, the ones who are being charged - and, once again, 15,000 people in the Hammonds Plains area that once again were not consulted, did not receive anything in the mail, didn't receive a phone call, nothing, letting them know that they were going to be charged this extra \$39. I mean, that is just a breakdown of communication which is very unfortunate. They don't deserve that. What they deserve is to be able to go to these meetings and voice their concerns. I mean, really at the end of the day, it becomes an environmental issue. We all know that we can't go without water, so they definitely have the right, or should have the right, to go and voice their concerns.

Until this bill can do that - and I would feel much happier knowing that the taxpayers and their issues are being addressed - I don't think I can support the bill, but perhaps the minister will consider making some adjustments and accommodating the taxpayers in their requests. With those words, Mr. Speaker, I will take my seat, thank you so much.

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

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, just to make a couple of comments in response to the statements by the member opposite, I will say I know there have been some concerns expressed - those concerns have been expressed to me by particularly the member for Hammonds Plains-Lucasville. I will say, for the sake of the House, those are not related

at all to these changes or the conversation that we're having around changes to the Halifax Regional Water Commission Act.

The member has also suggested that more needs to be done on the accountability side to ensure that the decisions being made at Halifax Water are transparent, that the public can properly avail themselves of that information and participate in those decisions, which is exactly why we are ensuring that Halifax Regional Council, that is a democratically elected council, responsible to their citizens, they have final say on what these business plans are.

Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, members of the public can attend council meetings. So final authority on these business development plans is actually with the democratic Government of Halifax, so I think that that will actually, and should, alleviate the concerns that the member expressed because we are absolutely ensuring that those who are accountable to the people, and those meetings that the public is able to be at, is where these final decisions are made.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will close second reading on this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 22. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 33.

**Bill No. 33 - Fences and Detention of Stray Livestock Act and Fences and Impounding of Animals Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to rise today and move Bill No. 33, Fences and Detention of Stray Livestock Act and Fences and Impounding of Animals Act, now be read for a second time. I'm pleased to be here today to talk about this bill streamlining the approach to managing issues related to agriculture fencing and stray livestock. Our government is committed to reducing confusing rules and legislation, wherever possible.

Mr. Speaker, we have consulted with the municipalities, the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, consulted with municipalities themselves, and also with the Federation of Agriculture. The Federation of Agriculture has asked us to make sure we have a committee in place, a Fence Arbitration Committee, which we have provided for in this legislation.

This will eliminate one bill and streamline the operation. From our records we can't find where this bill has really been changed since 1900, so it's about time the bill was changed. With those few comments, I'd be very anxious to hear the comments from the other Parties of the House.

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, yes, I am pleased to rise to my feet today just to say a few words about this. I also don't have too much to say about it. It's a very old bill, and it does need to be streamlined, as the minister has said. The Federation of Agriculture is also in support of this, and they have done consultations. They've had meetings with Municipal Affairs, the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities and the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture. I talked to them quite a bit. If they don't have any problem with this, I certainly don't either. I will wait to hear as well from others and probably speak to it on third reading.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: I, too, would like to say a few words about this bill. Sometimes what a bill doesn't contain is just as interesting as what a bill does contain. I certainly welcome a bill from the Minister of Agriculture on this issue of fencing. Clearly, this is primarily about the cattle industry. As the minister has said, this is steeped in the history of the province. The cattle industry at one time was a formidable industry in the province, and fencing was a very large issue.

I know from talking to the federation just recently that they see one or two issues per year on this subject of livestock at large. I know in Kings County we have. We no longer do simply because the farmer who had cattle at large passed away. That issue has gone away now that there's no longer a cattle farm on that site.

As a boy, I can remember cattle on our farm going loose. I can tell you that if you have poor fences, your cattle will get out. If you do not feed your cattle, or you do not provide them water, it doesn't matter how good your fences are; they're going to get out. If they are hungry or thirsty, they're going to get out. However, this was an issue.

It's interesting that we're dealing with an issue of fencing, that the Minister of Agriculture is bringing this issue before the House, when there are so many other massive issues in agriculture at the moment. We are talking about something that is fundamentally an issue from the last century primarily. The tools to deal with the issue for the one or two incidents per year are already there currently and are not fundamentally being altered.

This is fundamentally a housekeeping bill. I'm kind of surprised to see that when we have so many other large issues in agriculture in the province. I want to sort of contrast

that. Even if we just talk about fencing in the cattle industry, at one time in the 1920s, we had nearly 400,000 cattle in the province, and I can table that. In 1921, we had 334,000 cattle in the province. The latest statistics I found just casually looking were for 2009 of 88,000, and I don't think I want to table one of the library's books. The number of cattle in the province has been in very big decline. I would have preferred the minister to come forward with a bill to have altered that trend, not simply amended the fencing Act.

In fact, if we talk about fencing, the way that fencing is done has been radically altered in the province too. This is about barbed-wire fences and posts, really. I don't know how much you guys know about barbed-wire fences and posts, but what happens is, when you take a small spruce tree and pound it into the ground and put barbed-wire on it, it will rot right down at the level of the ground. It might look like it's fine, but in fact it's not even attached anymore. It's just waving there.

One of the things that this bill will repeal is the fence viewer. At one time, there was a fence viewer who would get paid \$5 a day. So this bill is cleaning that up. I notice that we haven't yet dealt with the snow shovelling. Apparently, there's a mandate in our Acts somewhere that we can compel somebody to shovel snow on the roads for \$10 a day. We haven't cleaned that one up, but we're getting rid of the \$5-a-day fence viewer. Obviously, if \$5 a day was considered a pretty fair wage to send somebody out looking at fences, that's a pretty old bill. It's going back pretty far in history.

The reality is that kind of fencing isn't really - it's still out there, but fencing has moved on. For a couple of hundred dollars, you can buy a Gallagher electric fencer, and I have one of those. It's good for 21 miles of wire. It will send an electric shock out along your 21-mile strand, which is a pretty large area. For very little money, you can fence it. That electric fencer runs on solar power and runs day and night, you don't have to - it's really pretty maintenance-free. In fact, there was a gentleman a few years ago who I met, whose name I no longer recall, who had invented the best machine ever for pounding in the spruce tree fence stakes, and thought he was going to make a lot of money on that, and would have, except for the fact that this electric fencing came in.

The reason this electric fencing is important to the industry, and to the cattle industry in particular, is because in the cattle industry there has been a radical change in the way that the farmers fence in their cattle. This again, this bill is so far back in history that it doesn't reflect this at all.

In our time now, we have intensive pasture management. This system came from New Zealand. Basically, the reality is, if you have 100 acres of grass you can have 100 cows on it. The standard was one acre per cow and, obviously, it takes a lot of land.

In New Zealand, they determined that a lot of that fodder, the grass on that acre, was being trampled by the cow, not eaten. So what they did was they took those 100 acres and with this inexpensive electric fencing, they divided this 100 acres up into six, or seven,

or eight paddocks, called intensive pasture management. They take their 100 cows and put them on 20 acres and they'll go in, and just clean out those 20 acres. Meanwhile, the other 80 acres can grow without being trampled on. Then a few days later, they'll move to the next 20 acres and so on.

This has allowed the numbers of livestock on 100 acres, or whatever acreage you have, to double or maybe more than double.

The rate of moving them is really dependent on the season and what you are doing with your 100 acres, but if it's in the very driest part of August, you might need to move them a little quicker, or if it's when the grass is rapidly growing, likely the grass will get ahead of you, and you take your machinery and you cut the hay, cut the fodder, the grass that the cows can't keep up with and you put that in silage or hay, whatever the case may be - likely not hay, likely silage. So the rate of movement just depends on how swiftly these cattle are eating.

The reality is that fencing has by and large gone electric. There was - and the one or two incidents per year are, again, rooted in history. Most of my adult life I had a neighbour named Bob, who kept a few cattle. That kind of guy who - and I don't want to say too much about Bob, he has passed away - probably couldn't read and write, but knew how to keep a few head of cattle and did it as a hobby. I don't know about Bob's books, but - probably all under the table, and that type of operation, they're really kind of almost now extinct but this is where some of this problem, that type of operator, this is where this problem arises.

The modern farm, and we see very little of this coming out of our - in fact, to my knowledge, no dairy farms have this sort of situation. There are so many opportunities in this province for the cattle industry to go forward, and here we are talking about something from the last century, so I find that a little bit baffling.

I say that I find this interesting in what the bill doesn't say, as much as what the bill does say. Obviously it's hard not to be against housekeeping. I know in our own home we get the children out to school before we look after the housekeeping. So we do what we consider to be the most important things first, and deal with the housekeeping later.

Where are the important things? Where is the opportunity for the beef industry to go forward in this province? Clearly, as I already mentioned, in 1920 we had 400,000 cows in this province. I know that I've heard that in the past century, 100 years ago, there would have been 100,000 cows on the Tantramar Marsh. So the next time you drive to Moncton you think about that, when you go across that incredible Tantramar Marsh and you look out across that marsh and you see those - if you look off in the distance you'll see one or two sort of isolated barns. Those barns are also steeped in history. At one time the Tantramar Marsh was dotted with those barns, there were hundreds of them. They would put the hay from just in the immediate area of that barn, up in that barn for the winter,

because the cow couldn't keep up with the growth of the hay in the summer, obviously. That kept 100,000 head of cattle on that marsh.

One time, on my own in Kings North in what we call the dyke, which is the grand dyke, which the Acadians called the grand dyke, which encapsulates about 5,000-6,000 acres. There would have been 12,000 cattle around that, which would have been bound on one side by Church Street, and on the other side by the Highway No. 341, and now, there are no cattle on that dyke. There's one dairy farmer, and I believe he keeps the cattle, as I said - this is primarily not an issue for dairy farmers, cattle getting out - but there's one farmer with cattle there.

At one time, in Kings County, that dykeland, which is probably some of the most productive land in the world to produce grass, was worth twice as much as what we call upland - my farm is on upland. On upland you can grow potatoes, cabbage, wheat, whatever. On the dykeland, it's primarily only good for the grass, because you never know if you're going to get your crop off in the fall. If it gets wet, you're not getting anywhere; that stuff turns to sticky mud. We have, in fact - and the Tantramar Marsh would be the same situation - it's really best suited to producing grass.

I know that in the EGSPA goal for this province, once of the things was that we would be 20 per cent self-sufficient by 2020, I believe. Where is the Minister of Agriculture in terms of that EGSPA goal, and where are we on that? I have no idea, and maybe the minister knows, maybe he can tell me. I know that when I started farming 30 years ago, I believe we were about 20 per cent self-sufficient in food in this province, and that number has continued to decline every year since. A large factor in that has been the decline in the meat industries. The hollowing out of the pork industry - the collapse of the pork industry and the beef industry has been a big part of that. We have so much opportunity here in Nova Scotia to make those commodities come back. In fact, grass-fed beef represents a glittering opportunity for us.

In the beef industry, what happened was that in the 1950s and 1960s, they figured out if they fed grain to beef cattle they would have more white when you had your steak in front of you - the fat would have a whiter colour. So largely for a colour issue - not entirely, but largely - we went from having grass-fed beef to grain-fed beef. Also, obviously, the cow will gain weight a little quicker on grain than grass, and so the cow gets a little fatter - marbling, it's called. There's a little bit more fat in that meat, and that makes the meat slightly more tender.

Is it better for you? I highly doubt it. Is the meat more flavourful? Well, I can challenge you to go down to the farmer's market and buy some meat from grass-fed beef from my friends at Getaway Farms which is up on the North Mountain in Kings North. I would maintain that grass-fed beef is every bit as good, if not better, than grain-fed beef, and likely better for you, and what a cow is intended to eat, I would say, is grass. Where is that industry now, and what are we doing with those Tantramar Marshes? But we're talking

about the fencing here, so I've got to get back to fencing. Fencing is obviously important to the minister.

Housekeeping - as I said, we do housekeeping in my home, but we make sure the kids get out to school before we do the housekeeping, so what is this? What are we talking about here? We're talking about fencing, and I guess I have a problem with that. I don't believe that we are focusing on the right thing here. I don't believe that this is, in fact, an issue in the province anymore. I say it's steeped in history.

I can remember on our own farm as a boy. The cattle got out. It seemed like they always got out Sunday morning when we were heading off to church, and it was just a massive nuisance. I can tell you that in rural Nova Scotia if your cows got out, everybody helped, so the neighbours and everybody would stop and help. In fact, I can remember maybe about 10 or 12 years ago, I was driving down Highway No. 341 about six o'clock at night from Kentville to Canning - about halfway - and there were cows out on the road. We stopped and helped the elderly gentleman - he's now deceased. He had his cows out, and he was just in a panic, and we helped.

That's usually the reaction in any neighbourhood in Nova Scotia and always was, if the cows got out. However, if the cows keep getting out repeatedly, time after time after time, it engages the municipality. It engages the tools in these bills. These tools are here. This isn't really altering the tools. As I understand, and as the minister mentioned, the federation was quite keen to keep its committee process in place, that they could have a couple of farmers to deal with it, who they could appoint for the municipality.

As it stands, usually the situation is that these committees become inactive and fall by the wayside, and then when a problem arises, the municipality has to go back to the legislation and see the tools they have, strike the committee, and start to deal with it. Because there's so little problem with this issue, it takes a little bit of time to get them geared back up or up to speed, to get that committee struck and all that stuff. So there can be a time lag in dealing with some of these things, currently, because there are so few incidents.

Is this the most important thing facing agriculture in this province today, cattle getting out, and this bill which refers to barbed wire and to spruce fences? I have an issue with that. I think, Mr. Speaker, that there are other issues I would maintain are more important right now and are not being dealt with. I can think of a number of them. We have an issue right now in the blueberry industry with very low prices, where blueberry producers don't know what they're going to do next year and are trying to decide if they're going to invest - next Spring, are they going to buy honeybees to put out there to get the production up if they lost \$10,000 on there?

In fact, a friend I was talking to a couple months ago was facing this issue. He has 15 acres of blueberries in Cumberland County, and he lives in Kings North. He cycles those



every other year, so eight acres every year are producing. He lost about \$10,000. What's he going to do with that blueberry production? Well, he may be glad to know that we're amending the fencing bill; I don't know if there's any cattle around his blueberry patch or not.

It's a huge issue for him. I mean, there are many big forces at play here; I'll admit that. It's a daunting challenge. But surely we could have something we could be talking about, the crisis in the blueberry industry. What are we going to do to support the blueberry industry? I know there are supports in place currently. I'm sure the minister could outline them at length. But surely this is not the most pressing problem in agriculture right now.

I think of the beekeeping industry. I just mentioned bees; they are very important to the production of blueberries. I know from talking to bee inspectors that they were not happy with the way things transpired this year with the inspections, with the small hive beetle. I know the minister and I talked about this - I don't know if it came to the floor of the House, but what happened was, in southern Ontario, there's a small beetle. It looks a little bit like a sap beetle that you would see sometimes if you're having your drink and you're out in the yard for a while outside, you get those little black beetles that get in sap. They're called a sap beetle.

This same family - not the same beetle, but the same family of beetle - will get into a beehive and eat the honey. The problem is that they spread a fungus, and that fungus will ruin the honey. The inspector I talked to said that the intent of the inspection was - I think it was a good intent and a good plan by the minister, but the execution was a little bit doubtful. The beekeepers had to go from Nova Scotia on their own dime to Ontario, inspect those, and then recover that money from the province. But it was the busiest time of year, and I can tell you, for a farmer, if you want to have a meeting with farmers, you don't want to have a meeting between May 1<sup>st</sup> and November 15<sup>th</sup>, because they aren't going to come out. They're busy. They want to work.

The beekeepers are busy in the Spring - it all happens at the same time. They all have other things to do, and you're asking these bee inspectors to go to Ontario on their own dime and then get recovery. It was a difficult process for them, and I'm not positive they were satisfied with the level of inspection and maybe that will bear looking into.

We certainly want to keep this small hive beetle out of the province, if we can. At the same time we recognize that the blueberry industry does need this pollinator, it's crucial to the yields. At the same time we know that in fact we have too many blueberries and the price per pound is going down. I don't know how you unsnarl that big knot, but it seems to me that this is a more important problem than whether the fences are looked after. In fact, I would maintain that by and large the fences are being looked after and the tools that were there that in this bill were already there to look after the fences. So I just question the logic of that.

Another issue which I think is far more pressing than this one is global warming. We see right now that in this last weekend, and we're talking about it in the House, we got 10 inches of rain in . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'm compelled to ask the member to bring his comments back to the topic of the bill, not what's not in the bill, if he wouldn't mind.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I will attempt to do so.

My point was, is this the most pressing issue in agriculture? This is an agricultural bill and I was giving examples of other pressing issues that I believe are in agriculture. I believe there are many, many more pressing issues in agriculture than this. I don't know if the minister believes that; we haven't had a lot of bills from agriculture. I can think back over the past number of bills that we've had and this fencing bill is one - while housekeeping is important, we've had that debate in the Legislature before. Is housekeeping important, should we do it? Obviously we should.

I believe this bill does not really reflect what the industry wants to see from the minister. I would like to just point out that I do have in front of me a document, which is the Federation of Agriculture Standing Policy, and I can tell you that fencing is not in this policy. So the Federation of Agriculture Standing Policy does not include an issue with fencing.

Now I think if we went back to 1921, when we had 400,000 cattle in the province, maybe fencing would have been one of the standing policies of the Federation of Agriculture. I did not have time to look up the standing policy of the Federation of Agriculture from 1921. I could do that, I'm sure; I'm sure that's in the document somewhere and I suspect fencing was an issue in 1921 when we had 400,000 cattle in the province. In 2009 we had 88,000 cattle in the province, and I would venture to guess that the number - and I trust the minister can update me with the most up-to-date information - likely less than that.

So we still have cattle, we still have fencing needs. As I said, fencing has moved on, this is part of the history of the province, barbed wire fencing. I know that as the West was won and the ranchers, if you remember the play Oklahoma, the rancher and the farmer should be friends - that was about fencing.

Fencing has been with us for barbed wire fencing, which is really what this bill is about and the inadequacies of that type of fencing, and the fact that it does not stand up is what this bill is about. Mr. Speaker, I continue to have an issue with that.

I know I was mentioning our dyke systems in this province and those dyke systems were built for cattle, really. When this land was settled it was easier to build a dyke and get land to farm than it was to cut the trees down so the Acadians - the original settlers in the

province - found it less work to reclaim land from the ocean by building dykes than to actually chop the trees down, so they could more quickly get going. That was for the cattle industry - they were raising sheep and cattle on that and turning that grass into food for themselves. That is why I want to say that the state of our dykes, I believe, is a much more pressing issue.

If we look at global warming and a once-in-a-200-year event, the rainfall we just had, if we had a one-in-a-200-year storm surge on our dykes our communities would be devastated. Amherst would be devastated, Kentville, Wolfville, Truro, Canning, and no, a fence would not make any difference.

This is a responsibility of the Minister of Agriculture. I have heard the Minister of Agriculture say that in his opinion, which I would beg to differ with, his responsibility is only for protecting the farmland, not for protecting the communities. But we know, in fact, that all of these early communities that were settled early in the history of the province were settled because they were close to water, and all of them are at sea level.

It's the minister's responsibility to protect us from a storm surge. He is responsible for the dykes system and we are talking about fencing. If we had a one-in-200-years storm surge, we would have the equivalent - and less than 200 years ago, we had the Saxby Gale. There are photographs of that, so that goes to the time of early photography, which is about 150 years ago. We had a massive storm surge across all New England and Nova Scotia, that's a once-in-200-years event.

We saw a once-in-200-years event last weekend, so I would maintain that these types of things are important, and what is the Department of Agriculture doing about that? But we are talking about fencing here. I'll just say that in all seriousness, I do not believe this is the most serious issue facing our Department of Agriculture, to deal with.

As I've said, I believe in housekeeping, but I believe that you get the work done first, and then you get the housekeeping done. The work is things other than this. There are so many other issues that face agriculture today, in our province, and here we are dealing with something that is steeped in history, which was important when there were 400,000 cattle in this province - now less than 88,000 - how is this bringing us forward?

I notice in my reading that, as I said, the EGSPA goals - where are we on the EGSPA goals for our province, for 20 per cent self-sufficiency? Surely, as the minister is bringing forward a bill which is essentially talking about cattle and sheep, surely becoming self-sufficient again in cattle would be of benefit to our province.

What happened is that industry moved out West, and as I've said, it's because of grain, and also because of one strange little item with cattle, and that is that a cow that is wet is going to mind the cold more than a cow that is dry, even if it's far, far colder. So a

cow in Winnipeg at minus 40 is going to be happier than a cow in Nova Scotia in the winter at plus 1 and wet. But those things can be dealt with too.

The cattle industry, the livestock industry, needs something more from the minister than a bill on fencing. We need to get back to where we were in the past, in terms of agriculture production.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I believe there are a number of other issues much more important. This is a housekeeping issue. It is one that I believe that is so far back in, it's baffling me that it would have come to the fore right now.

I know I was talking to a constituent of mine about two months ago, whose parents live in another county, in fact they live in Lunenburg County, and they have this exact problem with a neighbour with stray cattle in their yard. I don't want to say the community because that would probably identify them. In fact the discussion went to the municipality and animal control, and the responsibility of the municipality is to deal with this. Clearly all the tools are there for the municipality to deal with it.

Does it mean that it can't be straightened out a little bit? Sure, certainly everything can be straightened out a little bit, but in fact, there is nothing new in this bill to help that municipality deal with, as far as I know - and maybe the minister can enlighten me on how this improves the situation. It simply straightens it out a little but as far as I know, there's no improvement to it. I can tell you that it is a serious issue, and I would not make light of the issue of having your neighbour's cattle on your property, having it happen repeatedly, and not knowing how to deal with it. I know that those issues are very, very serious issues. I do not make light of that at all when I say that I believe there are more serious issues for the minister. What I am saying is that I do believe that the tools necessary to deal with that were all here and have not been improved or altered.

It has simply been two Acts made into one. I understand that one of these Acts applied to Cape Breton but not mainland Nova Scotia, I believe, so clearly there were some things in this all being straightened out.

I do want to be on the record as saying that I realize that if it's your neighbour who's got the cows loose, and it's your land that the cows are trampling on, this is a very serious issue. In fact, a very good friend of mine a couple of years ago had about a \$25,000 loss of crop on account of this very issue, and I do not believe that he received any recompense from it in fact. It was just part of the ongoing frustration of having a neighbour who was not really properly feeding the cattle. As I said, if your cattle are not fed, it doesn't matter how good your fences are, the cattle are going to get out. It's a very, very serious livestock management issue. I do not want to make light of any of those issues or the fact that this is a very serious issue.

As I said, from my boyhood, I can remember our cattle getting out. It wasn't all that uncommon. In fact, when my father bought the farm, he didn't even want to have cattle. He was a crop man through and through. He didn't like cattle at all. But he was told by the Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board that no farm in Nova Scotia could function without cattle. He was forced to have the cattle, and he kept them until he had got ahead enough that he could sell them all and be rid of that. He was not a livestock man. I've often wondered if I wouldn't have been more happy looking after cattle. I didn't share his opinion about livestock. Anyway, we never did get there.

So I do recognize that, as with anything, it all depends on whose ox is gored and what's going on. These things can be very difficult to deal with when it's your own neighbour and this is not being done correctly.

I would maintain - and I would encourage the minister to provide the statistics on this, if he does have the statistics on this - that this a problem in decline. The number of incidents in a year would be less than 10, I'm sure, probably one or two. In fact, I know of one that has been cleared up by the fact that that farm is no longer functioning. I know of two other incidents of this type of thing sort of under way. So I know of two. Maybe the minister knows of more. Maybe this is a serious problem that I have underestimated.

However, as I've said, fencing has moved on. The world of fencing has changed. The management of cattle has changed.

I don't believe that the issue was ever really there with sheep. It did apply to sheep; there's no doubt about that. At one time, there were hundreds of thousands of sheep in the province. The documents that I tabled already would outline that in the 1920s and 1930s there was an immense number of sheep in this province. The issue with sheep, of course, is that, being a small animal, it will go through a very small hole. They're very vulnerable to predation from wild animals, and farmers are compelled, really, to put in very high-quality fencing simply to keep them in or lose their sheep. Whereas with cattle it's a little bit less clear. They're a much more hardy animal and much more able to survive in the wild of the neighbourhood without being fenced in and not as susceptible to predation.

Where does this all leave us with this bill? As I've said, while I recognize the seriousness of this issue, I believe that this bill is really not progressing the needs of agriculture in this province, not really furthering the cause of agriculture. I don't believe it's really dealing with the issues that the minister has to deal with, the many profound issues affecting agriculture in our province, the decline in agriculture that we've seen from what was likely a peak in this province in the 1920s to now - when probably in the 1920s the Margaree Valley would have been farmed, the Musquodoboit Valley would have been farmed, there would have been more farms in Pictou County than in Kings County, and all of Annapolis County would have been farmed. Every farm would have had 20, 30, or 40 cattle on it; they would have been 100-acre farms and there would have been thousands of more people involved in agriculture. All of this land is there waiting to be farmed again.

It's all grown up in trees. The opportunities are immense for our province to produce more food, become more self-sufficient. I believe the Ivany goals have that in them.

As I said, I'm disappointed to be talking about a housekeeping bill on fencing, recognizing that this is not a trivial issue but can be a serious issue, but is almost certainly - and I stand to be corrected on that if the minister can tell me how many incidents there are in a year and why this was important to be dealt with at this moment in time, then I'd be interested to know that. It makes it difficult for us to support this bill because we don't believe this is really getting at the heart of what Nova Scotia needs right now, and I would be very pleased to hear the minister tell me why he believes this was the most important issue on the agenda of the Department of Agriculture at this moment in time.

I'm sure our mutual friends in the industry - I know he has many friends in the industry - were likely scratching their heads on this one too. If this is the most serious issue that we are facing in the agricultural industry and even in the municipalities - and maybe there is a municipality that wanted to have the two bills brought into one, without any real, substantive change to tools in the bills. Maybe there is a municipality that wanted to have the fence inspector who got paid \$5 a day, maybe there is someone who was looking for this. I would suggest to you, I would think that in our province there are more substantive issues, more serious issues. I believe I had mentioned a couple; I could mention more. As I say, this issue certainly does not leap out at you on an NSFA policy paper.

I think I've heard the minister say that he wants to work very closely with the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture. I know that he does - I don't know if I've heard him say that, but I'm certain he does. I know that any Minister of Agriculture in Nova Scotia would have a very close and co-operative working relationship with the federation, other than the fact that the federation wanted to maintain the opportunity to put people on this tribunal or in the Act.

I don't believe anywhere in my experience in agriculture in the last 30 years have I heard anybody say, my goodness, we've got to get that fencing bill updated and cleaned up. I can't remember hearing that in the last 30 years. I've heard lots of comments on many, many other issues, Mr. Speaker, and certainly when I talk to my farmer friends in Kings North, I can't say that I've ever heard any one of them mention the fencing issue to me. So I have to wonder where this came from. I know the minister will have an opportunity to explain at length, I'm certain, why this was a serious issue.

In fact, I can say I wish it was in another sense that we had more young beef producers in the province who had the skills, and as I said - I mentioned early in my talk about my neighbour, Bob, who had 10 or 15 head, and was essentially uneducated but knew how to raise beef. He kept reasonably good fences, but the skills that Bob had are largely lost. There aren't really that many young people today who even know how to keep cattle, and I'm not sure that I would even have an easy time of it. Certainly, there's some education required there in the skills necessary, and I would be much happier to be talking about a

bill to improve the ability of our citizens or young people to keep livestock, than to be talking about the fencing. I think that would be much more worthwhile. I think you can learn to fence in a few minutes. As I said, I have an electric fencer that I wish I used, and in fact, it's used for another purpose. We know that there are bears on North Mountain, and I have a fencer around my beehives just in case a bear shows up and wants to ruin my beehives. So far we haven't had a bear.

Fencing is becoming incredibly easy to install and do and move around. As I've said, the world of fencing has significantly altered from 100 years ago, when this bill was likely first penned - or maybe even further back than 100 years ago - when this was a serious issue and they obviously had many, many incidents of poor fences. The issue with fences is that they can look good, but they're really worthless if all of the posts have rotted off at the bottom. It depends on what species of wood you use to build that fence, but the one species of wood that would last, which is hackmatack or larch or eastern cedar - it goes by three names - if you built your fence out of that wood, your fence would last 50 years. All the other types of wood that are available - spruce, all those types of spruce - aren't going to last more than four or five years.

This issue was a huge problem at one time, but no longer is a huge problem, in my opinion. It is disappointing to be in the Legislature and have before us, after four days of being here, a water bill - which I have to say I haven't looked into closely, so I don't know much about it, and I recognize that that may involve serious issues too - and a fencing bill. I wonder, where is the government business before this House right now? Why are we here if this is the most substantive?

I realize that another bill has come before us this morning, earlier today, that I haven't seen. So there are three bills.

Obviously the Minister of Agriculture thinks this is important. His staff must think this is important. I would encourage him, if he had more housekeeping bills like this, to put them all together into an omnibus bill and let us deal with them all at once. I'm sure there are other parts in all of the Acts, in the many Acts in the Legislature - in fact, I seem to recall that there's a bill on warble flies that has never been dealt with.

Warble flies are no longer an issue, but they were an issue at one time in this same thing, in livestock. That bill has never been repealed. That's going back, an old bill - I'm sure there are many, many old bills in agriculture that could be tidied up, so we're dealing with this one. I would certainly be willing to look at an omnibus bill to tidy them all up at once, but to be here talking about this, when there's really no other business before the House on agriculture, makes me wonder where the priorities are, Mr. Speaker.

I'm disappointed at that, to be dealing with this bill, and I will vote against it - not because I am against the intent of the bill, but because I am against the intent and the priorities of the minister. Are the priorities of the minister the right priorities? I have to say

that when I read this bill, I don't see anything forwarding the Ivany goals in the bill, and I'm not sure how this would promote agriculture. In fact, I'm not even sure how it makes life easier for any of the municipalities, and I would welcome the minister's explanation on that.

I think the bill maintains the same tools that the municipalities had to deal with - they're exactly the same, just in another bill. I could be incorrect on that, but that's what I read. So it doesn't even improve the conditions for the municipalities, which is the primary intent and target of this. It doesn't really change anything for the federation. It doesn't really change anything for the offenders.

As I've said, the problem that this bill is solving becomes less of a problem each year. The offenders who we know are out in the community, if I could characterize the demographics, would probably mostly be very elderly people who have been keeping a few cows all their lives. We are slowly losing those people who would be the demographic of the offender that we had in Kings North.

In some ways it's unfortunate because those skills and those abilities to do this are then lost too. So where are we with agriculture in this province? If this is what we get from the minister, we get a bill on fencing, on cleaning up one little aspect of two fencing Acts, putting them into one. Is that the priority of this department or this House?

Without a lot of other material to talk about in front of us on agriculture, we have to say, Mr. Minister, review your priorities please and take a look at what really does matter to this province. There are so many large issues that do matter to us. I would maintain that fencing is not one of them.

As I've said, I've never had one of my neighbours in 30 years tell me that I should be worried about the fencing. I will tell you in fact one valuable use that the fencing does have, though: it tells us where our property lines are when we walk in the woods looking for the old property lines, we look for little bits and strands of this old fencing. That is a very worthwhile thing to find. These property lines were very carefully marked out by the fences, so if you find a few strands of barbed wire then you know you're on the property line and you know you had better not cut that tree down because there's steel in it. So that, in fact, is a useful use of these ancient fences.

This bill does not promote, I believe, in any way the Ivany goals, it does not promote in any way, I believe, what I really believe and I'm sure I've heard the minister say, he wants to see agriculture go forward, he wants to meet the goals that we have for exporting and for the growth and for putting off, for holding back imports.

I brought up other matters about agriculture, very low prices for agricultural products. I brought that matter up and do not feel I've really had a satisfactory answer yet from the minister on that issue, on why we have such low cabbage prices, such low



zucchini, other crops, all that stuff, in all seriousness. I know that my neighbours would be much more interested in the answer to those questions; in fact, that is a question my neighbours have asked me.

In fact, my neighbours have asked about dumping into our province of agricultural product from other provinces and how that can happen and whether there's differential subsidies in those provinces. I haven't really heard an adequate explanation from the minister on that subject - that has been asked in this House.

But here we are with a fencing bill and there are so many issues in agriculture that I cannot fathom that this is the one that we are talking about. For that reason alone and to make the point, to my friends in the industry, that I do not support this type of thinking, that we are going to focus on these small problems - small, small problems, things that are hardly problems, that are problems in decline. I cannot fathom that and I cannot let my friends in the industry know that I would support the minister in this type of activity that is really not progressing anything in particular, not even really benefiting the municipalities, really not substantively changing anything, not even adding more penalties in for failure to feed your livestock properly or any of that, it's not in here. Maybe the minister would answer that that is in regulations.

This is a bill I cannot support, for that reason: I believe we are focusing on the trivial here, by and large - not saying that if it's your neighbour and the neighbour's cows are on your property, that's not trivial, but the Act has already got that in it. All we're doing is window-dressing here, putting two Acts into one.

I realize that somewhere there's a book that keeps all these Acts and we can put two into one and maybe save a couple of sheets of paper in that book, but other than that, I'm not sure what we gained out of doing this activity. And here to talk about it - now, I'm sure my colleagues in the House must think, why take time to talk about a bill if I think this bill is not that important? Why take time to talk about it? It's to make the point that there are profound issues facing our agricultural industry and we need the minister to deal with those issues in a substantive way.

This House is where we bring in the overall, big-picture-type bills that steer the direction of the industry - things like the EGSPA goals which have had a profound effect on renewable energy in the province but had goals on agricultural production, on agricultural usage, on young farmers, and whither is that? Where is that? And where is the legislation to enable our agricultural industry to go forward and meet those goals? Where are the priorities?

In this priority, Mr. Speaker, which I cannot support, I cannot agree with the intent of the bill to simply just tidy up the small things, and as I've said, housekeeping in our family - we looked after the housekeeping after the important things were done, after the big goals were completed. As I said, after we had the kids off to school, then we dealt with

the housekeeping, but in the morning, when everything was happening all at once, we got the kids off to school.

The important things have to be done first, and priorities are important, and signals are important, and even small signals are important. This small signal - to who I'm not sure - this small signal to the industry, I'm sure that if the industry is listening, and I'm sure some of them are. This is a small signal of what? What is the minister intending to signal with this bill? That we are worried about a problem that is in decline? We're not providing any new tools to deal with it? We're simply combining two Acts into one? We're worried about the content of our own bills, but we're really not progressing any particular goal for our agricultural industry, we're really not dealing with any of the pressing problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

We're really not dealing with any of the substantive problems facing our province with this bill. This bill is dealing with one very narrow problem which continues to be less significant and even if something was added in - and I'm certain that that's in another bill - about feeding your livestock properly, and giving your livestock water, because as I've said, I know that if you don't feed your cattle, it doesn't matter what kind of fence you have. They're going to get out, and they'll go right through anything, and they're very large, powerful animals. If, in fact, they've been bred to be docile - and that's one of the reasons why fences work, because they have been specifically domesticated for that purpose to be - if you have a 1,500-, 2,000-pound cow, a fence is not going to stop it - but they are of the mentality, of the mindset, to be docile. That's part of the breeding that's been intentionally bred into these animals.

As I was saying, this bill does not substantively, in my opinion, address any of the major needs, many of the major issues, facing agriculture. This is the one bill we have had from the minister this session, and possibly the minister has three or four more substantive bills in his pocket. I would welcome that. But in lieu of that, I have to signal my protest at this by indicating that we will not support it, and with those few words, Mr. Speaker, I'll take my seat.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable member for Pictou East.

**MR. TIM HOUSTON:** Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise this afternoon to speak about this important topic of agriculture, and my colleague is completely right. It's an important part of our economy, and when you look at this type of bill that comes forward - and it's the pattern that we see from this government - where there are many, many housekeeping bills, but very little direction from the government on a vision for the province.

We saw that right from the Speech from the Throne - very, very light - no vision, no direction, no plan, and this is the bill that kind of fits that MO. That's the way this government works, just tidy up around the edges. It's kind of like the parent says to the

kids, this week I need the yard raked and I want the car washed and somebody put away the laundry, and then the kids says well how about if I close my bedroom door? Okay then, and nothing gets done except the minute things. It's not good enough.

It's important for me to stand up today on this bill as well because our traditional - it's always important in this province that we look for new industries and we try to grow industries, but we need to support our traditional industries as well, our fishing, our farming and the things that really are a big part of our history.

When I look even in Pictou County, it's home to a variety of agriculture. We have a range of production from fruits and tree nut farming, all the way through to a variety of animal productions. It's an important part of the economy and just in Pictou County the most recent statistics I had, just for Pictou County back in 2010 - and I thank the Pages for helping me pull this together - in Pictou County in 2010 the farm receipts for Pictou County were \$20 million. That's a significant amount of the economy of Pictou County. The expenses against that were about \$16 million, so they netted out \$3 million or \$4 million in profits. That's a lot of money flowing through Pictou County from agriculture.

If you look at the number, we talked about cattle today - we won't talk about a number of the other different farming things but if you look at Pictou County, in 2010 there were 277 cattle farms. Now to give some flavour to what my colleague was talking about, I did go back to the Nova Scotia agriculture reports. I went back to 1921 - my colleague was talking about back in the 1920s what might have been the case. Back in 1921 - now bear in mind, Mr. Speaker, I just said there are about 277 cattle farms in Pictou County - in 1921 there were 2,756. If you think about the decline in the farming industry over that time, that's pretty dramatic. It's a hundred years but that's a pretty dramatic decline.

Out of curiosity I went back through the reports to see what was important to the farmers at that time. Even back then, in the 1920s, with almost 2,800 cattle farms in Pictou County alone, in the reports - nothing about fences. It wasn't even a concern back then when there were 10 times as many. There was all kind of interesting stuff happening back in that time frame, Mr. Speaker. The province held the first egg-laying competition back around that time and that was quite a big deal; in fact it was such a big deal that they were oversubscribed. They were prepared for 30 entrants in the egg-laying competition and they had 36.

Interestingly enough, they attributed much of that success to some advertising help provided by the province. The province paid for some advertising in the paper to try and draw people into the egg-laying competition and it was a successful venture. I don't know that they had the size of the communications department back then that the Premier enjoys today but, nonetheless, it was effective in getting people into the egg-laying competition back at that stage.

This is an important industry and it's all too often an industry that is overlooked for a variety of reasons. I think this just furthers that. When the only bill we have in agriculture is this bill on fencing, it's really a shame. Yes, it's important to do this one but, as my colleague says, let's actually get to work on some of the real issues facing agriculture. I've looked through the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture's standing policy for this year, and there's nothing in there about fencing. It wasn't something that they're concerned about.

I'll tell you what they were and are concerned about, Mr. Speaker. One of their primary concerns is the rural infrastructure deficit. Certainly fencing would be part of rural infrastructure for farming. Maybe the minister feels that this will go to address some of the rural infrastructure deficit with this bill today, but it's not what Nova Scotians are looking for.

When they talk about a rural infrastructure deficit, they're talking about the state of some of the rural roads. You don't have to go too far around Nova Scotia to find how some of these J-class roads and K-class roads and all the other classes of roads that we have, how the state that they're in makes it pretty much impossible to do business up there. I was down in Lunenburg talking to some Christmas tree farmers down there, and they said, we'll take you for a ride up the road that we would need to use to go harvest Christmas trees. It's completely impassable. There's a whole segment of land up there that they can't farm.

That's what they're talking about when they're talking about a rural infrastructure deficit. They're not saying, let's deal with the fencing issue. They're saying, let's deal with the real issues that are holding Nova Scotia back. What they're looking for is the people in this Chamber, the people with their hands on the levers of government, as Alexa McDonough might say, to actually use those levers to drive the province forward. We're not seeing that. It's completely devoid of any leadership, and it's just housekeeping. It's just housekeeping. That's fine. It's nice to do a little housekeeping, but it's also nice to have a house to live in to do it in.

That's what we really need to get to. If we want to help the farming industry, if we want to help the people in agriculture, we need to get to the issues that matter to them and show them that we care about these issues, that we care as elected officials and that the government cares about them as well. They could start with something like addressing some of these rural roads, the state that some of them are in. With the overgrown weeds and deterioration of the ditching, the roads are falling away in many cases.

That's an area where we could start. That's something that the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture would like to see the government start to work at. They're not saying, can you please help us with this fencing crisis we have? They're saying, can you please help us grow our businesses? This government has a chance to do that, and thus far has decided not to. It's a real shame.

When they talk about the rural infrastructure deficit, they're talking about the technology deficit that we have. In fact, I think the United Nations said the Internet is a human right now. Just like all the basic human rights, Internet is one. If you have high-speed Internet or if you have Internet, you may be dismissive. But then if you go to visit a relative or something and try and stay a night or something with somebody who doesn't have it, you understand how critical Internet is for kids doing things like their school assignments, to do banking, or for any range of things you need it to do.

But it's not just a necessity. In the farming community, technology has advanced tremendously as well. Now the state of our rural Internet, i.e. we don't have it, really limits farmers. They can't use the latest technologies. That's the type of thing we should be recognizing, that it would be appropriate for a government to say, okay, we understand the hurdles. We understand the significance of the hurdles, and we are going to work to address them.

I don't even think, Mr. Speaker, you would need to say you're going to address them today. You just have to acknowledge that there's these things that are holding us back. In agriculture, there are a number of things holding back the industry, yet we hear nothing about it. People are noticing and people are approaching us as my colleague from Kings North said, and they are asking, where is the leadership? Then to have to go back to those people and say well we've seen the leadership and they're going to deal with the fencing situation, it's pretty tough to swallow.

I would have been at least a little bit more satisfied if the minister would have included in this bill some changes to the Margarine Act of 1949, because I find it completely appalling that if you don't properly advertise that the food establishment you are running does not serve margarine, the law requires you to state right on your menu or on the information you are providing your customers, that margarine is served in these premises. If you don't, you could be subject to a \$100 fine or 30 days in jail. Mr. Speaker, I was always very concerned when we had the Sergeant-at-Arms turnover, and when Kenny left us I was very concerned that maybe there's a bunch of people incarcerated, possibly in this House, for that very offense, who might have forgotten to be released or whatever.

If we're going to do these kinds of housecleaning bills, those are the types of things we should be addressing because in many respects it's on the same scale. This Legislature could sit all year and it could sit all day and do housekeeping bills, but what we have an opportunity to do in this Chamber is actually do things that produce positive, meaningful impacts on Nova Scotians - and that's what's missing. We could be sitting here today talking about, debating important changes to the agriculture industry and we could be talking about things that the farmers want.

I know the members opposite think it's a big of a giggle, right, because what do they care? It's just a bunch of farmers, maybe, to them, Mr. Speaker, but it's actually people

in the industry who are being held back by a lack of leadership and the lack of vision by this government. Today it's the agriculture industry and tomorrow it will be another one because that's the way it is, because until we actually see some leadership we're going nowhere.

It wasn't that long ago in this Chamber when we talked quite a bit about Gordon Fraser and the abattoirs across the province and the need for more of those and the need for people to be more self-sustaining in their own lifetime, in their own lifestyle, around their own homestead - having some turkeys, having some chickens, having a couple of pigs, having a horse, whatever the case may be, and some cows. Maybe this bill moves us back toward that lifestyle, maybe this fencing bill and having this nailed down will encourage more people to be more self-sustaining in their lifestyle.

But then at the other end of the spectrum, they won't be able to get any of their animals harvested. So if we want to show that industry that we support it we should listen to the things that matter to it and we should try and make some changes that are positive, that are helpful, that are productive - and there's a whole host of them. You don't have to recreate the wheel, you don't have to make them up, you just have to get the Legislative Library here to print off the Federation of Agriculture Standing Policy Statements and the things they want government to work towards, things like scale-appropriate food regulations. Imagine that.

We know that there are significant amounts of agricultural land that are no longer in production. They're overgrown for a variety of reasons - they're overgrown with weeds, small trees, and those types of things. What I would like to see is the government starting to address that, to think of ways that we can help put that land back into agricultural production instead of just letting it overgrow. There could be some programs to help farmers on that, and maybe we'll see that from this government going forward. We certainly haven't seen much of that just yet.

My concerns about this are pretty significant - like my colleagues' and my caucus'. I think Nova Scotians should understand that this is what's happening here - just minor tinkering around the edges. Not even on the edges; not even on the same table, to be honest. But there's so much we can do. This bill is a symptom of the way this province is governed. We all deserve better. We all have a right to expect better.

I hope that, however much longer this government has in its mandate, they use the opportunity and their majority government and the fact that they have every federal MP to actually harness that capacity for the good of Nova Scotia. Instead, they are harnessing that capacity to bring legislation like this forward. There's so much more that could be done.

With those few words, I would take my seat and hope that the members opposite took a little bit of motivation from my words today, and maybe come back to this House with some stuff that's meaningful. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to stand and speak for a few moments about the bill that is before us. (Interruption) I promise it's a few moments; I hear that from the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. I thank him for his hard work in Cape Breton these last few days. I know it has been rough on him to get everything organized because of the flood, and we wish the constituents there all the best. (Applause) But God forbid that there might be a fence in the way, because this bill might be required to be able to clear some land here.

I think Bill No. 33 is indicative of a government that's sort of scraping at trying to find something to discuss in this House of Assembly. I find it funny that we've been here since last Thursday, so we've been in the House of Assembly for one week now, and I think we've had the introduction of four government bills. I think two came today, or one came today, so there might be only three.

The content of those bills - including the one that's before us, Bill No. 33 - is nothing more than housekeeping, I guess is what we've called it. I think my two colleagues in the House of Assembly who sit with me underlined a number of very important issues in the agricultural industry that need attention by the Department of Agriculture and by this minister.

This bill does very little for anybody. I'm sure there's a situation out there that is pressing, a number of livestock animals that are running around on the loose, that need a little bit more of a heavy hand to get the owner of those animals under wraps or behind a new fence. But quite honestly, the tools are already in the hands of the Department of Agriculture to be able to address those. It's also in the hands of the municipalities themselves in the regulation of these things anyway.

Mr. Speaker, Argyle-Barrington is probably not known as the agriculture centre of Nova Scotia, yet there are a number of agricultural opportunities there, some of them requiring some fencing. One of them, I can use the example of my friend, Arnold d'Eon, who is a sheep farmer. I remember the other morning when we went to breakfast, as we meet in the group at the Hickory Hut every morning that I'm available in my constituency.

Arnold was late one morning, and he looked a little tired already by the time he had arrived for breakfast, but he has just spent an hour or so trying to get his sheep back in the fence, as they had found a way to get around the fencing that he did have, so that they would remain safe. But as they are off gallivanting around the community, it does cause - and I understand the issue of fencing, and why we have fencing, and why we have regulations around fencing - if they are off gallivanting around the community, they're a hazard of course to drivers, they are a hazard to homeowners, of course they are a problem for many of the neighbours there, when an animal does get out of the fencing and is at large.

I have to see a little bit of why we have a bill like this before us, to deal with situations like that, so that the enforcement officers have the opportunity to have a strong piece of legislation behind them so that, should they need to have some kind of action towards the owner, that they do have - I guess you would say some teeth - in why they are fining an individual, and the regulations that would be set forth by a bill like this.

Argyle-Barrington has a number of agriculture opportunities, a number of farms that require fencing, like mink farming, but mink farming needs a different type of fencing, not really held within this bill. The fencing required by mink farming is more of a biohazard-type situation where you are trying to stop other vermin, other kinds, or even wild mink, from getting into the mink farm to contaminate the health of the animals on the farm. AD, or Aleutian disease, is well-known within our constituencies of Argyle-Barrington and, of course, Clare-Digby, and one that needs biosecurity in order to try to stop it from getting into your farm and, of course, trying to stop the spread of that disease from one farm to another farm. That is not in this bill - how you deal with that biosecurity kind of fencing.

What we find, depending on the costs, or depending on the engineering - you can travel through my community and the member for Clare-Digby - and you can find a number of different ideas on how to do that. Some of them are pretty solid and, of course, some of them are pretty free to allow animals to flow in and out of those farms.

While I'm on the topic for a few moments of mink farming, which goes to the issue that the two previous speakers spoke about, is that when we have an industry in crisis, why don't we have a bill talking about that? Why don't we have the government being more forthcoming in how they are helping out those industries? In the particular case of mink farming, they have been in decline over the last year or year and a half, due to the pricing of the animals. The costs to grow a mink is somewhere in the range of \$45 per animal, which doesn't seem like a whole lot, but the sale cost right now of that pelt is \$20. So on every animal that is being sold right now off those farms, they're losing \$20 to \$25 per pelt. They can only sustain that for a certain amount of time. What we've seen is a number of those farms going out of business, going bankrupt. The Farm Loan Board has taken back some of those loans, at a cost, of course, to Nova Scotians.

Why aren't we talking about that in this House of Assembly? I know the farms that I represent are having a tremendous time trying to get themselves through this crisis so that when the price of these pelts goes back up, they're able to recoup some of their money.

But they can't invest in infrastructure, such as the fencing that I talked about a little earlier, to truly work on the issue of Aleutian disease. There are a lot more studies going on how to have mink that are Aleutian disease-resistant. They have different colouring. Of course, that requires a fair investment by those farmers in order to get going to be able to change their facilities over so that they are Aleutian disease-free. Again, it revolves around the biosecurity that's needed in order for those animals to remain Aleutian disease-free.



Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, I don't know about Kings South, but I do believe there's a number of farms near you or not too far from you that are mink farms.

All of those facilities need to be protected and talked about. Should there be something that we could do here in the House of Assembly by way of an Act, then why isn't that one here? Like I said, it has been a year and a half that mink farming has been taking a really big hit. Why aren't we trying to help them in that respect?

The other thing that I wanted to go with here, because we are talking about the beef industry, and I would say maybe sheep farming as well - those are the two big users of fencing in this province. In beef, for instance, we're still not that far down along the road since we had borders closed for beef exports. We're not that far away from when we in Canada were dealing with the BSE crisis. We have a lot of farms that of course were lost. The pricing of beef went way down. Today, it would amaze anyone to see the price of beef where it's at and to have those open borders again. As a matter of fact, it was just at the Summit of the Americas or whatever they call it when the three amigos get together - the Prime Minister of Canada, the President of the United States, and the President of Mexico - it wasn't until that meeting that Mexico actually opened up its borders for Canadian beef once again. That's a long time ago. That's 12 or 13 years ago.

AN HON. MEMBER: You were just a young fellow.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I was just beginning my career here in the House of Assembly. I was just the Minister of Agriculture at the time.

What we're trying to impart upon government is that there are very important issues in our agriculture industry. It's not an industry to be just pushed aside and, every once in a while, come out with a little bill, and that'll make them happy. There are a number of issues to them that are important to them.

The other one that I think is important because we're talking about bovines, we're talking about cows and beef, is why aren't we talking about the issue of CETA? Why aren't we talking about the free trade agreement with the European Union? There is a connection between our industry, mostly our milk industry, in relation to that. We know as the border opens up for more cheese from Europe, it displaces a number of those milk products for production here in Canada so that we're not able to produce that same amount. Why aren't we talking about CETA?

I hope that the minister, after he listens to our concerns about the agriculture industry here in Nova Scotia that go beyond Bill No. 33, is able to come back to us and talk about CETA and how he plans to address that with milk producers here in Nova Scotia. They are concerned. They're concerned in Quebec, they're concerned in New Brunswick, and they are concerned here.

More specifically too, if you look at what the two previous speakers talked about where there are a number of issues that are done in concert with the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, they always, every year, make sure that they lobby with us; they lobby us quite heavily. I don't know if anyone's noticed that in this House that the Federation of Agriculture lobbies us quite well as a matter of fact. They have a very good way of dealing with agricultural issues in Nova Scotia - they make sure they come to our caucuses, they make sure that we understand the consequences of our actions as we make decisions, whether it's on carbon pricing, whether it's going to be on Internet, whether it's going to be on taxes - maybe even on fencing.

But I can tell you, the last time the Federation of Agriculture was in our office, I don't recall them ever talking about fencing Acts. I don't remember it, and I'm pretty sure my colleagues didn't remember it, and just maybe we got a different presentation than the Liberal caucus did in this particular case. But this one wasn't here. This is not here. I don't know why we're doing this, quite honestly.

So, if we needed to do this, Mr. Speaker, I think a better way to do it would have been for the minister to come with a more of an - I guess I don't like the word "omnibus" bill, but maybe an agriculture update bill. I'm sure there are many other bills specifically within the domain of the Department of Agriculture that need updating. I mean, we're just talking about 1921, but I'm going to bet there are a number of bills there that are very, very old that need review. I would suggest that if the Legislative Counsel within the department, the lawyers, the policy people, I'm sure they have a number of other ideas that they would have liked for the minister to have come forward that would have been, I would say, housekeeping in nature, that they could have put together a more comprehensive bill, one that would have been more worth the time to discuss and one that we could have actually had a true debate on the value of agriculture in Nova Scotia.

The value of this industry in Nova Scotia is what? One billion dollars or more - of course mostly driven by the dairy industry, driven by the mink industry, driven by horticulture, driven by beef, and you can go down the list, chicken, turkey. I mean, all of those I believe warrant our inspection, warrant our review in this House of Assembly. If there's good news to be said, I'm sure the minister will find a way to say it. If there's a concern that we hear as a caucus, as an MLA, then of course we would bring it to the floor of this Legislature.

I know the minister won't take this personally as much as I think maybe others would, but our beef - pardon the pun - is not with the minister so much as it is with the approach that we've had for legislation in this House of Assembly. I mean, God forbid that we get together once in a while and talk about it together. Hey, here are some Acts, or here's some legislation that we might like the government to bring forward and we could work together.

We've had all summer to come up with new legislation. The government has a full armada or a full army of Legislative Counsels and lawyers within the department who work on legislation, policy people who have their ear to the ground of things that need to be updated, that we should have a stack of legislation in this House of Assembly this Fall - and it is a great opportunity during Fall to work on that other piece of legislation in this province because you know the Spring is taken up by the budget and that does take a fair amount of time because of the estimates. But the fall, Mr. Speaker, is a great time to bring a list of comprehensive legislation that we can discuss, that we can understand, and that Nova Scotians can feel that their House of Assembly is doing its job.

Mr. Speaker, what we have again here today is a bill that is brought in for the sake of counting a number - right now two, we're stuck on two - and we had a third one brought in today. (Interruption) Yes, we could get at that discussion, too, because I remember the Government House Leader, when in Opposition, went at length - I enjoyed it when he went at length - taking offence to the New Democratic Government at the time for bringing in very, very small pieces of legislation, very short pieces of legislation, one or two clauses, only very few words. I did enjoy his debate on that. He spoke very well when it came to attacking the New Democratic Party's legislation.

What I find today, what I find ironic, is that once the sides are changed, the new boss doesn't look any different than the old boss. There is really no difference in the approach. Do you know why, Mr. Speaker? Because behind these people are some of the same people who bring these ideas forward, who have been trying to do it for years, and whether the ministers are truly paying attention to their departments, bring forward stuff like this.

This one somehow punched through the list of things that the Minister of Agriculture had to bring forward in the Fall sitting of the Legislature. Instead, I'm sure there's probably a list of 20 other items that the department wanted him to bring forward but somehow through this process this was the only one that made it.

My comments, as far as this bill, are ones that, on principle, I think I can agree that there need to be updates to these pieces of legislation, but on the overall premise of why we're discussing this bill today is the fact that I don't agree with it. I don't agree with the piecemealing of departments, of legislation. Let's get on with the true work of what we do, as MLAs, and that is have substantive changes to how we do things. There needs to be vision and leadership in how we bring these things forward and how we truly change the way government does its work.

Now, I know the Minister of Business is going to stand at some point in the next few days, talk about red tape reduction, talk about the good work they're doing and yet do you know what? It's going to be a very short speech. What we find is that the total number of (Interruption) Well I can even hoist this, if you want, so you can either listen or not, that's up to you.

The point is that when you have pieces of legislation like this, it's really hard to do the tally of how much legislation is impacting Nova Scotians, and how much the government is actually trying to save them in red tape reduction. In a bill like this, which is only a few lines - and I can't remember what I did with it - it truly doesn't, I don't think, create red tape, yet I don't think it gets rid of any, it saves a little bit of red tape - maybe on the municipality side - I think is the only true thing, so really I think this bill might have come from the agricultural industry, but truly, I think it came from the municipalities - the municipalities maybe asked for it at some meeting somewhere - but truly, it came just for the sake of having a bill here before the House of Assembly, just to be able to count it, so when the Government House Leader counts off all the legislation that he did this session, this is a tick mark.

I know previous governments did it too so I'm not going to say we're complacent in that one. But let's bring some good pieces of legislation to this House, let's bring pieces that truly affect the day-to-day of our constituents, truly help the agriculture industry, or any other industry that we are interested in doing.

So if the Minister of Justice is here that she has something substantial, that if the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is bringing something forward that's substantial, and the same thing goes for the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, and the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal - that they all have something that we all can agree with that is going to make life better for Nova Scotians. That should be the first checkmark on any checklist. Does it make life better for Nova Scotians? On this particular case, I can't put a checkmark on it because I don't know. I don't think so. I don't think it does much, I don't think it makes better neighbours, but is that my job, to make better neighbours between neighbours? Maybe the lawyer over there that I'm seeing comment on it, maybe he has some concrete examples of the complaints that happen because of free-range animals. But, really, really is that why we do it? That should be the first thing.

The second question we should always ask, is it going to cost anything to Nova Scotia? Is it going to cost anything? And I don't think this costs anything, yet it might mean a few people are going to have to upgrade their fencing to keep their animals in, I'm not sure. Does it mean that there's going to be a bigger stick to be wielded by compliance officers? I don't know. That costs money. So, is there truly a savings to Nova Scotians in this particular case? Does it make their life better? I don't know...

AN HON. MEMBER: Ask Jean Laroche.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: There you go - maybe we'll ask the media to do an in-depth CBC response on this one, whether or not this is going to make the life of Nova Scotians better.

So, just to wrap this up, because I don't want to belabour it too long - I think we could probably go a little longer on this, but I don't think we need to. The point is, there's so many other issues that I think the Minister of Agriculture should be dealing with - he could have done this on the side, or there could have been something else that could have come forward - but he needs to deal with the issue of abattoirs, he needs to deal with the issue of mink farming, he needs to deal with the issue of CIDA he needs to deal with the issue ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please, order. Could I ask the members to keep the chatter down as the member for Argyle-Barrington concludes his remarks.

The member for Argyle-Barrington.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Thank you. So, let me just get this into the record, and I will happily take my seat and pass this off - but the standing policy for 2015-16 from the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture: condition of rural roads, excessive dust regarding rural roads, technology - which is poor Internet and cell service, regulatory burden - how many times have we heard about regulatory burden? This is a little piece of regulation - expanding or bringing new agriculture land into production, land bank, Crown land, zero taxation to farmland, energy, production - almost there - and trying to adapt to, I would say, regulation that matches, or harmonizes with other provinces. Those are the things that the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture wants this minister to deal with, wants this government to deal with, and we didn't see it here today. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to this bill.

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

The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest as my colleagues wasted almost three hours on a bill that they said wasn't important. Anyway, that is a matter of debate.

Evidently, they didn't read the bill. They didn't read it at all. This does give the municipalities the authority to make bylaws and rules around farm animals that go astray. The only way they can get this now is they have to come to Cabinet. Over a period of time, we have to do an R&R to Cabinet to put each individual municipality in that position, and it's too late at the time if they have a serious problem in the community. So that does give them that authority and it does take a lot of red tape away, eliminates it.

My colleague, the member for Kings North said that there's no real reason for this, absolutely no reason, but the law says that for every day, and he talked about beef and it's more than beef here, but for every day that an animal the size of a head of beef, it's 20 cents a day to keep that animal if you seize it, that's all you can charge a day.

I can tell you from our department we see some animals for other reasons and it costs \$1,000 a month to maintain these animals. So a municipality or the province or anyone who would be responsible for looking after this animal would get \$6 a month and it would cost the taxpayers \$1,000 a month in reality.

I guess that's not important to the Opposition, it doesn't matter. The member for Kings North said there's no incidence of this anymore, but he talked about his neighbour having serious crop losses. Those are serious things that you can't recuperate from, and try to get compensation for that.

He also talked about gathering up cattle off the highway. You know we talk about this and with the Opposition members who aren't going to vote for this bill think it's okay if a large animal gets on the road. (Interruption) Yes, the Opposition - the Progressive Conservative Party, I should say, we're very clear the Progressive Conservative Party is saying this - that if someone ran into one of these animals after dark and someone got killed in a vehicle, that's not important? It's not important at all? So when you don't vote for this, keep this in mind. When you think about this, this is simply cleaning some things up. It's making it a lot easier for things to happen.

The members across there said we're not making any progress in agriculture. Well in three consecutive Throne Speeches in this House we've identified agriculture as one of the key avenues of growing Nova Scotia's economy and we're acting on that. The proof is in the last year alone we increased exports out of this province by 21 per cent. We're moving very close to meeting the Ivany report on our exports. In agriculture and in fisheries we're just about there and that's in just three years. The other Parties over there, neither Party could do any movement on that.

Agriculture today is a very important part of our economy. We look back on Throne Speeches back to the 1800s and we could not find any place that the agriculture and the resource industries have been given such a high profile by government to grow the economy. (Interruption) And if you don't believe me, look for yourselves.

The member was heavy-handed for stray animals. (Interruptions) The honourable member who just finished speaking said we've got to get heavy-handed with the stray animals. Well I guess being heavy-handed with stray animals in his view is 20 cents a day and that's what the bill says now. We're going to change that so a municipality can become as heavy-handed as they want, through the bylaws that they will be allowed to pass now on their own without coming back to this Legislature to do that.

With those few words and all the very important things that the Opposition has brought forward, with questionable reasoning, I would move to close debate on second reading of this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 33. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Government Motions.

### **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I move that the adjourned debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne be now resumed.

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

MR. GORDON WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure if I should apologize to all those people out there at Leg. TV at this point in time.

I'd like to begin by saying (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'd like to caution the member to not address the public through the television.

The honourable member for Clare-Digby has the floor.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I certainly would like to apologize for that.

I'd like to address the Speech from the Throne for the Third Session of the 62<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the Nova Scotia Legislature that was brought forward to us on October 13<sup>th</sup> by His Honour Brigadier-General the Honourable J.J. Grant, the Lieutenant Governor.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start by saying how proud I am to have represented the constituency of Clare-Digby over the last three years. We've been able to achieve many things and help many people since we've been elected. Our Liberal platform continues to be seen as well-thought out, and more, achievable.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the Premier on behalf of the constituents of Clare-Digby. Your leadership over the last three years has been recognized and appreciated by everyone that I have met on the street, on the doorsteps, and in meetings.

I would also like to congratulate all of my colleagues, who have been elected to serve in the House of Assembly. You continue to be a source of inspiration and guidance to me. You continue to show the ability to maintain the confidence of the voters you represent, and I congratulate you all.

In preparing for speaking today, I reflected on my first Address in Reply. I took the time to review the key points I made three years ago, when I stood for the first time in this House. There were five key initiatives that I addressed that day: the electoral boundary review, out-migration, health care, Villa Acadienne, and Highway No. 101. I would like to briefly touch on each of these and what I see as progress to date.

The people of Clare still see the elimination of the Clare constituency as an overstepping of the former Attorney General's authority. We all know and remember that the elimination of the Clare riding did not reflect the will of the residents of Clare or the boundary review commission. There were requests made to the previous government to come to our communities and listen, but these requests were ignored.

Mr. Speaker, I have listened. For the last three years I have listened to my constituents, and I will tell you today that the residents of Clare have not forgotten. I recently had the privilege to attend and listen to the Supreme Court hearing regarding the Charter challenge of the boundary review. We all know, in the months coming, what their decision will be. We will also know, for decades to come, what was thought by the residents of Clare of the previous government and their actions.

This is how my riding came into existence. I was elected to represent the fine people of Clare-Digby, and I will, each and every day. As I rise today on behalf of the people of Clare, I do so with a lot of pride.

Another area that I spoke of was out-migration of the citizens of our area. This was seen as the number one threat to our rural economy. Many discussions were had with my colleagues and the Minister of Immigration in the first few months after being elected. I was extremely proud to talk of the good work our minister has done over the last three years.

More immigrants have made Nova Scotia their home in the first six months of this year than in all of the last 10 years. We saw a total of 3,418 newcomers arrive in Nova Scotia between January and June of this year. This is slightly more than the 3,403 who arrived last year, which was a previous record year.



Since December, we have welcomed more than 1,000 Syrian refugees. Three families have settled in my area, and I am very proud of how the community has come together, welcomed them, and made them part of our community - a wonderful addition to our communities.

We have developed a new immigration pathway for international students who have a job offer from Nova Scotian employers. We have launched the new immigration stream called Nova Scotia Demand: Express Entry. This will provide a faster route for more skilled immigrants to enter Nova Scotia in response to labour market demands.

We have entered into a new era. As a result of the good work of the Minister of Immigration, we have finally stopped the population decline that has threatened our rural communities. I would like to personally thank the Minister of Immigration for the tremendous work that she has done in that area.

Health care has continued to be my major daily focus of work in the community. I believe we have finally found what is to be the answer to a health problem that has plagued Nova Scotians for decades. The new Health Authority has finally seen a way to move forward on a plan to build primary health care models across this province. The lack of doctors in the Digby area has gone on way too long. The lack of doctors in the Weymouth area has gone on way too long. The good work of the clinics that we have - and I have five of them, in Bear River, Freeport, Meteghan, Weymouth, and Digby - is a tremendous asset in our community.

This is the result also of a lot of work by someone who we will someday recognize as our true champion in health care. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pass on my personal thanks to the Minister of Health and Wellness for leading the way in the last three years. Many hurdles have been overcome by his work for generations to come. The development of a collaborative health care practice will ensure stability and long-term solutions for doctor recruitment in rural under-serviced areas.

The last two successive governments have promised the replacement of la Villa Acadienne. I might say they never followed through on those promises. The people were beginning to lose hope that this would ever happen. One of my proudest moments was the commitment by our Premier to see this long-term care facility finally replaced. I know the process to have things such as this moved through government is slow. I would like to thank the residents of my riding for their patience. Our commitment to have this facility replaced is happening as we speak. I would like to thank our Premier and our government on behalf of the residents for their support.

I'll talk of another promise. I would like to comment on our promise regarding Highway No. 101. Again, this sat dormant for many years, decades. The people who live along this busy and dangerous section of road called a 100-Series Highway truly appreciate the fact that work is commencing this winter, something that successive governments for

decades never addressed. I am so pleased that this project is proceeding on time and will see ground broken this Spring. The continuation of this highway is a necessary part of completing our 100-Series Highways between Yarmouth and Halifax, which, by the way, is the only unfinished section of the key 100-Series Highway network in the entire province.

These are short summaries of the five key areas that I spoke of three years ago. Today I am here to tell you that we have worked hard and followed through on what we planned to do with action. These are things that the people of my riding can relate to. I am so very fortunate to have the support of my government, my ministers, and my Premier.

After three years, I would, more than ever, like to thank my wife for her continued support. Deidre, this job would be unbearable without you there to make each and every day one with guilt as I would leave the house for long hours . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I appreciate the sentiment of the honourable member, but please do not directly address someone who is outside the Chamber.

MR. GORDON WILSON: My apology, Mr. Speaker, again. I know that each and every member of this House can relate to this and I truly pass on my thanks.

Mr. Speaker, I have also been very blessed to have a loyal executive in my riding which has supported me since being elected. It has been humbling to see how much time each and every one of my supporters took to get me elected and are working hard to get me re-elected.

Mr. Speaker, a huge thanks to you, a huge thanks also to my two professional, dedicated constituency assistants, the foundation and backbone of any MLA. I am blessed and I cannot thank them enough for the service they provide to our citizens every day they come to our office.

My gratitude also goes out to all the residents of the Clare-Digby area who continue to make me feel welcome at the doors, at the community meetings, and my constituency office. They have trusted me to represent them, and my only fear is that I will let them down.

It was with extreme pleasure that I listened to the Speech from the Throne. The initiatives mentioned around French language, first-time homebuyers, adult learning, and broadband, will have direct impacts on my riding and the province. I think that myself and the people of Nova Scotia can take pride in not only our achievements but what we have in store for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again bring greetings to you from the residents of Clare-Digby. I will not get into all the beauty that we have in our area, I will not get into

all the amazing festivals and events that go on throughout the year. What I would like to do is mention that the area is more beautiful than it was three years ago, and that we now have more events and festivals than ever before. We have seen very positive things in our resource sector, tourism, and overall optimism within the communities. These things continue to grow and it is encouraging to see how our government has helped.

Mr. Speaker, the lobster industry is alive and well in my riding. With the hard work of our harvesters, buyers, and exporters we are nearing the goal One Nova Scotia has set of doubling in value our exports within a decade. Numbers have increased and have shown that Nova Scotia exports hit \$1.68 billion in 2015, a 33 per cent increase over 2014, and since 2010 exports of lobsters to China has increased 14 times, reaching more than 5,700 metric tons in 2015. Lobsters continue to be the most valuable export for Nova Scotia. The good work of Riverside Lobster and Gidney Fisheries are just two examples of the positive growth we have seen in my area. New development on the Digby Wharf by Shawn Everett is another example of the confidence business has in our resource sector.

Mr. Speaker, aquaculture continues to be an opportunity in Nova Scotia when it is done right. The investment of \$2.8 million in the industry will help with a more rigorous approach to improving new operations. This also assists by providing \$2 million for research projects focused on interaction between sites in their local environment.

Since the new regulations were introduced in October 2015, the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture has appointed a Science Advisory Committee, tendered for equipment to help with environment and fish health monitoring, established a committee to recommend a workable approach to tracing escaped fish back to their origin, appointed an aquaculture administrator for approving leases and licence renewals, and developed policies to improve the leases and licensing process. Mr. Speaker, these are but a few of the initiatives the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture has brought forward to grow our opportunities.

Our resource sector continues to be a major source of employment in my area. It has given back for rural Nova Scotia, and continues to see opportunities grow, but it is also important for rural communities to see their resources give back to the communities they come from. Hopefully with time, Mr. Speaker, we will see more opportunities and more of our resources processed directly in the communities they come from.

Mr. Speaker, the first conversation I had with a constituent after being elected was regarding families who have children at risk for developmental delays. There were some major concerns regarding the provision of resources in this area. Families who have children at risk for developmental delays are now getting the program faster, after improvements to the Early Childhood Development and Intervention program that were brought forward by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. The Minister of Education gets it, and has worked quickly to improve this area. Before the review, the increased support from government, more than 300 families were waiting for

early intervention services. These families are now receiving services and new families will be seen within a month of being referred. This is a tremendous improvement in access to service for children at risk. Thank you very much, minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Please direct your comments through the Chair.

The honourable member for Clare-Digby has the floor.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I will attempt to keep my eyes on you. I would like to thank the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. We have also seen an additional \$3.6 million per year to ensure that all preschool-age children with autism spectrum disorder can receive early intensive behavioural intervention and treatment before they start school at age six. As a result of this, about 180 children with autism spectrum disorder each year will now be able to receive treatment that will help them to be more successful when they start school. I cannot emphasize how this positively affects the lives of so many families in our province.

Another huge investment by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is in our province's child care. Support for child care centres has increased by \$6.6 million. This is so they can prepare their children for school in a much better way. This will make child care more affordable for families by investing in higher subsidies, higher rates, and investing to address historically low wages for early childhood educators. Beginning this October, centres receiving provincial grant funding must pay early childhood educators based on the wage ranging from \$15 to \$19 per hour, depending on training, and beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, families eligible for subsidies will pay less. Mr. Speaker, again I'd like to thank the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Mr. Speaker, one of the major problems in my area is not necessarily the lack of jobs, it is more so a lack of workers. I have spoken to many employers who would expand if they had access to dependable sources of workers. We know that many of our good young people have left the province to go work elsewhere. Out-migration overall, in rural communities, as mentioned earlier, was one of the major threats to rural Nova Scotia.

To compliment the good work of the Minister of Immigration in retaining our youth was also an initiative led by the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. The Graduate to Opportunity program was a major step in creating meaningful career opportunities. Nova Scotia Works was also an extremely important initiative to allow more front-line staff to be hired to focus on employment and engaging employers, client service, and outreach to schools. Mr. Speaker, I would certainly like to thank the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education also for the work that she has done.

We have been very fortunate to have excellent leadership not only from our Premier but from all of our ministers. I would like to thank them all individually for the work that

they've done to make this province better. This has been three years of hard decisions made in the best interest of all Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to comment on the importance of the Yarmouth-to-Portland ferry to our province. The people remember very well the impact that this had on the entire province when the service was cut out from underneath of us. I can cite many stories from tourism operators and non-profit organizations that suffered from the loss of this vital link. The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal did a tremendous job to manage the contract we inherited from the previous government and plan towards a better solution. The current operation of the Yarmouth-to-Portland ferry is just one reason why we have seen substantial increases in tourism this year.

Bay Ferries operated in my riding for decades and is a professional part of the key transportation link between Digby and Saint John. Partnering with Bay Ferries is not only logical but builds on opportunities for the entire region. Their understanding of our province and how to make it work will be the best solution for the future. The only concerns I have heard in my area are regarding the negative campaign carried out by the Leader of the Official Opposition and his colleagues. This type of negative messaging has nothing to offer but hollow words and no substance. I will tell you now that we have in place a good contract and a good relationship, which are key to moving forward - something we rarely have seen from previous governments.

We continue to see the opportunities for tidal development as the waters of the Bay of Fundy rise and fall each day. The creation of the Marine Renewable-energy Act by the Minister of Energy is at the forefront in leading this sector. I have kept close contact with everyone involved in the industry and with the regulators. As things continue to develop, I am confident that there will be a good balance found between environmental concerns and the interested stakeholders. This is an extremely important area that can provide many valuable skilled-labour opportunities for the Clare-Digby area. My involvement will ensure that everyone in my community understands the initiatives, the issues, and the real parts of the story as we move forward.

I am a lucky man to have such a wonderful area to represent. From Scallop Days to the Acadian Festival to the Wharf Rat Rally, our area continues to see growth in our festivals and events. The whale-watching on Digby Neck and the islands has never been better, world-class at the very least.

I am a very lucky MLA to be part of this government. But that does not mean that we do not still need to work hard. More than ever, I have heard that things are very complex. As I mentioned in my first Address in Reply, with different backgrounds and aspirations, there is a uniqueness within each person. Therefore, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to the many needs facing the citizens of Clare-Digby and the province to that end.

After three years, I continue to see the impression that government is perceived like some extraterrestrial power capable of solving all of the problems of the province. More than ever, I believe it is our duty as elected representatives here in this House to remind citizens that government exists to serve. It is important, I believe, that we spare no effort to continue to remind all of us in this House that government is an institution that is shaped by us all, elected and non-elected, to serve. We are all part of government. Everyone has a role in shaping government, not the least casting a vote on election day. More than ever, we need to remember that there is more to a democratic government than Cabinet, caucus, Opposition, departments, and agencies. For good government, we need constant interaction between all stakeholders, human interaction, and fellowship at all levels.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind everyone that while we might not have a perfect government system, nor has anyone that has come before us have ever had one either, but what we do have in place now allows for input from Nova Scotians to keep government in close check and provide guidelines for private citizens.

We must also not forget that human activity can't be regulated without judgment by humans. To the people of Digby County I continue to owe you the privilege to sit in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, to you and all the members . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, I'd like to remind the member not to refer to "you", to direct your comments to the Chair. (Interruptions) Order, please. The honourable member for Clare-Digby has the floor.

MR. GORDON WILSON: I was two lines away from finishing.

Mr. Speaker, I continue to owe the privilege to sit in this Assembly, to you and all the members of this Assembly, I invite you to visit the people of Clare-Digby sometime soon. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Immigration.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, it's an honour for me to rise today and express my sincere thanks to His Honour Brigadier-General the Honourable John James Grant, the 32<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, who has served this province with poise and dignity for the last four and a half years. Il est un honneur pour moi de prendre la parole aujourd'hui et d'exprimer mes sincères remerciements. I rise today to second the Speech from the Throne and to offer my reply.

Mr. Speaker, in the three years since I was elected by the people of Halifax Armdale to represent them in this House, this is the first opportunity . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'd just like to remind the honourable member that the motion has already been seconded, so it's not required to second the motion. The honourable member will speak to the motion.

MS. DIAB: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is the first opportunity I've had in the last three years since I was elected by the people of Halifax Armdale to reply and speak to the Speech from the Throne. I am humbled to have this chance here today and I would like to use this occasion to talk at greater length about Halifax Armdale, about my experience as an MLA and about the accomplishments our government has made over the last three years.

Mr. Speaker, three years ago I was given the immense privilege of representing the people of Halifax Armdale, a new riding that the Electoral Boundaries Commission created through a redistribution of Halifax Fairview and Halifax Atlantic. Il y a trois ans on m'a donné l'immense privilège de représenter les gens de Halifax-Armdale.

Halifax Armdale covers the growing population of the neighbourhoods of Springvale, Fairmount, Armdale, Walter Havill, Fleming Heights, Cowie Hill, as well as areas of Joseph Howe Drive, Mumford Road, Purcell's Cove, Herring Cove and St. Margaret's Bay Road. With its great diversity, Armdale is a sort of microcosm for the city as a whole.

There are many landmarks in Halifax Armdale, including the Armdale Rotary, Long Lake Provincial Park, and Sir Sanford Fleming Park - commonly known as Dingle Tower, where as a child I spent many weekends with my family, friends and others from my community. We had picnics, swam, played volleyball and had a great time. It is for that reason that I chose this to be the venue to hold my very first barbeque as an MLA.

Halifax Armdale is also home to Ashburn Golf Club and various small businesses, including a Tim Hortons on Osborne Street which serves as a popular community meeting spot. When I attended their grand reopening earlier in my term, I learned that it was the very first Tim Hortons in Halifax, and has been operated by the same owners since 1975. I've gotten to know owners Bev and Sandy more over the years, and I've been so appreciative of the support they have shown me.

Over the past summers I held pop-up offices in the café, connecting with residents and discussing the issues important to them. I've taken to calling these events "Tim's Talks," and I can tell you, there are few better ways to get to know what's on people's minds. I also had the chance to get behind the counter and pour coffee for customers on the occasion of Tim Hortons' annual Camp Day, where proceeds from sales help send children from lower-income families to summer camp.

Within my riding, there is also the historic Mount Olivet Cemetery, which is home to victims from the *Titanic* and the 1917 Halifax Explosion. This summer, I was invited by

the Titanic Society of Atlantic Canada to attend their remembrance Mass for the faithful departed at Mount Olivet, and I can tell you that I was moved by the Mass and thankful to see all the work the Titanic Society and members of the Catholic community have put into maintaining this significant part of our city's history.

I will also note for the record that there are a number of victims from the *Titanic* who are buried there who came from Lebanon and sank and died.

Speaking of history, I also had the privilege of attending a dedication ceremony in May where Deadman's Island and Melville Island were officially granted national historic site status. Melville Island served as both a prison and a medical facility for prisoners of war during the French Revolutionary Wars and the War of 1812, and it is estimated that over 400 people died there, to later be buried on Deadman's Island. It's incredible to me how much history we have in our own backyards in Armdale, and I was so pleased to be able to extend my gratitude to outgoing councillor Linda Mosher for the years she put into attaining federal recognition for these sites. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, the people of Halifax Armdale are quite lucky to be surrounded by so much natural beauty. Between the gorgeous Northwest Arm and the expansive and growing trail system of Long Lake Provincial Park, there is much to see and explore in Armdale. We're also fortunate to count Sir Sandford Fleming Park, HRM's largest park and the home of the Dingle Memorial Tower, a national historic site, among our attractions.

I've had the pleasure of hosting and attending community events at both Long Lake and the Dingle over the last three years, including my community picnic this August and the annual Natal Day Beach Party, which always draws such a crowd. I can tell you that they both impress me to this day. That's why I've been so happy to see improvements going forward for both sites.

At the Dingle, a brand-new natural playground is now being constructed with the help of a \$70,000 recreational facilities grant from the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage. HRM will be replacing the existing Dingle playground with a beautiful new structure that combines play value, nature appreciation value, and artistic value for our riding's families. Plans include a network of connected stations featuring outdoor instruments, a log-climbing structure made from rot-resistant black locust wood, sand and water play zones, and a hill slide. This natural playground will be fully accessible to children with impaired mobility and completely custom designed. I'm proud to say that this kind of playground project is completely unprecedented in Halifax. I can't wait for the project to be complete so we can welcome families and their children to spend sunny afternoons enjoying all that the Dingle has to offer.

Long Lake Provincial Park is also currently going through quite an exciting transformation. In June of last year, the Department of Health and Wellness provided a \$40,000 grant through the Recreation Facility Development Program to the Long Lake



Provincial Park Association, so that they could build the new Lakeview Trail off Northwest Arm Drive. The project was completed, and a ribbon cutting was held on Earth Day, April 22<sup>nd</sup> of this year. Over 300 people showed up to mark the occasion. I held my first community walk on the trail on May 15<sup>th</sup> and was thrilled to have natural historian, Martin Willison, guide us along the way.

I'm especially proud to say that with \$45,000 in additional support from the province, the Long Lake Park Association is going forward with Phase II of this important development. Future work will make the trail more accessible to cyclists, people with strollers, and those who use wheelchairs, and will also create a gazebo space amongst other amenities.

It's exciting to see this gem of a park getting the attention and investment it deserves, and I'm very happy that the people of Armdale and across HRM will soon be able to get even more use out of this beautiful, natural setting.

Sustainable transportation and our trail systems are also very dear to our community, and I'm encouraged by all the progress we've made in upgrading and expanding our paths and trails. Last October, I was very pleased to announce that our government was providing \$50,000 to help build the Chain of Lakes Bridge and community connector, a \$0.25 million project linking St. Margaret's Bay Road with the Chain of Lakes Trail. Our government also provided \$25,000 to Bicycle Nova Scotia for a plan to connect the Chain of Lakes Greenway and the peninsula. The Chain of Lakes Trail is truly a model of how successful urban, multi-use trails can be, and there's little wonder why the mayor chose it for his annual bike ride this May.

I made sure to attend the Chain of Lakes Trail Association AGM in July, and I'm excited to see how the trail will develop in the years to come.

I'm very proud of how far we've come with our trail systems. Our government contributed \$65,000 through Nova Scotia Economic and Rural Development to upgrade and unify seven of our trails including the Chain of Lakes Trail, to form a continuous 109-kilometre hiking and cycling route from Halifax to Lunenburg. Not only did local suppliers benefit from this work, but we're building a true destination trail by linking the Chain of Lakes Trail, the Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Trail, the St. Margaret's Bay Area Rails to Trails trail, the Aspotogan Trail, the Chester Connector Trail, the Dynamite Trail, and the Bay to Bay Trail. The completed Rum Runners Trail is not just beneficial to local cycling and hiking enthusiasts, but also serves as a draw for tourists to Nova Scotia.

Like all of my colleagues here today, I took full advantage of my summer months outside of the Legislature, and was grateful to be able to connect with so many of my constituents through community events and door knocking. In Armdale and the surrounding communities, there was lots going on and I was thrilled to be part of so much of it. Since the Legislature's last sitting, I was able to attend spring fests, field days at

Chebucto Heights Elementary School, École John W. MacLeod Fleming Tower School, and Springvale Elementary, joined in on nearly all of my community's graduation ceremonies - preschool, elementary, junior high, and high school. I must say I at least attend 10 every June. It makes me very proud as the MLA to be able to personally congratulate all of the bright and talented children of Armdale and of Halifax for their hard work and dedication and to wish them well in their future endeavours.

I was also happy to assist our schools in their important work by supporting the Springvale Under the Stars fundraiser for field equipment and upgrades, for supporting École John W. MacLeod Fleming Tower School's production of *The Sound of Music* earlier this year, as well as supporting Chebucto Heights Elementary School with their application for one of the new Out-of-School-Time Learning Grants.

The honourable Premier toured Armdale with me this summer, and I was thrilled to be able to introduce him to some of the people in organizations that make our community so special. We were able to sample delicious Acadian meat pies at Heppy's Pie Lady, learn about the services and programs offered through the Chocolate Lake Recreation Centre, and meet with so many wonderful residents of Ramsgate Lane.

I also took part in numerous festivities happening around Armdale. I co-hosted a community barbecue and picnic with constituent, Mr. Conrad, at Stanley Park Sports Field, and was happy to see so many families come out to join in on the food and fun. The Halifax Greek Fest and the Spryfield Harvest Fest were also especially memorable this year. I even participated in the latter's chili cook-off, something I've never cooked in my life, which was a fun challenge for me. I was also pleased to join the Armdale Yacht Club for both a tour and their annual summer picnic and sailing competition as well as the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron's Olympic and Paralympic send-off ceremony before the Rio Games got under way. I made sure to visit the Spryfield and District Community Market as much as possible and got the chance to join the Mobile Food Market for their first stop of the season in Spryfield.

I also marked some very significant events in the riding this summer. I visited the Rajus at Melville Heights to mark their 70<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. I joined constituent Jean Fairn for a lovely 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration and congratulated this year's award winners at the Spryfield Business Commission AGM. I also held my annual picnic at the new Lakeview Trail at Long Lake for the first time since it opened, which was a wonderful opportunity to meet residents and enjoy food and refreshments.

Like many other members, I ran a Feed Nova Scotia food drive out of my constituency office over the summer. I was amazed by the generosity of the people who stopped by to leave food and cash donations to support the organization in its time of critical need.

I had a lot of other great and varied opportunities for community engagement these past few months, including meeting some of the youth enrolled in Chebucto Connections summer English courses, attending the 1<sup>st</sup> Armdale Scout Group's closing ceremony at St. James Anglican Church, attending a fun and informative health and wellness demo at the Waterton with our local dietitian, joining the festivities at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Natal Day Beach Party at the Dingle, and perusing Bethany United Church's annual Fun Fair and so much more. Getting out in the community is one of the most fun and rewarding parts of being an MLA, and I'm grateful for the time I've been able to spend recently getting to know the people of Halifax Armdale even better.

I was very fortunate to have capped off the summer with a truly special community recognition ceremony at Bethany United Church. I was overwhelmed by the amazing response of the constituents and organizations that were invited from the constituency. I want to thank all of them for the contributions they make to our schools, our communities, and our province. When you have that many community-builders in one room, you cannot help but be overcome with pride.

Mr. Speaker, you learn a lot about yourself, about your community, and about your democracy as an MLA. I believe it's important when you have the role of representative for the people in your community to periodically reflect on where you've come from and how you got to where you are today. My dad came to Nova Scotia from a small town in Lebanon in the 1950s as a young man, crossing the oceans and travelling to an unknown world searching for a better life. It is by watching the sacrifices that my parents made to give me and my siblings a better life that I learned the value of hard work. As the oldest of six children, you also learn about making sacrifices for your family, being responsible, setting a good example, and most importantly, learning how to share.

When I came back to Nova Scotia from Lebanon at the age of 11, I did not speak a word of English. But that did not stop me from continually pushing myself to learn more and to do more. Through hard work, I obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Political Science at Saint Mary's University, a master's of public administration at Dalhousie, and a law degree at Dalhousie Law School.

It was through practising law that I found out about the value of giving back to the community. Helping people with issues large and small, I was able to see the difference someone can make in another person's life. For over 20 years I practised law. I want to thank my former partners and clients who, over the years, became more like family members, and when I told them I wanted to seek public office, they did not hesitate to throw their support behind me.

Mr. Speaker, three years ago I was elected to be the member for Halifax Armdale. With the help of a great team that included my four children, my husband, my parents, all my siblings and their families, my aunts and my uncles and all their families, and many

friends, including a fellow soccer mum who was with me every day in the campaign. With their support I was able to knock on every door in my riding at least twice.

Every day through the campaign I got to know so many people and hear their stories. Their stories inspired me to work harder, and continue to inspire me to make a difference.

Mr. Speaker, I've worked very hard to get to where I am today and I cannot emphasize enough how important the support of my cultural community, the Lebanese community of Halifax, was and is to my journey. My Lebanese-Canadian identity is an essential and immutable part of who I am. I am very proud of my Lebanese heritage and grateful that my parents retained and passed on their culture and traditions to my siblings and myself. It is something so important that will always remain with me, and I have come to pass it along to my children as well.

I am proud to have served for seven terms as the president of the Canadian Lebanon Society of Halifax, an organization established in 1938 to be the voice of the Lebanese-Canadian community. The Lebanese are very gregarious. Manners and hospitality are important and are highly influenced by French etiquette. Strangers as well as acquaintances greet each other respectfully. Our Lebanese community in Nova Scotia is highly educated, entrepreneurial, and well-connected to the community. We are lucky to have two annual Lebanese festivals spanned over the summer months that showcase our culture, food, and dance: the Lebanese Cedar Festival in June, at our Lady of Lebanon Church, and the Lebanese Festival in Halifax in July at St. Antonios Christian Orthodox Church. It is my hope that we will organize a third festival for the month of August to cover the whole summer.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to speak about a study commissioned by the Lebanese Chamber of Commerce in Nova Scotia and prepared by the Halifax Partnership, the Halifax Economic Development Organization one year ago that revealed to Canadians that Halifax's Lebanese community has been a positive and enriching one for the city. They have always made great contributions to the prosperity of the province. The Lebanese community serves as an excellent example of how an immigrant community and their families can contribute to city building and the local economy.

The Lebanese population is more than twice as likely to be an entrepreneur as native born Canadians, so the study said. It is likely that direct and indirect employment related to the Halifax Lebanese community and related business in Halifax is between 4,000 to 5,000 full-time jobs. Another way to look at this is that for each Lebanese immigrant identified in the 2011 census, an average of 3.6 full-time jobs are created. This is a ringing endorsement for a progressive immigration strategy. Immigrant communities like Halifax's Lebanese communities don't take jobs, they create jobs.

Mr. Speaker, on that note I'd like to address our substantial progress on the immigration file. We've been working really hard at the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration. Our approach to attracting and retaining newcomers has been aggressive. We've been so aggressive that in March of this year, federal Minister John McCallum told the Halifax Chamber of Commerce that "you'd have to be an idiot not to know that Nova Scotia wants more immigrants." What a compliment. We sure do.

L'immigration est une grande priorité du gouvernement et nous faisons du progrès. Notre programme des candidats de la province fonctionne bien et prend de l'importance.

Immigration is a shared federal-provincial jurisdiction. Immigration levels are set by the federal government on an annual basis. Our federal colleagues also approve all entries into the country, and they must approve any changes made to our Provincial Nominee Program.

We have a great working relationship with Minister McCallum and his staff, but we are persistent. We want to maximize every opportunity available to us, and that strategy is working. As a province, we've gained considerable ground on immigration in the last three years. We've welcomed more newcomers, we've strengthened our Provincial Nominee Program, we've connected to communities, and we have championed diversity.

Here's what we have accomplished. Immigration to Nova Scotia is at a 10-year high: 3,403 people immigrated to the province in 2015. We have already surpassed that number this year with 3,418 people coming to Nova Scotia between January and June 2016. Retention is at a high with 74 per cent of people who immigrated to Nova Scotia between 2008 and 2013 still living in this province.

Thanks to immigration, our province has reached the highest population in its history. We have made substantial efforts to attract new immigrants, to welcome refugee families, and to keep our young people here at home. Our population as of April 1, 2016, was 947,284; that is up 5,000 from last year. A healthy growing population is essential to the future of Nova Scotia, and we take pride in knowing that our province is on the right track.

We were the first province in Canada to take advantage of the new federal Express Entry system, launching not one but two Express Entry streams in 2015.

Nous avons été la première province canadienne à tirer parti du programme Entrée express en lançant deux volets de ce programme en 2016.

We acted quickly and did our homework, designing two streams that suit our labour market needs. We also launched two new business immigration streams on January 1<sup>st</sup>, a stream for international entrepreneurs and a stream for international graduates looking to start businesses or manage existing businesses in Nova Scotia.

Our new business stream for international graduates is the first of its kind in Canada. We need to keep more of the bright, talented young people who come to Nova Scotia as international students here after graduation. Many have entrepreneurial spirit, and now they have a way to apply for permanent residency while building a business right here in Nova Scotia.

We have responded to the Syrian refugee crisis in a big way. Since December, we've welcomed over 1,000 refugees from Syria through private, blended, and government-assisted sponsorship. That's not including other refugees from other countries. We are expecting still more to arrive between now and the end of the year.

It has been wonderful to see so many people and communities across the province offering a helping hand. I think we are a more welcoming province now than we were 12 or so months ago. We need to celebrate that growth and keep the positive momentum going.

We all have a role to play in welcoming newcomers and promoting diversity. In the last three provincial budgets, the Office of Immigration has received modest increases in funding, and we have spent that money very wisely. We have invested more in immigrant settlement services to help newcomers adapt to life in the province. It's not easy to settle in a new place. Whether you're an economic immigrant or a refugee, it's a difficult process.

As a province and a government, we have a duty to help the people we attract begin new lives here. We take that responsibility very seriously. That's why we've allocated an increasing share of our funding to immigrant settlement services over the last three years. This budget year, we're investing a total of \$6 million in settlement services for newcomers. As a point of comparison, the province spent \$5.4 million on settlement services in 2013.

Our settlement partners also share our desire to fully embrace newcomers. Organizations like Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia, the francophone organizations, the YMCA, all our partners that work the front lines every day do it very, very well. Nous sommes très fière de nos partenaires comme ISANS, le YMCA, les organismes francophones, et tous les autres. No one anywhere does it better, and I speak from experience because I've now attended a number of federal-provincial territorial minister meetings, and I am very proud of the work that we've done in Nova Scotia, and we are very grateful for the support of all our partners. They have gone above and beyond the help for our new residents and for those that do not speak English or French to help them learn their new language.

We've also invested more in settlement services outside of Halifax in each of the last three years, increasing one-on-one settlement counselling services across the province, and building stronger networks at the community level. In 2014, we changed the way we provide settlement services outside Halifax by forming a new partnership with the YMCA. The YMCA now provides one-on-one, in-person settlement counselling to immigrants

settling in communities across the province through the YREACH program. YREACH staffers currently serve newcomers in nine different communities: Bridgewater, Yarmouth, Cornwallis, Amherst, Truro, Pictou, Sydney, Kentville, and Port Hawkesbury. The last two locations, Kentville and Port Hawkesbury, were added this Spring.

This Spring, we also added more settlement services in Cape Breton by forming a new partnership with the New Dawn Centre for Social Innovation. The New Dawn Centre for Social Innovation already has two full-time settlement counsellors on the job providing a full range of services directly to newcomers.

We've worked really hard over the last three years to grow our population and better serve newcomers, and we are growing. Our numbers are up. We easily filled our 1,350 nominations last year, and we are on track to do so again. More immigrants have also landed in Nova Scotia in the first six months than all of 2015, and that is significant.

Over the last three years, we've also realigned the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration, adding new capabilities in the areas of strategic policy, employer support, and stakeholder engagement. We've also launched new immigration websites both in English and in French for the first time, I am proud to say. We've introduced an online application system for our Nova Scotia Nominee Program, and that's a first in this province as well. Now, candidates can apply for most of our streams online instead of mailing in paper applications. Having the options of applying online is more convenient for applicants. It's also more efficient for us.

It's been a remarkably busy, busy time, and I am proud of what we've accomplished over the last three years. I'm also very grateful for the support of my staff, our partners, and all those going out of their way to welcome newcomers. We all have a role to play in the months and weeks ahead, and we are going to keep pushing forward, and we're going to keep being quick and innovative, and we're going to continue connecting communities, and championing diversity.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the good work I was able to accomplish when I served as Nova Scotia's first female Attorney General and Minister of Justice. I was proud to be part of the team led by our Premier to reach a settlement outside the courtroom in the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children case. (Applause)

Our focus was on a respectful, restorative approach to justice based on healing for those who suffered abuse at the institution, and I am extremely proud of that. Not only on behalf of a team and caucus who were all behind us, and a Premier who truly wanted to do that - it was part of the campaign promise - but also as a person who is a lawyer and has acted in courts and has seen all of that. I could not have been any more pleased or any more proud of our province for doing that.

Je suis très fière que, pendant mon temps comme ministre de la Justice et procureure générale, j'ai dirigé mon département à soumettre la question constitutionnelle au sujet des circonscriptions acadiennes à la Cour d'appel. Cette décision a permis la communauté acadienne d'avoir cette question considérée par la Cour d'appel beaucoup plus vite que par la façon traditionnelle. Je suis très fière de ça.

Maybe I'll repeat that in English. I was very proud to have been the minister who directed my department to take the constitutional question on the Acadian ridings as a constitutional reference and not to go through the traditional court system. (Applause)

We partnered with the Department of Seniors to provide Senior Safety Grants aimed at improving seniors' health and safety by supporting existing and new seniors' programs throughout Nova Scotia. This was an important step in combatting the financial, emotional, and physical abuse of Nova Scotia's seniors.

We partnered with the Halifax Regional Municipality Public Safety Office and the Community Justice Society to launch the very first CeaseFire in Halifax. This project, based on the Cure Violence model from the University of Illinois School of Public Health, aims to prevent gun and physical violence, violent victimization, and gang-related criminal activities. This type of intervention is essential for keeping our streets safe and fostering stronger communities, and I was so very pleased to have been joined by the federal Justice Minister, who was a colleague of mine at law school when we were both law students, at the project's launch right here in Halifax.

We also created the Access to Justice Coordinating Committee to find ways to make Nova Scotia's family, civil, and criminal court systems more efficient and effective, less costly, and easier to navigate. This committee was the first of its kind in Canada, and I was so very proud to have co-chaired it with Chief Justice J. Michael MacDonald. Access to justice is one of the biggest issues facing Canada's legal system, and this was a very important step forward.

In April 2013, Justice Cromwell - justice of the Supreme Court of Canada at the time - stated that, "Access to justice is at a critical stage in Canada," and that it is "... the most important issue facing the legal system." I was very proud to have had the pleasure to reconnect with Justice Cromwell, a former law professor of mine, in Fall 2013 during one of his visits to Nova Scotia. He could always generate a good debate in the classroom, and today I'm pleased to publicly wish Justice Cromwell a healthy and happy retirement from the Supreme Court of Canada bench. (Applause)

We also amended the Maintenance and Custody Act with regard to grandparent access applications. As a grandmother, I'm very proud to say that these amendments ensured that grandparents' rights would be protected and that children's best interests would be taken into account.



I was also proud to announce the launch of the Nova Scotia Court Monitored Drug Treatment Program with Pam Williams, chief justice of the Nova Scotia Provincial Court, and her staff at the Annapolis Valley District Health Authority in Kentville. This program's goal is to treat substance dependency, provide support for individuals' recovery, and reduce criminal behaviour.

Mr. Speaker, I was also proud to bring forward amendments to the Limitation of Actions Act, the goal of which was to make the laws more consistent and uniform and reduce uncertainty for everyone involved.

Now, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, due to the hour, would you like me to continue for today? Yes? Okay.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to move a motion to adjourn debate for today, to be able to come back on another day to continue.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn the Address in Reply.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Lucasville.

MR. BEN JESSOME: Thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Speaker. If you could bear with me for a moment I'd like to direct members' attention to the east gallery where we are joined by aspiring P.Eng. - he actually did some work on the Long Lake Trail that the member for Halifax Armdale was referencing in her speech - my brother Jonathan Jessome. Could we welcome him here. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw the members' attention to the east gallery where I'd like to introduce Brendan Farrell, who has just entered. Brendan is my youngest son who is visiting the city in the course of his employment with the excellent Nova Scotia company, LED Roadway Lighting Ltd., where he is a technician who has just taken a new position in the quality control department. I would ask that all members give Brendan a warm welcome to the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. We will meet again tomorrow on Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, from the hours of 9:00

a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Following the daily routine, we will go into second reading of Bill No. 36 and following that, into Address in Reply.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House rise to meet again on Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

We stand adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, at 9:00 a.m.

[The House rose at 5:58 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 94**

By: Hon. Kelly Regan (Labour and Advanced Education)

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the outstanding contributions of the many volunteers who work to make Bedford a terrific place in which to live; and

Whereas Bernie and Wendy Levy have been deeply involved in Bedford Baptist Church, each serving the community there with their particular talents, as well as serving in various ministries and on the many committees; and

Whereas Bernie is a handyman extraordinaire, serving not only his own community but also Bayside Camp and the City of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, as part of a Habitat for Humanity team following Hurricane Katrina, and Wendy has brought the gift of music to many church events, as well as travelling to Bolivia to perform and assist with a three-week building project Bernie was working on;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Wendy and Bernie Levy on being honoured at the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception for their extremely extensive contributions to Bedford Baptist Church and beyond and thank them for making a difference in the lives of so many of their fellow citizens.

**RESOLUTION NO. 95**

By: Hon. Kelly Regan (Labour and Advanced Education)

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the outstanding contributions of the many volunteers who work to make Bedford a terrific place in which to live; and

Whereas Wendy Tarrel has volunteered with Bedford District Guides for five years, leading Sparks, Brownies, and Guides; serving as District Treasurer; and volunteering at camps, meetings, and other district activities; and

Whereas Wendy is a supportive and constant asset in all she does, including organizing and tracking the sales of 18,000 boxes of Girl Guide cookies every year;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Wendy Tarrel on being honoured at the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception for her extensive contributions to Guiding in Bedford and thank her for making a difference in the lives of many of our young women.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 96**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas anniversaries are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of two individuals united as one; and

Whereas it was once said that a marriage anniversary is the celebration of love, trust, partnership, tolerance, and tenacity, but the order varies for any given year; and

Whereas on June 18, 2016, a very special occasion took place when Alan and Yolande Doucette of Abram's River celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Alan and Yolande on this remarkable milestone in their life together and wish them many more happy years.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 97**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 8, 2016, Lea and Ryan Donovan welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Lea and Ryan on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 98**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 14, 2016, Kelley Penney and Chad Brannen welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kelley and Chad on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 99**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 15, 2016, Julie and Matthew d'Eon welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Julie and Matthew on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 100**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 17, 2016, Jessica and James Muise welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jessica and James on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 101**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 1, 2016, Holly and Ryan Nickerson welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Holly and Ryan on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 102**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 25, 2016, Elaine Doull and Jesse Deveau welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Elaine and Jesse on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 103**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 15, 2016, Sammy LeBlanc and Mike Nickerson welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sammy and Mike on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 104**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 18, 2016, Sasha and Sherman Crowell welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sasha and Sherman on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 105**

By: Hon. Kelly Regan (Labour and Advanced Education)

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

Whereas the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception annually recognizes the outstanding contributions of the many volunteers who work to make Bedford a terrific place in which to live; and

Whereas Ruby Barss-Brown has been a blessing to Bedford United Church for over 20 years, serving as an elder, member of church council, and communion coordinator, and serving the church community by assisting in the design of the church's renovation and decoration and the maintenance of the church's grounds and flowerbeds; and

Whereas Ruby brings design sense, diligence, devotion, and an appreciation of tradition, yet a willingness to embrace change and growth, to all of her tasks, thereby ensuring that she is an exceptional example of the spirit of service she so embodies;



Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ruby Barss-Brown on being honoured at the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception for her extensive contributions to Bedford United Church and thank her for making a difference in the lives of her fellow parishioners.