



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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

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

Third Session

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2016

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2016

Sixty-second General Assembly

Third Session

9:00 A.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Mr. Gordon Wilson, Mr. Keith Irving

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

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

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

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a petition, the operative clause being:

We, the undersigned, are concerned who urge our MLA Lloyd Hines and Minister Geoff MacLellan to act now to improve many of the various deplorable street conditions in the former Town of Canso.

The petition contains 302 names, to which 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 Justice.

RESOLUTION NO. 106

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

Whereas on October 23, 1969, off the coast of England, the HMCS Kootenay experienced the worst peace-time accident in the history of the Royal Canadian Navy; and

Whereas the resulting fire and toxic smoke caused by an explosion claimed the lives of nine crewmen, while 53 others were seriously injured; and

Whereas we offer our heartfelt thanks to those aboard the HMCS Kootenay for the sacrifice they made in the protection of the freedoms that we have as Canadians;

Therefore be it resolved that I do hereby proclaim the 23rd of October, 2016, to be HMCS Kootenay Day in the Province of Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Business.

RESOLUTION NO. 107

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

Whereas most businesses in Nova Scotia are small businesses providing valuable services and products to rural and urban communities alike; and

Whereas our province depends on businesses of all sizes, whether they employ 10 or 10,000 people, to grow the province's workforce; and

Whereas businesses in our communities are stronger if we support them by shopping local and building confidence in our contributions to the vibrancy of our communities and our province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members join me in celebrating Small Business Saturday tomorrow, October 22nd, and pay a visit to their community's small businesses this weekend to show support for the many passionate and dedicated entrepreneurs in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

RESOLUTION NO. 108

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

Whereas the Honourable D. Timothy Gabriel, a judge of the Provincial Court of Nova Scotia in Dartmouth has been appointed to be a judge of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Ann E. Smith, Q.C., a partner with Burchells LLP in Halifax, has been appointed also to be a judge of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Pamela J. MacKeigan, Q.C., a senior solicitor with the Nova Scotia Department of Justice in Halifax, has been appointed to be a judge of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia Family Division;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate these three outstanding individuals on their appointment to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia and wish them every success as they undertake these new duties.

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 Immigration.

RESOLUTION NO. 109

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

Whereas New Dawn Enterprises is the oldest community development organization in Canada, with almost 40 years of experience in the areas of social enterprise and community development; and

Whereas New Dawn Enterprises continues to foster a spirit of self-reliance, serving more than 600 people and delivering outstanding programming each day; and

Whereas the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration recently added New Dawn Enterprises to our list of partners in Cape Breton, with two immigrant settlement workers already helping newcomers adapt to life on the Island;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature recognize New Dawn Enterprises for its outstanding leadership over the last 40 years and thank Rankin MacSween, President of New Dawn Enterprises, Norma Boyd, Director of Operations, and

Erika Shea, Director of Communications and External Relations, for helping us enhance immigrant settlement services in Cape Breton.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

RESOLUTION NO. 110

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

Whereas the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility is celebrating its 15th Anniversary; and

Whereas the staff at that facility have done a great job providing programs and services to offenders over the past 15 years; and

Whereas every day for the past 15 years staff have brought their best to the facility to maintain a high-quality institution and workplace;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House show their appreciation for the important role that the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility plays in our justice system and the great work that the staff do each and every day to help keep our community safe.

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 Leader of the Official Opposition.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, before I introduce my bill may I make an introduction to the House?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw all members' attention to the gallery opposite where we have a distinguished visitor from Scotland with us this morning, Claire Faherty - I hope I said that right, I've been having trouble with the pronunciation. She is a student at Kilgraston School in Perth, Scotland, and is here on exchange.

She couldn't find a decent hotel, she's staying at the Baillie household. She has become the friend of my Grade 11 daughter. She had a choice this morning to go to school here in Halifax or come and watch the proceedings of the Legislature, and she chose to come here, so I encourage all members to give Claire, from Perth, Scotland, a warm welcome here to Nova Scotia and to the House of Assembly. (Applause)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 39 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 5 of the Acts of 2011. The Elections Act. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

Bill No. 40 - Entitled an Act to Implement the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (Ms. Lenore Zann)

Bill No. 41 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 401 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Residential Tenancies Act. (Hon. Mark Furey)

Bill No. 42 - Entitled an Act to Provide for Affordable Hearing Aids for Low-income Seniors. (Ms. Karla MacFarlane)

Bill No. 43 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 18 of the Acts of 1998. The Municipal Government Act. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

INTL. CREDIT UNION DAY (10/20/16) - MARK

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Yesterday, October 20th, was International Credit Union Day, a day that has been celebrated on the third Thursday of October since 1948. World Credit Union Day is a day to recognize the credit union movement's history and to promote its achievements. Credit unions are co-operative financial institutions owned by their members. I am personally proud to have spent several years involved with the credit union movement here in Nova Scotia.

In the difficult years of the 1930s, a movement started at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish which won praise as an attempt of people to be masters of their own economic forces that had previously been holding them in bondage. Co-operation was the most outstanding characteristic of the Antigonish Movement. Everyone learned to co-operate in groups to help each other and themselves at the same time. It's a true pleasure to mark International Credit Union Day.

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

BOWER, RUBY - BIRTHDAY (100th)

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: I'd like to acknowledge Ruby Bower, who is, this year, turning 100 years young. Ruby has lived a strong independent life in the community of Shelburne County. Her long and valuable contribution to the Shelburne County Exhibition was acknowledged during this year's opening ceremony at the exhibition. It was particularly fitting since this year also marked the 140th Anniversary of the Shelburne County Exhibition. As she was described in an interview with the Tri-County Vanguard, her contribution to the exhibition has ranged from cleaning to exhibiting, and even winning quite a few prizes.

Ruby is truly a remarkable person. She ran a canteen, worked in a fish plant, built her own home, and hunted into her 90s. We are very proud of Ruby Bower.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

WILLIAMSON, CATHY/HEPPY'S PIES - SUCCESS WISH

HON. LENA DIAB: In honour of Small Business Week, I rise today to acknowledge the hard work of the talented and dedicated Cathy Williamson, who manages Heppy's Pie Lady, a staple in the Armdale area. Cathy works tirelessly with owner Corinne Weir at their Herring Cove Road location, making all the fillings for Heppy's delicious assortment of traditional Acadian pies, as well as preparing tourtière, cookies, cakes, and chowders - all from memory. Having brought along some of Cathy's creations to my recent community recognition ceremony, I can attest to just how popular they are. Cathy has

worked for 16 years with the Heppy's team, sharing her love of Acadian food with customers and the community alike.

I would like to thank Cathy and Corinne and the whole Heppy's team for the wonderful support they've shown me over the years, and I ask all members of the House of Assembly to join me in wishing them and the proud local business they work with continued success.

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

MACRAE, STUART: ST. F.X. SPORTS HALL OF FAME - INDUCTION

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Stuart MacRae of Coxheath for his induction into the St. F.X. Sports Hall of Fame. Stuart was a member of the 2003-04 X-Men hockey team that finished 19-6-3-0 and captured the conference title. MacRae and his team also went undefeated at the Canadian Interuniversity Sports Championship Tournament and won the national title in double overtime.

I stand here to congratulate Stuart MacRae on his Hall of Fame induction. He has made all of us, and his family, very proud.

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

TRUTH & RECONCILIATION COMMN. - CALLS TO ACTION

MS. LENORE ZANN: I would like to take this opportunity to highlight this year's national Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

They released a set of 94 recommendations for our country's leaders as we collectively try to redress the legacy of residential schools. Its first recommendation calls upon all levels of government to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care. In doing so, the commission offers several routes for meeting this objective. They include: monitoring and assessing the neglect investigations; working with indigenous families and communities to help children in culturally appropriate environments; and requiring all child welfare decision makers to consider the impact of the residential school experience on children and their caregivers.

I look forward to hearing how this government intends to meet the specific calls to action. More to come, Mr. Speaker.

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

YMCA N.S. WORKS EMPLOYMENT SERV. - GRAND OPENING

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the opening of the new YMCA Nova Scotia Works Employment Services Centre on Cumberland Drive in Cole Harbour. It was inspirational to see the community and staff come together for the centre's grand opening on September 9th, and to feel such great energy from staff who are ready to help.

Nova Scotia Works represents a brand new approach, a fresh start. It's exciting to know that youth will now have the information they need to make good career decisions and employers will now have resources available to connect with workers to find and keep skilled workers to help business flourish. The employment services system has truly been transformed and will continue to evolve to meet the needs of Nova Scotians. I'm pleased that the resource centre is accessible to my constituents.

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

JELLOW, LAWRENCE: ACCOMPLISHMENTS - SALUTE

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Lawrence Jellow, who is still playing baseball twice a week at the age of 85. After ball season ends, Lawrence is heavily involved in bowling and plans to get back into skating this year. Lawrence likes being active and pitched three games in his last tournament, winning two. He is a bit of a legend around local ballparks.

Lawrence, you are an inspiration with your volunteering, Legion work and your physical activities. Mr. Speaker, we could all take a page out of Lawrence's book.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

INTL. CREDIT UNION DAY (10/20/16): WORK/VALUE - ACKNOWLEDGE

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Yesterday marked International Credit Union Day. Credit unions play a vital role in Nova Scotia, especially in our rural communities. They support their members and neighbourhoods with countless hours of volunteerism. They provide charitable work, and they root themselves within the fabric of communities, while striving to live up to their mandate of cooperative values, and their traditions of community-mindedness.

Since 1948, International Credit Union Day has been celebrated by credit unions around the world to honour those who have contributed to this movement. They have helped in providing communities the opportunity to access sustainable, reliable, and affordable financial services.

As a proud member of my own credit union. I want to acknowledge the work and value they bring to our province and to the lives of Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

S. SHORE OPPORTUNITIES: SM. BUS. - DEDICATION

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, South Shore Opportunities is comprised of a board of volunteer community members along the South Shore. For many years, they have been quietly assisting start-up and existing small businesses who may not qualify for traditional financing. South Shore Opportunities staff takes a chance on a vision and a dream, and helps them create a professional business plan, guide clients through all the necessary paperwork, and in many cases, provides a loan to get them started.

Over the last 18 years, South Shore Opportunities has helped create 214 full-time jobs, 172 part-time jobs, and 59 seasonal jobs, and has helped to maintain 639 full-time jobs, 270 part-time jobs, and 127 seasonal jobs. The Board of Directors in that time have approved 378 loan applications totalling more than \$15.5 million.

Mr. Speaker, it is an appropriate time during Small Business Week to thank the staff and board of directors for their dedication to small businesses along the South Shore, and their time and commitment to their community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

FIREFIGHTERS (N.S.) - RECOGNIZE

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to recognize the bravery and sacrifice that our firefighters demonstrated over the summer months fighting forest fires across the province, from Digby to Inverness. At the height of these fires, there were 175 to 200 firefighters deployed.

Without these courageous men and women leaving their families and volunteering their time, the fires could have been catastrophic. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the firefighters and acknowledge their time and dedication, and the hours of training to ensure that they are properly trained in all facets of firefighting.

I am pleased to recognize the firefighters in Nova Scotia here in the Legislature and thank them for placing such a high value on their community, and all those who call it home.

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

**AZZI, FR. PIERRE/OUR LADY OF LEBANON CHURCH
- COMMUN. DEDICATION**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Father Pierre Azzi, and his church, Our Lady of Lebanon parish, located at 3844 Joseph Howe Drive in Halifax. On September 9, 2006, Father Pierre Azzi was appointed new pastor of Our Lady of Lebanon Church.

He has brought joy and enthusiasm to all the members of his parish and does this by establishing relationships with all its members, and creating initiatives that appeal to all different crowds and age groups. Father Azzi empowers the youth of his church tremendously. The church offers a youth choir that practises weekly, an altar server program, religion classes, cultural dance lessons, and a youth council.

Not only that, but Father Azzi also believes strongly in giving back to the community and to those in need around the world. With this stewardship in mind, Our Lady of Lebanon welcomed a new Syrian family to Halifax on Monday, September 26, 2016.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Our Lady of Lebanon Church and Father Azzi on their continued efforts to make this world a better place.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

DICKS, NANCY: NEW GLASGOW MAYOR-ELECT - CONGRATS.

HON. PAT DUNN: I rise in my place today to recognize New Glasgow's newly-elected mayor, Nancy Dicks. Ms. Dicks is a lifelong resident of New Glasgow and most recently served as the councillor for Ward 3 of New Glasgow for the past four years.

Nancy is a retired educator, having taught at G.R. Saunders Elementary School in Stellarton for the majority of her teaching career. The mother of three grown children, Nancy spent countless hours heading up her local Westside Community Centre, Girl Guides, and Hogmanay Craft Fair. Ms. Dicks sat as a representative of our town council, serving in the roles of deputy mayor, chairman of the police commission, and chair of the Communities in Bloom Committee.

I would like all members of this Legislature to join me as I wish Mayor Dicks great success in her future as mayor of New Glasgow.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

HFX. BACKPACKERS/ALTEREGOS CAFÉ - ANNIV. (15th)

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, today a very special business on Gottingen Street is celebrating 15 years. Halifax Backpackers and Alteregos Café is the work of Michelle Strum. As a business owner, Michelle has shown leadership by deliberately and consistently hiring local young people and encouraging them to grow and show their leadership. She was also key to the formation of the North End Business Association.

There is a celebration, including music and food, tomorrow night, but today has been declared Halifax Backpackers and Alteregos Café Day by Halifax mayor Mike Savage. I'll be dropping by for coffee after the House rises. Please join me in congratulating Michelle Strum for taking a risk, committing to her community, and contributing so much to Halifax Needham.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

WINDSOR FD - ANNIV. (135th)

MR. CHUCK PORTER: I'd like to recognize the Windsor Fire Department as it celebrates 135 years of serving the citizens of Windsor and surrounding areas. In 1881 this volunteer fire department was founded by the Windsor Town Council and interested citizens. The Windsor Fire Department began with water buckets, hand-operated pumps, wooden ladders, and hand-drawn or horse-drawn wagons using water from wells, creeks, and the Avon River if the tide was in.

Their current complement of equipment includes pumpers, aerial devices, tankers, heavy rescue, light rescue, and a 16-foot Zodiac fast rescue boat for water-related emergencies. The Windsor Fire Department proudly engages annually in the Hants West Relay for Life by entering a team and acting as the emergency first responders for the event, and participates in the Hants County Christmas Angels fundraiser telethon.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank all members, past and present, of the Windsor Fire Department for their dedication and commitment to the residents of Windsor and surrounding areas.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

CONNORS, GRANT - ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS

MR. JOHN LOHR: Grant Connors is a professional strongman athlete from Kentville. During the Atlantic Canadian Strongman Competition, held in Kentville on May 27th, Grant walked 16 feet carrying 1080 lbs on his shoulders to win the progressive max super yoke competition. He also won the max log press, car hold, medley, 20,000-lb. truck pull, the overhead press, and the Atlas stones finale.

Grant won the overall competition with 86 points, making that his tenth win. I would like to applaud his dedication to the sport and congratulate him on his achievement as the only man in the sport of strongman to hold the championship crown 10 times.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

LAVALLÉE, RENÉE/STAFF: SUCCESS CONGRATS.

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: In light of this being Small Business Week, I would like to bring attention to a small business in Dartmouth South, whose recent expansion announcement in Dartmouth has residents quite excited. Since Renée Lavallée opened her 20-seat soup-and-sandwich establishment above Two If By Sea two and a half years ago, The Canteen has become a hotbed for community gatherings, community engagement, and community growth.

After having spent time honing her skills around the world, Renée brought her talents to Ochterloney Street when she made Dartmouth home. Now even more Dartmouthians have the opportunity to appreciate The Canteen's fare, as Renée and her team are taking the plunge and opening a full-service 55-seat restaurant on Portland Street

I want to congratulate Renée and her staff on their success over the past years and wish her the best of luck in her new endeavour. Thank you.

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

HAMMONDS PLAINS HERITAGE DAY: ORGANIZERS - THANK

MR. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate the Hammonds Plains Area Business Association and Hammonds Plains Community Centre on their joint venture, the inaugural Hammonds Plains Heritage Day held this past August 13th.

Hammonds Plains is a diverse community with many people from many different backgrounds. Heritage Day gave these people an opportunity to come together and enjoy an informal setting, and learn about the history of Hammonds Plains and the community they live in. It also gave an opportunity to meet friends and neighbours, various business owners, and community members.

It is important to acknowledge the many volunteers who contributed much time and effort to make this event a success. Without their hard work, this event would not have been possible.

This opportunity to meet and greet my friends in Hammonds Plains-Lucasville was a comforting reminder of why I continue to do my best to represent our community. Thank you.

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

SIBLEY, BRETON/U-14 ATL. SELECTS - BASEBALL SILVER MEDAL

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Breton Sibley of Port Morien and his under-14 Atlantic Selects teammates who won silver at the Disney ESPN Wide World of Sports Baseball Tournament in Florida recently. For Breton Sibley and his teammates it was a very rewarding experience that they will remember forever.

I stand here today to congratulate Breton Sibley, and all the Atlantic Selects, for making everyone so proud of them, and wish them all the luck in their future endeavours. Thank you.

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

NATL. TRUTH & RECONCILIATION COMMN. - CALLS TO ACTION

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to continue to highlight the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action issued last year. Its second recommendation asks that the province assist the federal government in preparing and publishing annual reports on the number of Aboriginal children who are in care, compared with non-Aboriginal children.

These reports should include accurate numbers that demonstrate that each level of government is directing its spending to care services and preventative interventions, as well as analysis on the effectiveness of these efforts. This is tremendously important in ensuring that all levels of government are doing everything possible in advance to process the Canadian reconciliation.

Once again, I look forward to hearing how this government intends to meet this specific call to action. To be continued.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**S. SHORE EX. - FIREFIGHTERS CHALLENGE:
DAYSPRING & DIST. FD - CONGRATS.**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, each year at the South Shore Exhibition, several local fire departments gather together in a friendly firefighter's challenge. It is a fun opportunity for the public to watch local firefighters compete, and to claim bragging rights.

This year, the Dayspring & District Volunteer Fire Department was once again victorious. Wearing full gear, six firefighters from each department had to sprint from the start line to four stations set 50 feet apart, then connect couplings and nozzles, and aim a stream of water to knock over a pylon. Dayspring defeated seven other teams to take top place.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the Dayspring & District Fire Department for capturing its seventh consecutive firefighter's challenge. Thank you.

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

ANTHONY, JOE/A & L SEAFOODS - DONATIONS

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Joe Anthony of A & L Seafoods, who recently donated \$2,000 to each of eight food banks and community organizations in the Sydney area. Joe had a good year and feels it's only fair to give back to the community. Joe has been a generous contributor to many organizations over the years and has been a champion of local communities.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Joe for his generosity and his commitment to local communities, as well as his dedication to those in need.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

PUFAHL, CALLUM/CLARKE, ISAAC - BASKETBALL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Horton High School Grade 10 students Callum Pufahl of Wolfville and Isaac Clarke of Hantsport for their accomplishments on the basketball court. In August 2016, Callum and Isaac were both members of the Nova Scotia Provincial U15 Basketball Team that won the gold medal at the national championships in Winnipeg. It was Nova Scotia's first-ever gold medal at that level, and the first time a Nova Scotia U15 team had defeated Ontario in a national championship.

Both Callum and Isaac, as Grade 9 students, were also members of the Horton Division 1 Boys Basketball Team that won the provincial school championship in March 2016.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, I would like to congratulate Callum Pufahl and Isaac Clarke on both of these accomplishments, and wish them all the best in their future athletic careers.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

CRESSWELL, STUART: INGENUITY/CREATIVITY - RECOGNIZE

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to recognize the ingenuity and creativity of Stuart Cresswell.

Stuart, who hails from England, settled with his family in beautiful River John in 2006. He has a long list of creative achievements in the film industry, having recently written and produced the film *The Only Game in Town*. It is a coming-of-age story that was filmed in the communities of Tatamagouche, River John, Scotsburn, and New Glasgow, with a local cast and crew of 30 people.

I would like to thank Stuart for contributing to the rich cultural and artistic spirit that is found along the North Shore. I congratulate Stuart on the completion of his film, and I look forward to viewing it sometime in the near future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

IMMIGRANT SERV. ASSOC. (N.S.): WORK - RECOGNIZE

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia with international pharmacy graduates.

A decade ago, ISANS staff recognized that internationally trained pharmacists were having difficulty qualifying to work here - not because of lack of knowledge but as a result of cultural differences that made it difficult to pass oral exams. ISANS pulled together the College of Pharmacists, the Dalhousie School of Pharmacy, and other partners, to identify hurdles and address them together. Today, thanks to their leadership, Nova Scotians can turn to many qualified and diverse pharmacists working and living across Nova Scotia.

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

**SACKVILLE SURGE U-12 FEMALE FAST PITCH SOFTBALL TEAM
- GOLD MEDAL**

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Sackville Surge U12 female fast pitch softball team who took home a gold medal in early August at the provincials in Stellarton, Nova Scotia, making this the first title for the association since 2008.

Congratulations to Mya, Lauren, Grace, Hayley, Rebecca, Jana, Kaitlyn, Brianna, and team captains Lauren and Emily. A special thank-you to coaches Tom and Graham for helping these young ladies along the way.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that a few of these players have been selected as an elite team to represent Sackville baseball at the Atlantic Cup in P.E.I. I ask that all assembled in this House today wish them the very best in their endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

MCGILLIVRAY, DANNY: STELLARTON MAYOR-ELECT - CONGRATS.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place to congratulate newly elected Mayor of Stellarton Danny McGillivray.

Danny was born and raised in Stellarton and, according to his mother, he told her when he was a very young child that he would be mayor of Stellarton someday. Mr. McGillivray has become well-known throughout Pictou County through his involvement with many organizations that serve the county as a whole. Danny was the business manager for the Pictou County YMCA for many years, founding chairman for the Pictou County Fuel Fund, and executive director of the CHAD Transit, to mention only a few of his roles in our area.

I would ask all members of this Legislature to join me in wishing Mr. McGillivray the best of luck and much success in his role as Stellarton's mayor.

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

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

MS. JOYCE TREEN: In celebration of Small Business Week, I want to recognize two lifelong 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. When visiting any one of their businesses, you will receive excellent customer service and heartwarming hospitality from their great staff.

I ask all the members of this House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Mary and Albert for all their success, and wish them many more years with their businesses.

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

WOOD, PHYLLIS: RETIREMENT - CONGRATS.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, August 31st marked the last day on the job for Phyllis Wood, a resident of Hubbards Point, in my constituency.

Phyllis worked at the Villa Saint-Joseph du Lac since 1966, a career that spans a half-century. She began working in the laundry serving other departments, and retired as the villa's environmental supervisor. Phyllis is known to have a huge heart and a strong work ethic, and she has been a role model for other employees wherever she has worked in the home. Phyllis will be greatly missed by the residents and staff of the Villa Saint-Joseph du Lac.

Please join me in wishing her a well-deserved retirement, continued good health, and success in the future.

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

Order, please. That member has already had two statements.

MS. LENORE ZANN: I'm standing up to beg leave to do an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, the honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River on an introduction.

MS. ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction today. We have several visitors joining us in the east gallery. We'd like to welcome President Liette Doucet of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and her executive members. Let's give a warm welcome to Liette and her executive. (Applause)

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

HAMMONDS PLAINS-LUCASVILLE MLA - BIRTHDAY (30th)

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, October 22, 1986, marked what would become an historic day in our province's history. It was on this bright Fall day that a young man was born in the early morning hours. Born under a common name, the member for Hammonds Plains-Lucasville has been a passionate and dedicated leader in education, sports, and most recently as a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

The honourable member has been a friend and a confidant to me personally over these last three years and has become the younger brother I never wanted or asked for, especially during hockey season. In spite of this, through you, I would like to wish him a very happy 30th birthday, and many healthy and prosperous years to come. Thank you. (Applause)

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

STAR ACADIE: PARTICIPANTS - CONGRATS.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le président. Le 24 juillet 2016, la sixième édition du concours de chant annuel Star Acadie a eu lieu au Centre communautaire de Par-en-Bas à Tusket parrainé par le Festival acadien international de Par-en-Bas. Quinze jeunes ont participé au spectacle de deux catégories, huit étaient âgés de 10 à 14 ans dans la première catégorie et sept étaient âgés de 15 à 19 ans dans la deuxième catégorie. Des prix d'argent de 500\$ ont été remis aux gagnants. Emma Jacquard était la gagnante dans la première catégorie; Jacques Surette a gagné dans la deuxième. Jacques Surette a aussi gagné 200\$ pour avoir présenté une chanson originale. Cet événement est présenté tout en français qui aide à promouvoir la musique française à travers la communauté acadienne. Je présente mes plus sincères félicitations à tous les participants.

In English, Mr. Speaker, on July 24th, the sixth edition of the annual singing contest Star Acadie was held at Centre communautaire de Par-en-Bas in Tusket sponsored by le Festival acadien international de Par-en-Bas. There were 15 participants. Eight were aged between 10 and 14 in the first category. Seven were between the ages of 15 and 19 in the second. Emma Jacquard was the winner in the first category while Jacques Surette was the winner of the second. They each won \$500. Jacques also won \$200 for presenting an original song. This event is presented all in French which helps promote French music throughout the Acadian community. I offer my sincere congratulations to all the participants.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: DOCTOR SHORTAGE - BROKEN PROMISES

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, the Premier's promise was for a doctor for every Nova Scotian if elected. The Minister of Health and Wellness has visited communities suggesting a plan is on the way. Now, the failed Health Authority has finalized a plan in hopes it will address the doctor shortages but this plan will not be ready until next year. The member for Clare-Digby announced this week in this House that the doctor shortages may now take up to five to 10 years to address. Since then, several Liberal MLAs have had the opportunity to clarify the member for Clare-Digby's statement, even the MLA for Clare-Digby himself. So it appears to me the trial balloon has been floated to address this promise. A broken promise is a broken promise.

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

DIGBY SKATEBOARD & BMX PARK: BUILDERS - RECOGNIZE

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, when people are committed to a project and work together, anything is possible. At the start of 2015, the Digby BMX and

Skateboard Association proposed building a skateboard and BMX park, a place where the area's youth could have fun and be active far from their computer games and tablets. By mid-November, the kids were able to enjoy their brand new park complete with a four-foot-high, 30-foot-long quarter pipe. One was quoted as saying there's nothing else like this from Yarmouth to Greenwood. It's great to have a place where we're allowed to ride. I want to recognize the efforts of everyone involved, including the Town of Digby and Digby BMX and Skateboard Association, in building this place in our community that let our kids be kids and promote active lifestyles.

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

MARGUERITE CTR.: BD. OF DIRECTORS/STAFF - THANK

MR. IAIN RANKIN: I would like to recognize the Marguerite Centre, located in Timberlea. The Marguerite Centre has been operating for more than 15 years. This unique facility has programs designed specifically to support women living with addictions. It is the only recovery home for women battling alcohol, drug, and gambling addictions. The testimonials from former residents of the Marguerite Centre speak in glowing terms of the care of the staff and counsellors and the life-changing impacts of the programs that allow them to achieve sobriety, and to regain their lives. The staff included my mother, Christine Rankin, who recently retired.

I would like the members of the House of Assembly to join me in thanking the volunteer boards of directors, Executive Director Lisa Mullin, and the staff of the Marguerite Centre for their compassion and caring, which make such a huge difference in the lives of their clients.

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

MACLEOD'S PLUMBING & HEATING - ANNIV. (22nd)

MR. DAVID WILTON: In the Spring of 1994, Doug and Patti Ann MacLeod started operation of MacLeod's Plumbing and Heating, serving New Waterford, Glace Bay, Sydney, and surrounding areas. For the first few years, they built their name to be a leader in all aspects of the business, from new home plumbing installations to maintenance and repairs on all furnaces.

Over the last 22 years, Doug and Patti Ann have expanded their local office in New Waterford to open local offices in Glace Bay and Sydney. Currently, they employ 17 people, from experienced plumbers and certified burner mechanics, to professional office staff and fuel delivery drivers.

Please join me in recognizing MacLeod's Plumbing and Heating on 22 years and wish them many more successful years to come.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Last evening, I had the pleasure to attend the Foster Parents Appreciation Banquet, where long-time foster parents are honoured for their dedication and commitment to children in the care of the minister. These extraordinary men and women open their hearts, their homes, and their lives, by welcoming and supporting children who have suffered abuse, neglect, and other unimaginable situations in their birth families . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please, I'd like to remind the member that it's not proper to use a Member's Statement to address a topic that falls under a particular ministry of yours.

The honourable member for Colchester North.

BEGIN, ALAIN: PROV. & FAM. COURT JUDGE - APPT.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Alain Begin, a resident of North River, Colchester North, and a former naval officer, graduated from the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario, in 1986. He served two years in the Reserves and eight in the regular naval service, prior to entering law school. He graduated from the University of Ottawa Law School in 1994. Mr. Begin has served as a veteran criminal lawyer and civil lawyer in Truro for 22 years. He is a partner in the firm of McLellan, Richards, and Begin, which he joined in 2000. He has a reputation as a capable, fair, and dedicated litigator in both criminal and civil matters.

Congratulations are extended to Mr. Begin, who has been appointed a provincial and family court judge. He will sit in the provincial court in Sydney. Because he is bilingual, Mr. Begin will also be travelling across the province to preside at trials that are required to be in French. I would ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in congratulating Alain for his judicial appointment and wish him well in his new role.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**STEINHART, THOMAS/STEINHART DISTILLERY:
AWARDS - CONGRATS.**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: We don't hear of one-year-olds winning world championships very often. However, that's exactly what happened this past March when Steinhart Distillery took their product to the San Francisco World Spirits Competition and took home top honours. The still-young distillery, owned by Thomas Steinhart of Arisaig, has been making waves on the international spirits scene with its unique flavours. Some flavours, like Habanero Vodka, are an outgoing, but unforgettable experience. Others, such

as their Maple Vodka or Haskap Gin, incorporate ingredients that reflect our home province.

The awards don't stop with San Francisco, though. The Maple and Habanero Vodkas I just mentioned recently brought home gold medals from the New York Wine and Spirits Competition. These awards reflect the hard work and energy invested into the business by Mr. Steinhart and his team. They work to ensure the products are available through various channels to any adult who may want to buy them, knowing that the quality of their product will lead to a satisfied customer. Just look for the Steinhart logo at any farmers' market across the province, and you'll know what I mean.

I ask my colleagues in the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Thomas Steinhart and Steinhart Distillery on their numerous awards and wish them continued success.

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

MACKENZIE ATLANTIC TOOL & DIE/MACHINING LTD. - ANNIV. (10th)

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Matthew MacKenzie on his 10th Anniversary of a successful company, Mackenzie Atlantic Tool & Die/Machining Ltd., located in Musquodoboit Harbour and Woodside. Matthew grew from one owner/operator to a company with 20 employees and one of two ISO 9001:2008-certified manufacturing shop in the Halifax area and offers design, precision CNC machining, welding, and fabrication under one roof.

Matthew demonstrates Nova Scotia entrepreneurial spirit by completing contracts for work in Canada, the United States, and China. In the past year Matthew and his talented employees have designed, patented, and built a medical product that will be exported into provinces in Canada, the United States, and Europe in 2017.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Matthew MacKenzie on his tremendous achievement, creating a vibrant, local company that contributes to the growth of the Nova Scotia economy for the products that they design and build. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

COM. SERV. - FOSTER PARENTS APPRECIATION BANQUET

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to give this Member's Statement on behalf of the member for Dartmouth North. Last evening a wonderful event took place, the Foster Parents Appreciation Banquet, where long-time foster parents were honoured for their dedication and commitment to children in care. These extraordinary men and

women open their hearts, homes, and lives by welcoming and supporting children who have suffered abuse, neglect, and other unimaginable situations in their birth families.

Last night there were parents who have fostered for one year, to an amazing 50 years. Parents who have fostered over 100 children, adopted foster kids, met the needs of the LGBTI community, supported foster kids of differing abilities and challenges. Each MLA in this Legislature has foster parents in their ridings. I encourage you to reach out to these families and express your gratitude to these unsung heroes.

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

FALL RIVER RD.: CENT. WATER SERV. - INSTALLATION

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, I was very happy on behalf of the Minister of Municipal Affairs to announce that the Province of Nova Scotia will be contributing nearly \$2 million to fund an installation of 3.5 kilometres of central water services along Fall River Road. This is part of a larger \$7.9 million investment by all three levels of government. The long-awaited announcement for our community was met with tremendous enthusiasm and excitement.

Mr. Speaker, maintaining a safe and reliable water supply is a fundamental task of any government in expanding central water services, from Windsor Junction Road to the Fall River centre. It's the type of project that makes a real difference in people's lives.

Mr. Speaker, the partnership and co-operation shown between governments on this issue is an encouraging sign of what can be achieved when we work together.

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

JOSEPH, DAN/DARRYL'S REST.: SUCCESS - CONGRATS.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to acknowledge Dan Joseph, owner of the popular Darryl's Restaurant. For years now, Darryl's has been the go-to spot for delicious burgers, milkshakes, and fantastic service. This is in no small part due to Dan's hardworking compassion as the owner. It is rare nowadays to find an owner who leaves his personal phone number and email on a restaurant's comments card, but that's how much Dan cares about his customers. He works tirelessly to ensure both they and his staff are happy and treated well.

I'm sure many of us have been to Darryl's before and suffice to say, it's usually a packed house. That in itself speaks to the great atmosphere of food and service the restaurant provides. I want to congratulate Dan Joseph on his success with Darryl's, and encourage everyone to check it out if they haven't already.

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

**MACLEOD, LAURA: THE OLD APOTHECARY BAKERY & CAFÉ
- SUCCESS CONGRATS.**

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, this Small Business Week, we as a government have been working very hard to help small businesses in Nova Scotia. We have cut red tape, made targeted industry investments, and have helped small businesses hire new grads. Today I'd like to acknowledge a popular Barrington Street bakery. The Old Apothecary Bakery and Café is owned and managed by Laura MacLeod. She wanted to pay tribute to the building's history which was long ago a drugstore.

Laura has brought her culinary experience to the bakery which serves up fresh-baked goods, pastries, and other delicious items. Laura wanted the bakery to be a cozy hangout for customers and she recently undertook a very cool initiative - for one day only she transformed the bakery into Central Perk, the café from the TV show "Friends". It was a huge success.

I want to congratulate Laura on all her success with the Old Apothecary Bakery and Café and encourage everyone to pop by on Barrington Street sometime.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

MACDOUGALL, CHRIS - CANCER FUNDRAISING

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Chris MacDougall, an Enfield/Elmsdale businessman, decided to train and organize a cycling fundraiser for cancer research. The planning and training took almost a year. Most of his ride is being done alone, except for a support vehicle.

Charlie's Ride for Cancer Research is named in memory of Chris' son, Charlie, who passed away in December 2004 at the age of 14. Charlie fought a three-and-a-half-year battle against the same cancer that claimed the life of Terry Fox. When Terry was diagnosed, the survival rate was 30 per cent. It has now grown to 80 per cent thanks to research. Chris MacDougall is covering all the expenses for his ride across Canada, and donating the money raised to the Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute in Halifax. Research is making great strides, but Chris still needs our help.

I would like to applaud Chris MacDougall. His efforts in the memory of his son may well save many lives.

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

EAST COAST HYDRAULICS & MACHINERY LTD. - THANK

HON. LLOYD HINES: We often underestimate the big impact of small business in our communities, often overlooking their value and contributions. Businesses like East Coast Hydraulics and Machinery Ltd. are a shining example of the importance of entrepreneurs and the small businesses they create.

For over 30 years, this Mulgrave-based company has been involved in hydraulic engineering, installation, and sales, steel fabrication, mechanical and electrical repairs to ships' installations, industrial repair, and sales and service of mechanical components for the industrial and marine industries, as well as onshore and offshore oilfield services. Brothers Dana and Mike Feltmate built this company from the ground up, now employing close to 40 employees during peak times and working on projects throughout eastern Canada.

To East Coast Hydraulics and Machinery Ltd., and to all of our small businesses across this great province, I say thank you. Thank you for investing in our communities and in our future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

TURCOT, VICTORIA: CAN. GAMES TRAINING TEAM - CONGRATS.

HON. LENA DIAB: Merci, Monsieur le Président. I rise today to congratulate a very talented young woman and constituent of Armdale, Victoria Turcot. Victoria, a student at J.L. Ilsley High School, is one of 22 Nova Scotian girls chosen to train with the Canada Games Training Team in preparation for the 2017 Canada Games in Winnipeg.

Over the coming months, Victoria will be training hard, both on the volleyball court and in the weight room. I'm confident she will make the roster of 14 athletes to proudly represent the best of our province at the games next year. On October 15th, Zumba team The BobKats hosted a fundraiser class for Victoria at Cunard Junior High in order to help her cover the costs associated with training. I was very happy to personally support Victoria, and have the chance to reconnect with her proud grandparents, Patricia and Ray Gillis.

I ask all members of the House of Assembly to join me in wishing Victoria all the best with her training and her final year of high school. Merci.

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

COLE HBR. & AREA BUS. ASSOC. - LOCAL BUS.: SUPPORT THANK

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the Cole Harbour and Area Business Association for their continued dedication to supporting local businesses and in turn, helping develop community spirit. The Cole Harbour and Area Business Association has had a busy year, accomplishing several goals. One of the association's main objectives was to create a current mission statement that would reflect boundary changes, and would engage a more inclusive membership pool.

A boundaries subcommittee was created to address these issues, and they were highly successful in seeing their tasks through. Of course, also on this improvement agenda was the name change that has made it the Association for Business for Cole Harbour.

I wish to congratulate the association on a great, full year of full events and successful strategies that will allow them to continue to improve business in the Cole Harbour-Portland Valley area.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much for those members' statements. I just want to take one further opportunity to remind members when they're reading members' statements not to address folks directly, and also not to use members' statements as any type of commercial endorsement or endorsement for the topic of your statement.

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

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

PREM.: NURSING HOMES - BUDGET CUTS

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. This week, the Premier informed the House that he has sent auditors into Northwood to prove that his cuts are making them feed our senior residents there at a total of \$5.12 a day for three meals.

Of course we know this is not a situation unique to Northwood; most of the nursing homes across this province have had the same cuts as Northwood and are being forced to feed their senior residents on the same amount or even less.

I'd like to ask the Premier, will he acknowledge that his cuts in fact affect most of the nursing homes of the province, not just Northwood?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question.

Yesterday we had four executive directors of four different nursing homes across the province. They very clearly told all Nova Scotians that the changes in the funding model did not affect food, but the honourable member said it has across this province. They clearly said it has not affected the quality of food, and they also said the changes have had no impact on their residents.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, quite the opposite, they were here yesterday because they are very concerned about the effect the Premier's cuts are going to have on their residents, including food. Nursing homes are dealing with his budget cuts, both last year and this year, and seniors are being forced to eat on \$5 a day and, in some cases, less.

The Premier's answer to that is not to restore the funding for our seniors but, rather, if a nursing home complains, to send in the auditors instead, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to ask the Premier, since we know this is happening across the province, what other nursing homes does he plan to send auditors into instead of helping our seniors?

THE PREMIER: Again I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, it was very clearly said by the four executive directors who were here that the changes were not impacting seniors. It's unacceptable that a member of this House would go around using seniors as pawns for political purposes; it is unacceptable.

We made it clear, Mr. Speaker, to all those nursing homes that if there are issues related to delivering those services to contact our government. We continue to work for them. I was pleased yesterday to have them say there was no impact in delivering those services to their residents. What they were concerned about was next year in going forward and we're continuing to reach out with them and work with them.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, this is a farce. Nobody comes to this House - the Premier knows it full well - nobody comes to this House to say everything is hunky-dory. That is not the reason the nursing home representatives were here yesterday. They are very worried about the effect of his cuts. In fact what they're saying, what we are saying, and what Nova Scotians are saying, is that what is unacceptable is telling our seniors they have to eat three meals a day on \$5.12. Only the Premier thinks that's okay and is asking for auditors to prove otherwise.

I don't know what he wants to see, Mr. Speaker. Does he want proof that they are getting skinnier? Does he want proof there's no one to take them to church on Sunday? Why doesn't he end this charade right now?

I call on the Premier, put that funding back in.

THE PREMIER: Again, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member is using false information. He knows full well that yesterday those executive directors were here, that

there was no impact on food quality, no impact on service being delivered to seniors. What they did say, they raised an issue about, on a go-forward basis, what this would mean to them.

The Minister of Health and Wellness has been reaching out, talking to them and working with them, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to make sure seniors are a priority in this province and not a political pawn like the member across the aisle is using them.

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

PREM.: STUDENT DEBT - INCREASES

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, students returned to universities across this province last month to an increased debt load. Data released by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission showed students in Nova Scotia have faced the largest increase in fees since the government took office, on capping the tuition. In fact the tuition fees are increasing more rapidly than anywhere else in the country under this government.

I ask the Premier this at a time when Nova Scotia really needs to attract and retain more young people. Again, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier, is he proud of this government's decision to increase the debt load on students who are already strapped for cash?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As he would know, there has been in place the Nova Scotia bursary for Nova Scotia students of about \$1,200 a year. He would also know, under the leadership of the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education, one of the first things we did is remove interest off student debt. He would also know for Nova Scotians who finish their degree in four years in this province, we forgive the Nova Scotia portion of the student loan.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, other provinces are taking action to reduce the debt load on post-secondary students - provincial governments in both Ontario and New Brunswick are taking action to eliminate tuition. In Ontario, work is being done to ensure that students' families with incomes under \$50,000 will have no provincial student debt. In New Brunswick, tuition will soon be free for students from low-income and middle-class families. Meanwhile, this government is forcing thousands of students in this province farther into the red. I'll table those documents. I ask the Premier, why has the government decided to burden students with debt when there are ways to make post-secondary education more affordable from the very start?

THE PREMIER: Again, I want to tell the honourable member that for any Nova Scotia student who completes the degree in four years, the entire Nova Scotia portion of

that student loan will be forgiven. Nova Scotians with a disability have up to 10 years to finish their degree, and their student debt would be forgiven. We're going to continue to work with students. We worked with private sector to provide those job opportunities to those students here. As he would know, or he should know, this province is leading the country per capita in retaining our young people. Population is up, retaining youth here. Job opportunities are here because the private sector is providing them. We're making sure that when students graduate in this province, their student debt is looked after.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Unfortunately this government has ignored post-secondary education's biggest detractors, high tuition fees and student debts. Only the New Democratic Party has made a plan to make university and college more affordable in Nova Scotia. For example, the New Democratic Party will soon introduce legislation that will eliminate tuition at Nova Scotia Community College. This would address a major funding gap for community college students where there are fewer supports and programs to address student debt. I ask the Premier, will he take the first step to making post-secondary education more affordable by supporting the NDP's effort to eliminate tuition at Nova Scotia Community College?

THE PREMIER: What the honourable member has not told the House or Nova Scotians is how he's going to pay for that. The last time they were in power, they cut \$65 million out of classrooms across this province. Is that where you're going to find the money?

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

PREM.: NURSING HOMES - AUDITS

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: My question is for the Premier. It's pretty obvious this week that the Premier is getting annoyed and frustrated when people question him about the cuts he has made to our nursing homes. No wonder: he got caught. He was hoping that no one would mention it, but then Northwood spoke up, and now other nursing homes are speaking up, about the devastating effects his cuts are having on our senior residents, including their food budget. When he got caught, instead of doing the right thing by our seniors and putting the funding back in place, he called in the auditors. No wonder nursing homes are afraid to come here and speak their minds about what's going on when that's the reaction they get from this Premier.

I'd like to ask the Premier, are other nursing homes going to have auditors called in now because they have spoken up against his cruel budget cuts?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member should know that when Northwood raised the concern, they came to government, we went in, and we looked at them. There was a difference in numbers. He should also know that Northwood not only is a not-for-profit, but it also has a for-profit part of its operation. They agreed to have the auditor come

in. They agreed on who that was. We were going in to look at those numbers. I think any reasonable person, when there's a dispute between them, it's not automatically accepting we're right. We're going in to let a third party look at that, and we'll continue to work with Northwood. I have heard from four executive directors yesterday who said there was no impact on food quality and no impact on the residents. That honourable member should perhaps listen to front-line people delivering services.

MR. BAILLIE: To be perfectly blunt, the residents in our nursing homes do not care whether they are for-profit or not-for-profit nursing homes. They just want a decent meal three times a day. Is that too much to ask? They don't care how many auditors the Premier sends to their nursing home. They just want to eat a healthy, nutritious meal. They want the dignity of a reasonable retirement. He has taken that away by cutting the funding to those homes and watching as our seniors eat on \$5.12 a day. No auditor is going to change that fact. Will the Premier end this auditor charade and put the funding back in so our seniors living in nursing homes - for-profit or not - get the dignity that they deserve?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the honourable member for the question. The fact of the matter is the executive directors of four nursing homes were here and disputing the very thing the member is talking about. He is absolutely not correct, they said it has not impacted food quality, has not impacted the fact that services (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: They did say, Mr. Speaker, they were concerned about what happens next year. As we have said, the Minister of Health and Wellness is reaching out to those nursing homes and working with them. He also should know that the issue around the auditor is related to a difference of opinion. Instead of automatically assuming we were right, we brought a third party in, that was agreed on both sides, to make sure we get to the bottom of it.

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

EECD - TEACHERS: WORKING CONDITIONS - IMPROVEMENT

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Teachers from across the province are telling me they are tired of the Liberals' spin, spin, spin. They tell me the minister's action plan is a no-starter and they have shared their frustrations with PowerSchool Gradebook and TIENET.

Teachers are held accountable for inputting students' grades in a faulty system, although many teachers find themselves giving up in frustration when the system

repeatedly tells them “the following page has become unresponsive.” You can wait until the page becomes responsive or choose to kill it.

My question for the minister is, will the minister please tell this House what she is planning to do to improve teachers’ working conditions? Will she remove her action plan and reduce data entry for the 9,000 frustrated teachers who are tired of having to constantly hit the “kill” option on the PowerSchool Gradebook.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, what I would be proud to tell the House and the folks in the gallery who, I believe, understand this, and all Nova Scotians, is that when we formed government in 2013 we inherited a mess - we inherited four years of cuts to education. We began to listen to teachers then and teachers said to us they wanted smaller class sizes and we began to implement those. They told us they wanted a more manageable curriculum, we brought teachers from the classroom in to help develop that. So, Mr. Speaker, I think we have demonstrated that we have listened.

Are there still concerns that teachers have? Absolutely. Are we listening to teachers, are we providing a forum for that to happen? Absolutely.

MS. ZANN: Well as somebody who should be proud of being a public school teacher, it’s interesting she does not include that in her bio on the government website. Instead, she has principal and supervisor.

Another frustration I often hear from teachers is that the current business model of education doesn’t work. Teachers want to be able to spend time building a class community that feels safe and engaging for our students. They were not trained to be data-crunchers. That’s not who they want to be; it’s not who the students need them to be; and I highly doubt it’s what parents want them to be when they send their children to school.

As Education and Early Childhood Development Critic, it’s my belief we need to move towards a model where decisions about classrooms are based on local needs, not driven by a dubious data collection system.

My question for the minister is, does she agree that her government’s business model for education means that teachers are forced to spend more time doing data collection than taking care of the diverse needs of students and doing what teachers do best, teach?

MS. CASEY: In response to the question, I’m really proud to say that I’m a teacher. You don’t become a principal until you’ve been a teacher, and I would think people would understand that.

However, having said that, I do want to say that we have, we will continue to listen. I think our budgets for the last three years have demonstrated that. For four years there

were budget cuts by the NDP. The member speaking sat on her hands and did nothing but support those budgets.

Mr. Speaker, when teachers were protesting they went to her office (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development has the floor.

MS. CASEY: It's my understanding, Mr. Speaker (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development has the floor.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, it's (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please, the honourable Minister of Education and Early Development has the floor.

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding when teachers were protesting those cuts under the NDP Government and they went to the office of the member opposite, she had not reported to work that day.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

EECD: CLASSROOM IMPROVEMENT MEETINGS - SCHEDULE CONFIRM

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Teachers, parents, and students will be watching the potential upcoming meetings on classroom improvements. We all want to see meaningful results come from these meetings. My question to the minister is, is the first meeting scheduled, and when can Nova Scotians expect questions from classroom teachers to be addressed or answered?

HON. KAREN CASEY: When the invitation went to the Teachers Union, to the president, from me to President Doucet, it was an invitation for the three partners to sit down and talk about a forum where teachers' concerns could be heard. I was very pleased to have a favourable response from the Teachers Union. In the response, there was an agreement that we would look at dates to have our first meeting. When that is announced, I will be glad to share it with the member opposite.

MR. DUNN: Many teachers have freely explained the numerous frustrations they face each day in the classroom. I've had the opportunity to speak with many teachers across the province. My question to the minister is, will the minister commit to also meet with classroom teachers to discuss the working conditions they are facing in their classrooms?

MS. CASEY: I would like to say that I've spoken to teachers on Monday and on Tuesday of this week. I've arranged opportunities to go into classrooms. Teachers have invited me to go in, and I've accepted that invitation. That will happen. I do want to say to members in the House here that we're not only asking teachers to identify their concerns. We're asking them to help us with solutions.

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

PSC – CAREER BEACON: POSTING - DURATION

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: My question is for the Minister of the Public Service Commission. On Tuesday, October 18th, a posting for a permanent position of associate deputy minister appeared on Career Beacon, a job-posting website. The closing date for this six-figure job is only seven days later, on October 25th. My question for the minister is simple, is it fair to post a government job for just one week?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, as you can appreciate, I don't check the job postings of the Public Service Commission, but I'd be more than happy to look into that and get back to the member.

MR. ORRELL: The minister responsible should know what the rules are. I just asked, is it fair to post that job for one week? A six-figure job with a one-week competition sounds really familiar, Mr. Speaker. That's the process that landed Marilla Stephenson her job as managing director of corporate and external relations. Maybe that's the process this government has adopted to ensure that the person the government wants wins the competition. My question is, did an insider write the job description for the position of Associate Deputy Minister of Communications Nova Scotia?

MR. KOUSOULIS: I'd like to thank Marilla Stephenson for the wonderful work she's doing implementing the One Nova Scotia report. Mr. Speaker, as you know, this past summer, Nova Scotia had a (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of the Public Service Commission has the floor.

MR. KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, as you know, this past summer, Nova Scotia had a record year in tourism, something that every member and every Nova Scotian can be proud of. I'd like to thank everybody who's working on the One Nova Scotia report, everyone who's having a positive outlook in this province. I wish the Opposition could have a positive outlook like the rest of Nova Scotians.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: OPIOID OVERDOSES - ADDRESS

HON. DAVID WILSON: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. It's alarming to hear about the spike in opioid overdoses in Nova Scotia this year, which to date has already claimed around 70 lives. The CEO of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia stated that as this problem grows, there are simply not enough doctors working in addiction medicine. He also said there's a need for more counselling services as well as a greater focus on education and intervention. I'd like to ask the minister, what is he doing to address the growing problem of opioid overdoses in Nova Scotia?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I thank the member for that important question that he's bringing to the floor of the Legislature today. We have taken a proactive approach in terms of even a potential coming storm with fentanyl and carfentanyl. About four weeks ago, I started speaking first to the deputy minister to arrange a meeting of the college, Doctors Nova Scotia, and others who can map out a more comprehensive plan. I met with Doctors Nova Scotia yesterday. We all realize that 85 doctors who do some replacement therapy is simply not enough, and we'll now map out a plan over the next few weeks so that Nova Scotians know exactly what kinds of helps and support are out there.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, my concern is that the government hasn't acted quickly enough. There are overdoses happening daily, weekly, here in our province, and we knew from reports that this was coming to our province. Yesterday, I asked the minister about the possible closure of the Ally Centre of Cape Breton because of federal funding cuts to that facility; however, there were not a lot of suggestions or an answer from the government on what they're going to do. The Ally Centre of Cape Breton is one, as I said yesterday, of only two sites in the province piloting the program to distribute Naloxone anti-overdose kits.

So, I would like to ask the minister again, what is he doing to ensure the Ally Centre of Cape Breton will not have to shut its doors?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, an important question as well and that is a program that I've observed in action and one very valuable for those vulnerable citizens of the province. We know that the Ally Centre of Cape Breton has lost its federal grant; in fact, we've reached out to the federal government to see about seeing it restored. They've given considerable help to British Columbia, and Nova Scotia will expect equity in terms of supporting the centre - and, next week, we'll review not just a short-term need but the long-term need of that centre.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

HEALTH & WELLNESS - WEYMOUTH: DOCTOR - TIME FRAME

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. On Tuesday night, more than 150 people gathered in Weymouth to discuss the severe doctor shortage in that part of the province. Many of the people shared their stories, stories of fear, frustration, and tragedy. One woman told the crowd she lost her baby because the health services she needed were not available close to her home. The people gathered in Weymouth Tuesday night feel betrayed by the Liberal promise of a doctor for every Nova Scotia.

My question for the minister, how long will the people of Weymouth have to wait before the minister acts to ease the stress and suffering of all those who don't have a family doctor?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, to the member for Kings South who asked again a question that is being addressed. We know that many small communities in the province will find it in fact impossible to attract someone who wants to practise as a solo physician these days. So, moving those patients in Weymouth to the collaborative clinic in Clare as well as Digby indeed has met with some challenges, because attracting doctors to Digby over the last number of years - in fact we're now into a second decade where they have had a deficiency of physicians, but, I'm pleased to say that we currently have many of the patients from Weymouth now going to Clare; a new locum has started in Digby; and two nurse practitioners have started at the Digby collaborative practice. It will take a little time to meet all of the needs, but we are well underway.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, the member for Clare-Digby told the crowd at the meeting there is a position open for a physician in Weymouth, but no doctor wanted to come and live in that community. The warden and Health Authority corrected the member and said no doctor would come because there wasn't a position in Weymouth to fill. A newspaper account of the meeting, which I'll table, says the member for Clare-Digby told the audience he had convinced the minister to approve a doctor to work in Weymouth if one could be found.

My question for the minister is this, the people of Weymouth deserve a straight answer - who is right, the member for Clare-Digby or the Health Authority?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, probably there has been no issue over the past year that I've actually received up-to-the-minute information on the member for Clare-Digby. I don't know whether he's checking on me Sunday mornings, but he checks in Sunday morning with an information update on the situation. He has answered many, many calls from the residents to give them that assurance that a plan is unfolding, and what I can tell the member opposite, we will see in fact some very, very good news to address Weymouth's situation.

There are many communities the same way. One in my riding of Aylesford with an 83-year-old doctor are seeing the last days of a family practitioner who has given unbelievable service to that community, but in the future they will go to Berwick or Kingston.

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

CCH: KRAFT PROJ. PLAY CONTEST - FUNDING

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage. The Northside Soccer Association headed by Angela Hull and Sandy Cantwell-Kerr was successful in winning the Kraft Heinz Project Play contest for \$200,000 to upgrade Munro Park soccer field. This contest brought a whole Cape Breton community together. CBRM and ACOA ended up with over \$200,000.

We applied for money from the Province of Nova Scotia. Two letters, four applications later, and we were told that we were past the deadline - it was too late. This process started in September 2015, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister tell these good people if any money will be made available to complete this project this year?

HON. TONY INCE: Thank you for the question. First of all, I'd like to say that we at our department look at all those community organizations and welcome any applications from any of those community organizations.

My staff have met with those individuals and have communicated with them. We will, in the future coming year, for the next application, ask that organization to submit that application. My staff and department will be willing to work with them and move everything forward. Thank you.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I started that process back in September 2015, last year. I sent two letters, I asked questions in the Legislature and I passed in four applications that were either lost or misplaced.

Mr. Speaker, when they finally got the application, I was told the application was too late. My question is, if it's not going to be done this year, do we have to reapply or will it be put in a queue automatically?

MR. INCE: First of all, the group that submitted the paperwork that you are referring to, or documents, it was a proposal and it wasn't a full application. So I asked them to send in the application and our staff will work with them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

JUSTICE: JAILS - SEGREGATION

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: My question is to the Minister of Justice. The Ontario Government has been under pressure to reform its use of solitary confinement following reports of poor conditions at correctional centres. Just this week the Ontario Human Rights Commission has said that there is an alarming and systemic overuse of segregation in the province's jails. I will table that.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is I'd like to ask the minister, does she have any concerns about the use of segregation in jails here in Nova Scotia?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member opposite has raised a very important question, and one that 60 seconds doesn't allow for a good answer.

I think all of us are concerned about the impacts around segregation or closed confinement in our correctional facilities. We're certainly very aware of it in terms of mental health concerns, and our correctional facilities and staff are working to change some of the procedures we have or some of the opportunities to help people with mental illness.

MS. MANCINI: Our caucus has been trying to get information from the Department of Justice about the use of segregation in Nova Scotia jails. However, we have been informed through a letter from the department that it does not track the total time a person spends in segregation, nor does it provide any breakdown of how many inmates are there due to disciplinary reasons or safety issues. If there is no tracking then this would appear to be an apparent lack of oversight by her department.

I ask the minister, if the department is lacking such critical information on the use of segregation, how does the minister know whether or not there are issues that need to be addressed?

MS. WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I know that when there was a snapshot taken on a single day it was 3 per cent of the offenders who were in our institutions who were in either closed confinement or segregation. The reasons for that are varied, they're absolutely wide. Sometimes, and I admit that it's not the majority of time, it's because the individual asks. Sometimes it's for their own protection, sometimes it's because of disciplinary action. But it isn't taken lightly, it is the very last resort. There are other things that can be done first.

One thing I think that is very positive is we are working with the federal government - and it is in the federal minister's mandate - to look at segregation. As part of that, we have reduced the days from 15 to 10 that can be allowed on a regular basis.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

HEALTH & WELLNESS: PICTOU - DOCTOR SHORTAGE

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I have hundreds of constituents without a doctor. This past month, a constituent reached out to me with a heartbreaking story. A young woman and her husband were expecting. However, her pregnancy became unviable with a molar pregnancy, which required immediate surgery, which then discovered that she had cancer - she has gone through months of chemo.

She is going through this whole ordeal without a doctor, despite my desperate and repeated efforts to work with the Health Authority. Given this woman's circumstances, does the Health Minister believe it's good enough for me to give her a 1-800 number and wait? I certainly don't think it's good enough.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Pictou West for that question. As the member knows, Pictou had the unfortunate death of a doctor, also doctors, as they are in the last years of their practice, closed the walk-in clinic at Sutherland Memorial, so we had a number of quick-developing events take place in Pictou.

As she knows, we are currently working to establish a further practice. Certainly one of the new nurse practitioners will be going to that community for primary care.

MS. MACFARLANE: I believe that the Health Authority needs to take into consideration those who have life-threatening medical conditions waiting five, 10 years - with 100,000 people in this province waiting for a doctor - is unacceptable when you have a condition that needs to be monitored every week.

I'd like to know if the minister here today will stand and help me find this young lady a doctor.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question because there are those very challenging circumstances that come up. I've handled a number personally, reached out to Nova Scotians, in fact another one recently in the member's riding. What I can tell the member opposite is the first call will be made before 12:00 noon today.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: MENTAL HEALTH CARE CRISIS - MIN. ADMIT

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, mental health wait-lists for young adolescents has, once again, taken a sharp increase in Nova Scotia. Access to mental health care has been an issue in this province for far too long, and it's always disappointing to see when the wait times grow even larger. Province-wide wait times have more than doubled for access to service in communities. I'll table that document.

Will the minister now admit that there's a crisis in mental health care?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I can say that when I arrived here, in fact, even for many years, we had a wait-list of over 900 at the IWK. As the member knows, we have now dramatically reduced the wait-list for the more intensive services.

As the member knows, we're building capacity across the province, and yesterday, with the Stronger Families announcement, extra money for that program, we'll have 3,500 families that will receive that coaching with their adolescent children. We are getting marvellous results from it.

We'll continue to work to improve mental health services for youth, especially that transitional group of 19 to 25, which are a challenge in all our provinces.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, that chart basically has wait times that are almost off the chart. Trends like this are not new to Nova Scotians who are trying to navigate the mental health system. This is not the way to handle mental health care delivery in the province, regardless of their age. We have a lot to do, and this minister needs to step up a lot more than what he has been doing.

Long waits for mental health services can end in tragedy. We've talked about some of those things here in the House of Assembly, and I know we as MLAs have heard it far too often in our communities. Will the minister table his plans to address all mental health cases within acceptable time periods before the end of the Fall session?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I can tell the member today is that I've had the first draft from the mental health panel that we established in the Spring. I asked for a very short number of recommendations that we could implement very quickly. Under the guidance and work of the co-chairs, Dr. Stan Kutcher and Starr Dobson, the first area that they've highlighted is our school system.

I'm pleased to say that on Tuesday, when I met with a side meeting with the federal minister to take a look through the accord for additional funding for mental health resources for our school system - I hope to be able to say very soon that there will be results coming from that approach.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES:
CUTS - TOTALS PROVIDE**

HON. DAVID WILSON: When he sat on this side of the House as Opposition Leader, the Premier told Nova Scotians that he would have an open and transparent government if they were given the chance to govern. Since August, we've been trying to

obtain from the Department of Health and Wellness the total cuts that long-term care facilities have had over the last two years. The minister continues to add and add to the list of cuts that happen, and indicated yesterday in the answer to a question that a couple different streams of funding would be affected by the 1 per cent cut.

I want to ask the minister, would he provide the House with the total amount of funding that was cut to each long-term care facility and not require the Opposition to pay for that information through freedom of information?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for this question. In the Health and Wellness Department we provide the members opposite and Nova Scotians with the facts. If he'd like a more concise picture with two numbers added together, I'm more than prepared to provide him with that.

MR. DAVID WILSON: That's what we asked for in August, Mr. Speaker. It's not very difficult. How much was Northwood cut? How much was Saint Vincent's guest home cut? How much was Oakwood Terrace cut? We just want to see how much these facilities were cut.

This government cut millions of dollars from long-term care facilities across the province over the last few years, and yesterday the minister said that just last week they started to reach out to those nursing homes to find out how they were handling those cuts, the reductions, and what the challenges were.

Is this really the minister's plan for long-term care in Nova Scotia, to make cuts and then ask questions later?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, we realize that with some of the consolidation we did through the one Health Authority, especially around procurement, a better use of human resources - shared resources in some cases - that we have a higher quality of work being done, both in the Health Authority and with our delivery service across the province.

We anticipated that we could do much the same with nursing homes, who have operated their 132 facilities very independently. Now it is time to take a look at the lessons learned. I've been in about 60 per cent of our nursing homes. Many have been able to look after the 2 per cent cut, but we will take a look at those that have some needs and address them very quickly.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

CCH - FILM IND.: DISARRAY - RECOGNIZE

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question through you is to the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

The film industry in Nova Scotia is suffering. However, the Deputy Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage stated, anecdotally, that the film industry is doing well. In fact, though, the Directors Guild of Canada has shown that its members made \$2.8 million less in 2015 after the Film Tax Credit was suddenly cut.

When will the minister recognize that the film industry is in disarray and that cutting the Film Tax Credit was a mistake?

HON. TONY INCE: I thank my colleague for the question. First of all, the creative industries are growing. Film is just one part of the creative industries. I cannot speak to the specifics around film. If you would like to have some direct answers on film, I would ask you to speak to the Minister of Business.

MS. MACFARLANE: I will remind the minister that his department is directly related to the film industry, as well as the Department of Business. So I'm open to whoever wants to answer the next question.

The Deputy Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage claims the industry is rebounding. However, the Directors Guild of Canada said fewer productions, a westward migration of workers, and a complicated new incentive fund are to blame. In addition, they say that NSBI's new incentive fund is too time-consuming to attract new business and takes too long to deliver necessary funds. I can table that.

When will the minister admit that it was a mistake to cut the Film Tax Credit and take action to help the struggling film industry, and bring jobs back to Nova Scotia?

HON. MARK FUREY: I appreciate the question. It gives us the opportunity to speak to the growth that the industry has experienced most recently. My colleague knows that we work very closely with the industry to find those issues of concern. Over the past 18 months, we have come to what I believe are solutions in advancing the Film and Television Production Incentive Fund. To date, we have 38 productions that have been approved. We just recently increased the budget for the fund by \$1.5 million because of the uptake in the fund. More importantly, we just approved a \$6 million investment in the production *The Mist*, the single largest production ever in the Province of Nova Scotia. Things are going very well in the film industry.

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

ENVIRON. - MATTATALL LAKE: ALGAE BLOOM - REMEDIATION

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: My question is for the Minister of Environment. For the last three years, residents of Mattatall Lake have been dealing with a terrible algae bloom problem. Their lake literally turns deep green. The toxicity of the algae bloom has been proven in testing at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Bible Hill. All of this has been

shared repeatedly with the minister's department, but the department, and the minister herself, have admitted that they don't have the expertise to deal with this problem. This is a problem at Mattatall Lake today, but it could be your lake anywhere in the province at some point in the future. I would like to ask the Minister of Environment now, what steps has she taken to acquire the expertise in her department to help the residents of Mattatall Lake deal with their algae bloom and other lakes around the province that may face similar problems in the future?

HON. MARGARET MILLER: This is a very important issue, certainly, to many residents around Nova Scotia who do have lakes. Mattatall Lake is not rare. This is something that you're going to see happening more and more around our province. It can be the result of many factors, including higher temperatures. What we're doing is encouraging the groups to form - in this case, especially - a watershed protection committee so we can look at what the real source is of the additives in the water that promote the algae bloom.

MR. BAILLIE: I appreciate the answer, but the residents of Mattatall Lake are going to be wondering exactly who the minister means by "we" because her department has completely abdicated its responsibilities to the volunteer residents themselves. Yes, they've formed a stewardship association, and yes, the department gave them \$10,000 and then told them to find an expert in the United States to help them deal with the problem. That's not good enough, Mr. Speaker. That's why we have a Department of Environment: to help people who have these issues with the environment like at Mattatall Lake. I'd like to ask the minister, will she assure the residents of Mattatall Lake today that her department will take responsibility for getting to the root of the problem and helping them clean up Mattatall Lake?

MS. MILLER: We have certainly never said to the residents of Mattatall Lake that it's their problem, and they have to deal with it. We realize that this is an ongoing problem, and it could be affecting any lake in Nova Scotia. I'm not sure if I have the numbers exactly right, but I believe there are 2,400 lakes in Nova Scotia, and to expect government to monitor all those lakes and control the quality in those lakes is not realistic for the citizens of Nova Scotia. I have met with the residents of Mattatall Lake. We continue to meet with them. My department continues to meet with them, and we will come up with a solution that works for all of us.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

COM. SERV. - AFFORDABLE/ADEQUATE HOUSING

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services. There is a desperate need for more and better-quality affordable housing, particularly in Halifax Needham where rents and prices have increased significantly in the last ten years.

Monday was the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, and I met with constituents struggling to find housing. Two of them are living in a shelter, and receiving the shelter and receiving the shelter allowance of \$78 a month. I ask the Minister of Community Services, what hope can you give to income assistance recipients, currently living in shelters, that there is a pathway for them towards affordable and adequate housing?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: I thank the member for the question. This government and, in fact, the previous government - started under the previous government - supports a shelter transition community support worker in the shelters in Halifax Needham, and they have helped people find affordable housing whether it's Needham or the rest of the peninsula or in Dartmouth.

Between the twenty-block area between Cogswell and North End Halifax, there are 1683 social housing units. There are 15 more than there were a couple of weeks ago, because we've actually taken over the mortgages for the Brunswick Street Non-Profit Housing so that we wouldn't lose those units within Halifax Needham. So, there are many tools within the toolbox of affordable housing, and we'll be making announcements in the coming weeks.

MS. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, at that same meeting with constituents, I heard about some really abysmal living conditions inside some of those Metro Regional Housing Authority facilities. I would like to ask the minister for an update on how they're going to address problems like bedbugs, mice and rat infestations, and other problems.

MS. BERNARD: Well, I'm happy to say within the last three years we've actually invested an additional \$42 million into affordable housing that was sitting in a differed contribution fund that actually her government previously didn't spend a penny of. Part of that \$42 million (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. I'd like to remind everybody to keep their comments directed through the Chair.

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

MS. BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite clearly knows it. Nothing was spent from the differed federal contribution under her government, and part of the money that was part of that \$42 million went into renovations. We've had extraordinary success in the remediation of bedbugs and pest control. We have invested extra money in public housing in Dartmouth, in Uniacke Square, in Mulgrave, and in Greystone. We have tenant associations that are lively and vibrant. We have provided rent supplements. We have reduced the wait list in this province by 10 per cent, the first time in a decade.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: AT-HOME CANCER TREATMENTS - FUND

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Yesterday, I attempted to address the issue of at-home cancer medications to the Minister of Health and Wellness, and as we know, the minister has committed to look at this closer; he has put some money aside.

My question to the minister is, will he commit to the people who have to go to hospital for cancer treatment, who have to travel from our communities like Yarmouth and Sydney for specialty work here in Halifax, who might be available to oral, at-home cancer treatments - will he commit through you, Mr. Speaker, to funding at-home cancer treatments once and for all?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: First of all, I have to say I'm very disappointed that the member waited until the last moments of the House today. This is a question that's very important to me as minister. It's one that I believe our first explorations are providing some path forward. What I can tell the member very quickly is that we continue to look at how can we move beyond the 77 per cent that are currently funded in the province . . .

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

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition on an introduction.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I do wish to make three introductions of individuals who are seated in your gallery. I must admit I have a bit of a dilemma - one of the three has instructed me not to introduce her because she feels she has been introduced plenty of times in this House. That person is my mother and she's sitting in the middle of the three people in your gallery, so I will honour her wishes and not introduce her.

Mr. Speaker, seated in your gallery, in addition to my mum, are her brother and my uncle, Doug Hubley, who is from Toronto but grew up here in the north end of Halifax, literally went down the road, moved away in 1961 - and I hope he doesn't mind me saying this - at the age of 87 has returned to see our city and our province here. So let's welcome him to the House. His son, Steve, is also with him and I'd like the members to welcome my family to the House. (Applause)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm just curious if the Leader of the Official Opposition is going to take credit for the increase in tourism numbers now that he has indicated he has even brought family here to the province this summer. (Laughter) It's certainly great to have them here.

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. 36.

Bill No. 36 - Gaming Control Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Business.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 36, an Act to Amend the Gaming Control Act, be read for a second time.

Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak to this administrative amendment, and I'll take a few moments to explain why this change is needed and why it is administrative in nature. This change is needed to update the Gaming Control Act which currently states that the former, and now defunct, Nova Scotia Gaming Commission, issues gaming licences. The commission no longer exists and today it is the Executive Director of Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel and Tobacco who, on a day-to-day operational basis, issues gaming licences. He does so under my oversight.

When the Gaming Control Act came into effect in 1995, it established the Nova Scotia Gaming Commission as the body responsible for regulating gaming in the province. The commission was later dissolved and today the Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel and Tobacco Division of Service Nova Scotia fulfills this role.

In 2011 the Gaming Control Act was amended to bring the legislation in line with the way gaming is currently regulated and controlled in Nova Scotia. That amendment, Bill No. 104, replaced the word "commission" with the word "minister." The amendment I am introducing today, Mr. Speaker, amends Bill No. 104 to designate the Executive Director of Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel and Tobacco as the licensing authority for gaming, and not the minister.

The reason is simple, Mr. Speaker. In everyday operational practice, it is the Executive Director of Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel and Tobacco who has, and should have, the authority to issue gaming licences and not the minister. This authority should rest with the executive director, and not the minister, for two reasons: Service Nova Scotia receives approximately 7,500 requests for gaming licences each year. Our goal is to process these applications in a timely and efficient manner, within days.

To ensure we are providing efficient and timely client service, the authority to issue these licences must be at the operational, and not the ministerial, level. This is part of Service Nova Scotia's ongoing work to enhance client service and achieve excellence in public sector service excellence.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, as Minister responsible for Part II of the Gaming Control Act, my role is supervision over the regulation and control of gaming in Nova Scotia, while the executive director provides operational day-to-day regulatory oversight.

Mr. Speaker, amending Bill No. 104 will allow us to amend the Gaming Control Regulations and proclaim Bill No. 104. It will ensure the Act is aligned to our existing licensing structure and operational practices. Finally, it will allow us to also amend the regulations to remove the word "commission", which must also be done before we are able to proclaim Bill No. 104.

Making this change will not change the role, responsibilities, or oversight of the minister, nor will it detrimentally impact or affect the integrity of gaming in Nova Scotia. The goal is to update our gaming legislation so that it properly reflects the existing licensing structure administered by Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel and Tobacco Division under the oversight of the Minister of Service Nova Scotia. The intent is to serve our clients in an efficient manner while continuing to ensure the integrity of gaming in Nova Scotia.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks and look forward to the comments of my colleagues.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: We do see the bill for what it is, which is some housekeeping to organize the legislation to match with the actual administration that's happening today in Service Nova Scotia. It wasn't that long ago that we did have an Alcohol and Gaming Commission, so I can understand that it's taken a few years to get it updated. But again, we are here simply talking about some housekeeping.

I would have liked to have seen some more substance in it as well, maybe talking about regulations on how we're dealing with some of the new lotteries that are happening in this province. The best example that I have of course, is the Chase the Ace lotteries that are happening right across this province to make it effective and timely for them to get their licences up and running. The example I have that's going gangbusters at this point is the Chase the Ace in West Pubnico at the Legion. That one is already up to \$330,000. I think it's actually higher than that. If you add up the night ticket win and of course the pot, I think it's closer to \$360,000 right now. That one's doing well because they have the one licence, and they're adapting to it, of course, as the pot goes up.

There are a number of different stipulations that are put forward by the executive director of Service Nova Scotia on how they actually allow this to happen. I think it's been a learning experience for a number these Chase the Aces, how government can help those communities keep their proceeds safe and keep their volunteers within the law. There's a lot going on at one of these things.

The added piece is the smaller organizations that have started Chase the Aces and give away their pot within a few nights. They actually have to go and reapply and do all that work.

I would be interested to see, maybe in the minister's response, in his closing, what kind of activity are we seeing within the department? How effective is it in reissuing licences or doing licences so that it is more effective for Nova Scotia organizations that are doing the best that they can and organizing lotteries to fund services that are not available from government?

With that, Mr. Speaker, I don't see a lot wrong with what we're doing. I just wish there was more substance in it, as we've said on a number of pieces of legislation that the government has presented to us in the House of Assembly.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: I just have a few words on this bill. I know the minister stood and indicated that it's more of kind of a housekeeping type of piece of legislation. But I've been in this this Legislature for many, many years now, and when I hear that, antennae go up. You have to make sure that that's actually the case. I guess we will find out as this progresses through the process here to go over to Law Amendments, for example.

The minister indicated in his comments that the powers to oversee some of these approvals should go over to the operational side of things, not in the ministerial capacity or the department's capacity. I think he indicated there were some 7,500 applications a year. One of the reasons to move this over to the operational side would be a quicker ability to respond and to approve or not approve.

But it's not all bad to ensure that sometimes these requests aren't dealt with too quickly. Throughout the years in Nova Scotia, there have been times when gaming have been very high on the attention of Nova Scotians, and the effects that gaming has on Nova Scotians.

I know the minister said it's their job to ensure that they're serving their clients, but it's also the government's responsibility to ensure that programs and services that are approved and supported and funded through the government, shouldn't harm Nova Scotians, either, or they should be able to try to mitigate the harm.

I'm not here to get into a discussion about the pros and cons of gaming in the province. There are people on either side of that argument who could stand in their place here in the Legislature, or in the public, and say why we shouldn't have gaming, and why we should have gaming. I am very much in support of regulating gaming in our province. I've said that before, as minister who oversaw a portion of the gaming file when we were in government. It's important that government has a role in ensuring that gaming in our province is done in a way that minimizes the impact of addictions and those who have a problem with addictions, especially around gambling.

I've read reports of jurisdictions across the globe that don't regulate gaming and the issue of addiction is much worse in those jurisdictions. I think government needs to play a role, and I think they need to be the ones that are overseeing it as much as possible, and I hope that this change is not just to expedite those applications and fast-track approving potentially new gaming or new ways of gaming in Nova Scotia.

I think it's extremely important to make sure there's a balanced approach here when dealing with gaming. We know in more recent years the impact that online gaming has, especially on our young population. It's very popular, but I think the government needs to continue to monitor that.

We will support this moving forward, but we will keep an eye on ensuring that this is the right move for the government to do and we hope that the oversight, truly, is with the government, with the minister and his department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

The honourable Minister of Business.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, just a few brief comments in reply to the comments offered by both my colleagues - very appropriate points to make. I'll speak very briefly, first to the comments of the member for Argyle-Barrington. I'm pleased to hear that he's receptive to the changes. He speaks about the Chase the Ace game that continues to grow in Nova Scotia. He has referenced specifically the circumstances of the game in West Pubnico. I have a number of family members who are regularly participating in that game, and I hope they are successful, and I hope they think of me at some point during the consideration of how they administer that money.

Mr. Speaker, I think the point my colleague makes, really, is finding a balance between ongoing games and the interests of games, and government's ability to provide oversight, at the same time very conscious of consumer protection in how those games are played. The integrity of these games remains critically important. That is the balance between legislation, regulation, and department policy. Specific to Chase the Ace, we want to continue to provide the efficiencies, recognizing the integrity of these games, but we also want to be able to deal with those circumstances at the policy level wherever we can.

That leads into the comments of my colleague from the New Democratic Party, hoping that these 7,500 applications aren't being rushed through. I want to assure all members of this House, and the public at large, who are taking great interest in these games, particularly the Chase the Ace game, that we want to ensure and maintain not only the integrity of the game, but the best interests of those who are playing those games, Mr. Speaker.

There is no desire to rush the approval of applications for these types of licences, Mr. Speaker, it is about finding a balance between the ability to play, the ability of our community groups to find unique and new ways of fundraising, at the same time protecting the integrity of the game so that our community groups can continue with those efforts in mind.

I think it would be appropriate, Mr. Speaker, to recognize the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness and the work they are doing with the public at large, including the private sector business community, and stakeholders across the province, as they provide a very open mind, inclusive leadership to how we approach legislation and regulation, and the ability to recognize both the concerns of my colleagues who spoke briefly on this today, that there is appropriate oversight and that the best interests of Nova Scotians are retained.

With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, I want to assure both my colleagues that is our effort - that is our intent - with this administrative change. I will continue to provide oversight as the minister responsible, and with those comments I rise to close second reading on Bill No. 36, an Act to Amend Chapter 260 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Liquor Control Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 36. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, 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 Halifax Armdale, with 21 minutes remaining.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to continue with the minutes that I have left here this morning with my reply. I would like to take the remainder of the time that I have left to address some of the significant progress our government has made more generally.

As the Speech from the Throne detailed, our government has been moving forward with a practical and progressive plan for a stronger Nova Scotia. I'm proud of the steps we've taken in education, in employment, in immigration, health care, and I believe it's worth highlighting some of the considerable progress we've made, and will continue to make.

Our government's first update to Budget 2016-17 projects a small increase in the surplus. With \$102.3 million in infrastructure investments in clean water, post-secondary education, and innovative research, this is a sure sign that our prudent fiscal plan is helping to build a stronger Nova Scotia.

Our government has launched a new initiative to welcome an additional 50 international students in 2017, from China, India, and the Philippines. This is an exciting pilot project and it will help recruit and retain international post-secondary students, and ultimately strengthen our province by helping young graduates launch their careers in Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotia's tourism industry is on track to reach record growth in 2016. More people are coming to discover our beautiful province and they are doing wonders for our businesses. Tourism revenues for July 2016 are estimated to be \$362 million, bringing year-to-date July tourism revenues to \$1.3 billion. Room nights sold and overall visitation numbers were both up over 5 per cent from last year.

This year we concluded our redesign of Nova Scotia's employment services system, Nova Scotia Works. Our job search centres will be providing better front-line services and support for youth, job seekers, and employers, while more efficiently using the resources we've provided them with. This will strengthen Nova Scotia's workforce and help our young people establish themselves here.

The federal government is investing \$94 million through the Canada First Research Excellence Fund to support Halifax's Ocean Frontier Institute. I was proud to personally be present at this announcement. This funding, along with \$125 million in support from our government, other provinces, and our partners, will cement Canada as a world leader

in ocean science. The Ocean Frontier Institute represents an historic partnership between Dalhousie, Memorial University in Newfoundland and Labrador, the University of Prince Edward Island, and numerous national and international research partners, and will attract world-leading research talent to Halifax. The institute's work will assist our policymakers, scientists, and businesses, and make a huge contribution to our understanding of the ocean ecosystem and sustainable aquaculture.

Our government has improved access to home care for Nova Scotians. Over the past three years, currently only nine of the 28 home care agencies in the province report having a wait-list, compared to 16 agencies last year. Home care is a major priority for us, and we've invested \$59 million in additional home care supports, reducing the overall wait-list for home care by 72 per cent in the last year.

With Housing Nova Scotia entering the new federal Social Infrastructure Fund agreement, our province will see a doubling in the current funding for affordable housing. This represents an almost \$75-million investment in new and existing social housing construction and renovation of shelters and transition homes and affordable housing options for seniors.

Here I want to take a moment to thank the wonderful leadership and the great work that our Minister of Community Services is doing for the entire Province of Nova Scotia. (Applause) This money will be directed to those who need it most, and as part of our government's commitment to ensuring that everyone has a safe place to call home. Our government has reduced wait-lists for affordable housing by almost 600 people over the last 18 months through direct investment, and I'm confident that we can make more progress in the years ahead.

Our government has also been successful in launching the Graduate to Opportunity program in collaboration with our small- and medium-sized businesses. I'm proud to say that we're helping to link young graduates with good-paying jobs that will provide them with needed experience and will provide their employers with energetic and creative employees. I'm proud of the work we are doing under the leadership of the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. The coming expansion of this program is good news for our young people, our businesses, and the future of our province.

Moving on to health care, our government is moving forward with its long-term commitment to invest in collaborative care practices across Nova Scotia. Over the past three years, 134 doctors have been recruited, and we're working hard to recruit more to our province by offering tuition relief, family medicine bursaries, debt assistance, and programs for international medical graduates with return of service agreements.

Here I want to stop for a moment and pay tribute to the hard work and the dedication that I have seen first-hand for the last three years from our Minister of Health and Wellness and to all the work that he has been doing on behalf of all of us in this Legislature, on

behalf of our families, on behalf of our communities, and on behalf of all Nova Scotians. He is truly representing us all on a national scale, and I saw him at the conference, as well, that was held this past week, and I am truly, truly proud to call him my friend, and my colleague, and the Minister of Health and Wellness for the Province of Nova Scotia.

We've given \$3.6 million to the Nova Scotia Health Authority for 22 nursing positions which will allow 14,000 more Nova Scotians to access primary care, and will work to make our collaborative care practices more attractive for physicians and our health professionals. We know that today's physicians want the flexibility and support offered by the collaborative care model, and I am certain that our plan for a health care system centred around quality primary care from collaborative care teams, will produce results from Nova Scotians.

I could tell you firsthand, as the Minister of Immigration, that many may not be aware, but through our Provincial Nominee Program, we have nominated a number of individuals that have come to our province in the last 18 months for primary health care, and we have nominated many, many in a number of the health professions including nursing, including technicians, including many, many professions in health care, and I am very proud of that - that they are selecting Nova Scotia to come live, work, and make this their home. I'm also proud to say that we've established MyHealthNS, a secure online tool to make information-sharing between patients, physicians, and all health care providers easier. I am proud that I got to see this firsthand when I attended - along with a number of our colleagues from the Legislature - this wonderful, wonderful announcement with the Minister of Health and Wellness of our province, with our Premier, and with the federal minister in Halifax two months ago.

Thanks to the collaboration between our province and the federal government, Nova Scotia will soon be the very first province in Canada to offer a digital health service option province-wide, and I cannot wait to start using this myself. This is just another example how we are moving our health care system forward and really, another example of how we are leaders in this province in so many areas, including health.

Now, I want to talk about education. This is something that is very, very dear to me. Our government has completed the very first comprehensive review of our education system in 25 years. Public response to that review was simply overwhelming. As a mother of four children - and I do keep saying that because I am proud of that fact; that's probably the number one thing I am proud of in my life - whose four children have attended the Halifax public school system continuously now for 24 years - and I will say that again, 24 years I have been a mother of the Halifax public school system. It's worth repeating - and I'm not finished yet; I still have my youngest in high school - and as soon as she's out, my first grandson will start elementary, and so, I am very proud of that ...

AN HON. MEMBER: Will that be public school?

MS. DIAB: Public school. This review was long, long overdue. I represented the schools as a student many, many years in the system, myself, as a mother, in parent-teacher association, and SAC - School Advisory Council. I actually worked at the time in the very first junior high that developed the ethics - that was over, actually, that was about almost 15 to 20 years ago - part of the school because we never had it before. I'm proud to say now we're implementing it across the province - ethical standards. Here, I really, really want to thank the Premier and the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development for making education such a priority for this government and this province. I am so proud that we have fulfilled that commitment, and we now have a better understanding of what needs to change to strengthen our education system. I am glad that our government is moving forward with those changes.

We have reinvested millions into our public education system, and yes, we have capped class sizes from Primary to Grade 6. We have hired many new teachers, we have hired more Reading Recovery teachers, early literacy specialists, math mentors, early intervention math teachers, mental health clinicians to support our students, to support our teachers in the classroom. We're spending an additional \$3.6 million on early intensive behavioural intervention so that children with autism have access to the specialized therapy they need to succeed.

Our education action plan is now in its second year of implementation, my colleagues - second year - and we have done this second year only in the public school system, and I am happy to say more math and literacy support for students, expanded delivery of Junior Achievement - I am proud of Junior Achievement - I did Junior Achievement, I was a young kid with a couple of years of English under my belt, and I did Junior Achievement so I understand the benefit of these wonderful things.

The inclusion of coding in our school curriculum - boy, do I wish I had that. More specialists in our schools and expanded breakfast programs. Yes, I actually volunteered as a mother in some of those breakfast programs, and yes, some of our schools need those breakfast programs. This is progress we can be proud of, and it's excellent news for teachers and students and all families.

To help more Nova Scotia students succeed in math and literacy, we have now introduced eight new out-of-school-time learning grants to benefit students who need extra support outside class. They will help community groups, schools, and other organizations provide after-school activities, such as academic coaching, homework help, and literacy support. I'm proud to say I'm helping one of the schools apply for that grant.

Mr. Speaker, there's always more work to do. I'm a realist - I'm a practical person - but I know what we have done, and I know that we are doing more progress to build upon what we have done. I am very happy with how far our province has come over the last three years. I'm looking forward to continuing to work towards a stronger Nova Scotia, with my colleagues and the caucus, with this team.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude my remarks. I would like to reiterate how grateful I am to be in this position and to be able to serve the constituents of Halifax Armdale as the Member of the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

Monsieur le Président, en conclusion, je voudrais réitérer combien je suis reconnaissante d'être dans cette position et d'être en mesure de servir les électeurs de Halifax Armdale comme leur députée.

I understand full well that the position I am in is a privilege.

Je comprends que la position dans laquelle je suis est un privilège.

One that I attained through the support of my family, my teachers from long ago, who have supported me in this election, my friends, my community, and I'm very proud of my children - and I've got to say my son-in-law, who is like my fifth child. I am forever grateful for everything they have done to help and support me. I want to tell all of them that I am very grateful for that. I want to take a moment to thank my former and current constituency and executive assistants: Anthony, Tasha, Peter, Connor. I want to say to all who have helped and supported me how grateful I am for their support and that I will not let them down.

Since October 2013 I have been working hard. The amazing people I meet at anniversaries, at birthdays, at festivals, at schools, at church events, community meetings, on the streets, in grocery stores, at Tim Hortons, at the constituency office and yes, through door knocking - they inspire me and keep me going day after day. Every time I am able to assist someone or direct them towards the help they need, whether it's something big or something small, I am reminded of why we as MLAs chose to run for office in the first place. It is because we know we can make a difference in people's lives and there is no feeling quite like knowing that you have done exactly that.

Mr. Speaker, on October 8, 2013, Nova Scotians voted for a government that was committed to putting Nova Scotians first. To date we have accomplished a great deal that I am proud of and I am excited for what the future holds for the residents of Halifax Armdale and for the entire Nova Scotia community.

Monsieur le Président le 8 octobre 2013 les Néo-Écossais ont voté pour un gouvernement qui était déterminé à placer la Nouvelle-Écosse au premier rang. À ce jour, nous avons accompli beaucoup de choses et je suis très fière et je suis très heureuse pour ce que le l'avenir réserve pour les résidents de Halifax Armdale et de toute la province. Merci beaucoup.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the Minister of Immigration for her remarks. I'm thinking as she was speaking that I too will accomplish the feat of having my oldest son graduate in the next year, having a grandson in school. I have never thought of that accomplishment before but I hope and expect that we will accomplish that, too. So it's very nice to hear and I certainly want to acknowledge that.

I do want to say a few words about the municipal election, simply because unlike many parts of the province, the interest in the municipal elections in Kings North was profound. We saw many election signs, we saw all of the positions available in Kings County were contested, except for unfortunately the school board positions, although the school board reps that I deal with are very great people and I'm happy to see them be acclaimed - Sandy Fraser and Nancy Bigelow-Acker. For all of the other positions the interest in the municipal election of October 15th was very high and we saw various levels of turnout.

One thing I want to bring to the attention of the House is that the highest level of voter turnout was in the Town of Kentville where we saw 51 per cent turnout and they had e-voting available. That seems to have made a difference in the turnout in the Town of Kentville. In the municipality in general we had 30 per cent turnout, which is still pretty good for a municipal election and, as I said, the interest level was extraordinarily high.

I do want to note the names of the councillors that I deal with directly on a day-to-day basis for Districts 1 and 2 and 3, congratulations to Meg Hodges, Pauline Raven, and Brian Hirtle on their wins, and congratulations to the new Mayor of Kings County, Peter Muttart.

I am very pleased to see our county go to a mayoral system. I think the warden system was steeped in history, really, and goes back to a time when somebody at one end of the county really didn't know somebody at the other end of the county and a time when transportation and communication in the past were much more difficult, and to have a race that encompassed the whole county had communications and transportation challenges.

The other benefit, I believe, to this system is that the council - the councillors and the mayor - will deal with the big questions of the county. I think that a mayoral race gives an opportunity for those big questions to be addressed, such as - do we want more services and more taxes, or less services and less taxes? Those really large questions probably don't get asked to that extent at a district level, but certainly do at the county level. It's great to know that those types of questions, which profoundly influence the direction of a municipal government, are getting asked.

I do also want to acknowledge the Town of Kentville. We have one incumbent back, Eric Boland, and five new councillors, and a new mayor. I do want to acknowledge Sandra Snow as the new Mayor for the Town of Kentville.

I want to say a few words in reply to the content of the actual Speech from the Throne, and then I want to talk about Kings North a little bit. I noticed on Page 11 in the Speech from the Throne - and I won't table that since it is the Speech from the Throne and has been well tabled. It says, "My government will continue to help grow the creative economy by partnering with the film industry, book publishers, music industry, the craft sector and other creative industries." I can't help but wonder what the film industry thinks about that statement.

When we look back to the platform of the Liberal Government in 2013, it said, ". . . extending the Film Tax Credit and Digital Media Tax Credit for an additional five-year period." In fact, there was a bill brought in, I understand, in November 2014 to that extent. Then just five months later, in the next budget, there was a complete reversal of that platform position. It is something worthy of theatre, I think. You think about Caesar and Brutus with the knife in the back - but this was a betrayal to this industry of theatrical proportions, but unfortunately very real, which continues to affect the lives of many people - even in Kings North.

What we hear is that the industry - a lot of people in the industry have had to move away to find work. Under the new system, yes, there is still some work happening, but given the fact that since that time there has been a complete reversal in the state of the Canadian dollar vis-à-vis the U.S. dollar, other jurisdictions in the country have seen huge increases in the number of film productions in their areas, and we have certainly seen a decrease.

So what essentially was a lost opportunity there, because of this policy, we could have had considerably more work going on in the province with the Canadian dollar being so low relative to the U.S. dollar, we see that this industry has - not entirely, but by and large - migrated out. I do want to point out that I think the film industry will be disappointed to see this statement in this document knowing that, in fact, this was an absolute and complete reversal of the policy of the platform of the Liberal Government in 2013.

I believe that our platform had the same commitment to the film industry and we would have - I hope, as a government - continued that. Certainly the way that the decision was made was not made in regard to any real economic basis. We saw that KPMG report come out about six months - eight months later that outlined the actual benefits to the economy of Nova Scotia from the film industry. It showed that \$24 million Film Tax Credit was not a net cost to the province. It was a net benefit. It was keeping young people in the province working, and a creative economy, which we were very proud of.

I know my constituents are extraordinarily proud that in the movie Amelia Earhart, we have scenes from Blomidon. I know that every Nova Scotian is proud of the fact that part of the Book of Negroes was filmed in Louisbourg, in the Fortress. I recognize that there is still a small amount of work going forward, but it represents a sort of monumental lost opportunity that unfortunately government policy, and the policy of the government

unfortunately has taken away from our province, and I have to express my disappointment at that.

I know that we have at length addressed that subject, so I will leave that alone for now. I could go on on the Film Tax Credit. Unfortunately, it's what transpired, and I know that - to go on slightly more - that I did hear the Minister of Business say, I believe at the time, that if there was evidence that the change had impacted the film industry that your government would make changes. I would challenge you to fulfill that promise and rectify the situation because clearly . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. I would request that the honourable member direct his comments through the Chair rather than to the minister through the use of the word "you."

MR. LOHR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the direction from the Chair, and my apologies.

I would encourage the Minister of Business, the government, through you, to fulfill that commitment, to look at what in fact has been the outcome of the changes of the Film Tax Credit and what can be done in this climate of other jurisdictions in Canada doing very much better now with their programs, to do a jurisdictional survey and see what it is that we need to do to make this industry, to encourage this industry to come back to Nova Scotia, to bring back the workers, the Nova Scotians who have moved out to places like Sudbury and other jurisdictions to find work, to bring them home again on this. We have a beautiful province; it's very photogenic, it has many different types of scenery in a very short distance. There should be ways in which we could bring this industry back.

I would like to talk a little bit about what's going on right now in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the negotiations with the government and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, and I would like to tell this House that the teachers I talked to in Kings North are absolutely adamant that this is not about money but about working conditions for them.

These are the teachers I'm talking to, my local teachers, some of whom I've known my whole life, some of whom I've known 15 years. So there are many teachers there. I have one local teacher who sent me a particularly compelling email outlining some of the issues that she sees, and one issue that they see is families and students struggling to meet basic needs for food, shelter, clothing, and jobs, and teachers are often providing food or clothing or money, extras, helping these students - and we see that in our educational system.

We see an increase in social services protection cases in the classroom. We see an increase in the number of students refusing to come to school as early as in the elementary grades, and certainly it is chronic by middle school. The teachers are being burdened with

adaptations, IPPs, medical plans, BIRT plans, behavioural plans, resource programming, and all of these things are burdens on the teachers, and in fact the IPP program and what to me is an incredible disconnect between the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the minister who would be negotiating in October of this year.

A month and a half into the school year, there was a new mandate brought forward that students in IPPs, individual teaching programs, the teacher has to meet with the parents four times a year. So this was a mandate brought in a month and a half into the school year, adding to the burden of teachers managing these IPPs - and this was during or as the negotiations were happening for better working conditions with the NSTU, and the government, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is bringing in a further demand to complicate the teachers' lives.

The complication is that each of these meetings, four times a year with each IPP student and with the parents, is a daunting amount of meetings for the teacher. One teacher said they don't even have enough substitute time to make up for that. When the teacher is meeting with the parents and the IPP student, someone has to be managing the class. They reckon they don't even have enough substitute time available in their budget to accommodate this. This was put on in October of this year. This is the type of thing where there seems to be a disconnect between the reality in the classroom and what the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is asking for from the teachers.

Another issue would be coding. The reality is in many places in Nova Scotia, by the time the class sits down to start their coding class - and nobody is against coding, totally in favour of coding - in some cases they wait 12 to 15 minutes for the Internet to download the program. By that time, the class is one third over. If you're dealing with very, very slow Internet speeds, it becomes a very frustrating exercise to try to do coding. Some of the basic resources are not available. This becomes a mandated course. Coding is happening, great, but if the Internet doesn't allow coding to happen, that doesn't become such a great class. We are told that this is happening.

Another issue is class sizes and the cap. It's great to talk about a cap, but it's a soft cap, not a hard cap. I can tell you that when I have my chainsaw in my hand, I want to have a hard cap in my hand. There's a huge, huge difference between a hard cap and a soft cap.

The difference is that we have some cases where in a grade there will be three classes of 26 in them, six over the soft cap. There could have been another class of 18, but there isn't. The reality is all it does is sort of make the averages work out to say that there's a soft cap. If you have somewhere a very small class of four or five or six students, it gets blended into the average, and it works out. It's small comfort for that teacher dealing with a soft cap and having 26 students and having a daunting set of circumstances to teach.

This is what I'm told happens in these classes. Because of inclusion, they have a certain number of very, very bright, capable students; probably a large number of average students, some of whom are on an IPP - so they might have six or seven or eight IPP students; and they have some less-than-average students. They end up having to try to teach six or seven different levels of curriculum in one class. It is a physical impossibility. It's not possible for a teacher to do that well. What happens is, they end up teaching mostly - this is the reality - to the lowest level of that class. The very brightest kids can read the textbook and figure it out, but it is that second tier of kids who are going to lose out on that because they do need the help.

This is what we have with inclusion. I think that this is one of the frustrations. I had one teacher one time tell me - her statement was that inclusion is a delusion. I'm not saying that. I think that what we have to say about her comment is that if we're going to have inclusion, it has to be funded. It has to have the resources in place to make it work. It's quite clear that if we have one teacher teaching a class of 26 students and having six or seven different levels of that course being taught at exactly the same time, that isn't going to work. That teacher cannot fulfill that job without having more resources available.

If we're going to have that kind of a classroom - I'm all in favour of that kind of a classroom if it's funded and if the resources are provided. But if the resources are not being provided, and the teacher is being asked to teach this many things, that is a physical impossibility to do well. I know it goes against everything that I can think of. In my working life I would never ask an employee to do six or seven different jobs at one time. I can't do it myself. I think that we have to be willing to look at this realistically and ask ourselves, what do we want?

We have to be able to start getting - we have to either fund it properly, or make adaptations. Maybe we make pathways to success or some other adaptation, but this is something that has to be dealt with. We're asking the teachers to do a job none of us could do ourselves - I don't believe. The very best and brightest teachers have a difficult job doing it well, I would suggest.

I think I've already mentioned the requirement to have a four-times-a-year meeting with the IPP students and the parents, but there are increasing assessment and data collection demands being placed on teachers. So not only are teachers being asked to teach, but they're being asked to collect data for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. I've heard teachers say that this is very time consuming data - this type of thing.

The teachers tell me that they see an increase in mental health concerns in our system - a massive increase. We have an increase in suicides, or suicidal ideation, or cutting and self-harm behaviour. A number of months ago, I had a meeting with a number of teachers and I believe the Minister of Health and Wellness was actually at that meeting. If my memory serves me correctly, one teacher told us that they had just started a class with

19 students, and eight students had a history of having attempted suicide in that class of 19 - I may be off on the numbers, but it was essentially that ratio. I was astounded. I had no idea that teachers were dealing with these types of severe mental health issues in some classes. It's very distressing to hear that sort of thing.

We see demands for more extracurricular activity. Some of these programs are financially out of reach for many low-income families. I can tell you - having had sons in hockey - that it's very expensive to have sons in hockey. So how do you fund that for high school hockey?

We see an increase in online gaming by students - spending hours and hours playing Internet games, even from very young ages.

Teachers tell us they see behavioural issues on the rise. I have heard teachers telling me stories of things that even very young kids have said to the teachers that I would not repeat even in this Legislature - of being sworn at, and being challenged, and these types of things.

We're told that there is no attendance policy in our schools. Students can miss as many days as they wish and they will not fail. The teacher is expected to provide an education package to them or provide the content of the class - the time they had missed when they arrive back in school, or provide it by Internet. Families go on vacation, teachers during the school year are expected to deliver these packages of the work that the child would have missed afterwards. This is a big issue to the teachers. There is no attendance policy - no compulsion for students to attend school. There is no way a child can fail, and this is a problem for teachers.

There are curriculum expectations. We're told some courses do not even have outcomes. Teachers tell us that there are issues with the report card. Almost every year there is a switching in what outcomes are or - they're language-based report cards, which people don't really understand, and the outcomes keep changing.

So we see a daunting variety of challenges that our teachers face, which I'm sure that my description does not do justice to. I think that it would be difficult to imagine - I doubt any of us would tolerate out-and-out disobedience from our own children, but the teachers have very limited ability to deal with these discipline issues. They see mental health issues on the rise, behavioural issues on the rise, increasing demands from parents, increasing demands from the school board on what they are doing on data entry and that sort of stuff. So the working conditions have, I believe, and this is what I'm hearing from teachers in my area, that what this rejection of the contract was about for teachers from Kings North was not about the dollars, but about working conditions.

What I'm telling you is all real. I challenge any member to go talk to their schools, their teachers. I would just say that I think that we as a Legislature, the Department of

Education and Early Childhood Development, we need to find a way to solve these problems because it's not simply about political points and us versus the government. It's also about the reality of what needs to be done in our school system to give our children the best opportunity to succeed in life.

All of these issues are happening; they're real. I know that you can go to any one of your schools and do your own research. Maybe there are . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I would request that the member refrain from using the direct "you" to members of the Assembly, but direct your comments through the Chair.

MR. LOHR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my apologies.

I think it is incumbent upon us as legislators and you, Mr. Speaker, to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development that these issues need to be solved and they need, to be really frank, some of them I think reflect the broad sweep of our culture. Obviously we're not going to change the number of hours that students spend online playing video games; it's not going to be easy to do. That's something that's just in the broad sweep of our culture.

Some of the poverty issues are very daunting to address, but there are many issues in this list that I gave you that can be addressed, and they do need to be addressed. I believe the teachers I represent want to see at least a turnaround of some of these issues being addressed. Even things that I would suggest don't cost a lot of money. Some of these can be addressed.

For instance, this new demand that came in in October for teachers to meet with parents of IPP students, certainly that's a very worthwhile goal, but what it does is it takes up the - in fact, it increases the cost to the school. Presumably there was already a plan to meet with parents at some frequency, but now we have an increased frequency of meetings.

So some of these things are not about money, but about common sense. I believe that a very good suggestion would be that the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development look at some of these demands that they are making on teachers and it would be a very good olive branch, that is the word I am looking for, from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to look at some of these reporting demands that they are placing on teachers and at least consolidate them.

One teacher I was talking to said that back when Dr. Jim Gunn was the head of the AVRSB that there would be a new program or a new plan or something new brought forward that was very worthwhile, of course, and Dr. Jim Gunn would say okay, we can do that, what do you want me to cut? In other words, we can't keep adding things in without funding them, and if it's not funded then something has to be cut.

I think that this type of mentality has to be brought to bear to the way that we are dealing with teachers. We cannot place more burdens on our teachers. We have to consider how we are dealing with this whole department and we really have to do it, frankly, not for the government and not for the teachers, but for the students. This needs to be done for the ordinary students, so we can give them the best opportunity to succeed if we create the best opportunities possible for the teachers to teach.

I'm not sure that has been a focus, but I think we need to have a focus on what we can do to have teachers succeed. If we help teachers succeed, create a great working environment for teachers, one in which they know exactly what the demands are, if the demands placed on them have some sort of bearing in common sense, some sort of achievable level of demands, I believe that would go a long way towards dealing with the current impasse between the union and the government. I would like to advocate for that on behalf of the teachers and students of Kings North.

I would like to say a little bit about the promise in the Liberal election platform of 2013 of ensuring a doctor for every Nova Scotian. I was dismayed to hear, in this House a few days ago, the term "health care provider" - that we have a promise of a health care provider for every person. In other words - maybe to the average person, well, what's the difference? A doctor is a health care provider.

I believe it is a way of wordsmithing away from this commitment, but in fact, the commitment is a doctor for every Nova Scotian. Was there actually a plan in place to have a doctor for every Nova Scotian? Because it's quite clear from what we hear that the situation is getting worse.

I asked a question today about Weymouth. Weymouth is a community without a doctor, and has been trying to get a doctor. How are these things going to be addressed? Not only that, but we've had a huge number of doctors leaving in Cape Breton. Where is the plan to fulfill that mandate, and is the plan adequate to the task? I would suggest that the government's plan is not adequate to the demands being placed, for a variety of reasons.

Some of those reasons are simply demographic reasons. We have a large cohort of doctors retiring who were workhorse doctors, but they're in their 50s or 60s or 70s, and some are in their 80s and continuing to see thousands of patients. Hats off to them - their commitment to their patients and their communities is just unparalleled, how hard they are willing to work. I want to acknowledge those doctors without naming any names. I know they're out there, and I'm sure every MLA here can identify in their own mind some of those doctors, who are some of the most hard-working citizens we have. But one of the issues is that replacing one doctor like that with one doctor is clearly not adequate, if the new doctor is not willing to see 3,500 or 4,000 patients.

We have a clinic in my community with six doctors that see 24,000 patients. This has been put together by the doctors themselves. With that type of efficiency, maybe the

Department of Health and Wellness needs to look at that clinic. I'm sure they know who I'm talking about.

I am disappointed. It seems that there was a statement in a platform that was clearly not backed up by a credible plan to achieve that, and I think that needs to be brought to the attention of this House again. I am disappointed that this is becoming part of the wordsmithing of this government, that it's no longer a doctor for every Nova Scotian but a health care provider for every Nova Scotian.

I also continue to be disappointed that the breaking of the monopoly has not been addressed adequately. When the Liberal Government was campaigning in October 2013, the platform piece to break the monopoly was front and centre. It certainly caught the public's interest.

I think that when we talk about monopoly, we think about what a monopoly is. It is an organization or a company that has complete control and can charge whatever they want. Breaking the monopoly will result, I think, in the general public buying the idea that the monopoly being broken will mean, I can buy my power from my neighbour or from a provider in some part of the province for less than I can get it for from Nova Scotia Power.

But that's not the reality. The monopoly, if it has been broken, has been broken in a way that means I have the opportunity to buy more expensive power. How does that make any sense? It is not what the wording would have suggested. The wording implied that I would have the opportunity to buy power at a lower rate, and that is in fact not true at all. The lowest-rate power I can buy is Nova Scotia Power's, which I believe is \$0.15/kilowatt right now, which is one of the most expensive rates in the country. That being said, I will say that you don't have to generate power very long on your own to know that's not a bad buy, either. If you try to put diesel fuel through a generator, or gasoline through a generator, you start to go through a lot more money very quickly.

Even at 15 cents, we have - I would suggest - a credible price. However, I believe we have to have service for that pricing too. Nova Scotia Power faces daunting challenges in tree-trimming and a supply of service. Has the government addressed any of these issues, I would ask? I believe it is something that we need to think about.

I would like to say something about the agricultural platform of the government. I read in the agricultural platform that this government was going to re-establish a drainage program that would reintroduce thousands of hectares of low land back into production. While I do acknowledge that there is some drainage happening, I would suggest to you that thousands of hectares would not fit the bill and if there is even a thousand hectares that have been drained, I would be surprised.

I think this is something that the farmers - for the farmers in the province, the two most enduringly popular programs were always land clearing and land drainage. It is one

of the ironies of Nova Scotia that we live in a province that requires both irrigation and drainage at the same time on the same field, but we can see that clearly, where we have a province that experiences severe drought that, in some ways, hasn't lifted in southwestern Nova Scotia, and incredible flooding conditions in Cape Breton.

That's the reality for us as farmers too - in the Spring, the land can be too wet to work, but in the summer it's too dry for anything to grow. We need to have both systems in place. The idea of bringing land back into production, I would suggest, is an admirable one. I'm not sure that this commitment has been fulfilled.

I know that one of the trends that we have also seen in agriculture in the last two years in the Annapolis Valley has been the shutting down of several added-value processing plants. There was one in Middleton and one in Hillaton. This has been a very unfortunate development, and I believe that while the platform didn't say anything about that, that's one of the things that has transpired that is of great concern to our farmers in the area.

We realize that added-value processing of this sort has an incredible buffering ability on when there is excess crop - to have these types of processors available for this opens up other markets that would otherwise not be available to farmers. The plant in Middleton in particular, which took local broccoli, local cauliflower, local cabbage, local potatoes, and turned them into high-value salad products and sold them into the grocery stores. It's very disappointing that we've lost that plant.

I know you all probably notice the short supply of those types of items in your grocery stores - I say that facetiously, because of course we don't notice any difference. The product comes in easily, and instantaneously, from Quebec or Ontario - possibly from New Brunswick or P.E.I. - from other provinces. So when we lose that type of added-value processing, not only do we lose the labour - the wages that were being paid - and I believe the plant in Middleton had 40 or 50 employees. The plant in Hillaton, which was a little different, didn't deal with as high-value product in the end, but we lost 99 seasonal jobs - a big blow to our communities to have this happen, and it is something that is of great concern to our agricultural industry, to have this transpire in this way.

I'm very concerned. I recognize it was not in your government's platform to increase this, but I believe it is something that is incumbent upon the Department of Agriculture to consider - how these things can be addressed and rectified.

I do want to say a few things in particular about Kings North. I want to begin by acknowledging the great fire departments that we have. I have a background. I was privileged to be on the board of directors of Kings Mutual Insurance for a number of years. I know a little bit more about property and casualty than the average person. I won't say I know a whole lot more, but just a little bit more which I was able to learn over those years.

One thing I learned was that if you have a property on the Valley floor, you will be treated by any major insurer as if your home had a fire hydrant right out in front of the driveway. They will class you in the fire protection category - I'm not sure what they call that category - at the highest rating, in other words, with a municipal fire hydrant right outside your door. I can tell you that the municipal fire hydrant is two or three miles away from me, the closest one. But we have incredible fire department service.

On our farm, we were able to witness that first-hand I believe it was on September 25th. We had a kiln catch fire. We dry summer savoury. When summer savoury is fully dry, it's extraordinarily flammable. We dry it down to about 9 per cent. It's a plant product. It's got essential oils in it, so it burns extremely well. We try to dry it in a way that keeps those oils in the plant. We had five kilns in a row, and kiln number two caught on fire. Kiln number one is about 18 inches away, and kiln number three is about 18 inches away. Because of the service of the Canning Fire Department and because of the mutual aid system that is in place, which brought other fire departments to bear, too, or at least their pumpers, we were able to not see any damage at all to kiln number one or kiln number three other than smoke damage, which was probably inevitable. That meant that the content of those kilns was compromised, but in fact, we were able to save those.

I would like to express publicly my deep gratitude towards these fire departments and to Canning Chief Rick Weisner and Deputy Chief Jeff Skaling, who were there, and my friend John Timmins, who was there. He's a truck operator. Most of the fire department I know personally, of course. I'm deeply appreciative of the service, and it is a service that benefits every resident in the Annapolis Valley.

I can tell you that if you have a car accident, a motor vehicle accident, in the Annapolis Valley, odds are very, very good that the fire department will be there before the ambulance will be there, even though both are called at the same time. Odds are very good not only that the fire department will be there, but also that those fire department members are fully trained first aid responders and will know what to do and have the equipment to deal with it.

We're remarkably well served. We have the Kentville Fire Department with Ryan MacEachern as chief. That is also a remarkably good fire department and remarkably well equipped. There's Port Williams, with Philip Porter, and Halls Harbour, with David Watson. Again, we have my friends in Halls Harbour at Canning station number 2 and some Huntleys and Toppers in that fire department, and they've done a remarkable job for the residents of Kings County.

There's a high density of fire departments in the county. I know my colleague, the member for Kings South would echo my comments. We think about Wolfville, Greenwich, New Minas and Kentville and Port Williams - four or five fire departments literally within a 10-minute drive, and all of them with four, five or six trucks and well-trained members. All of these trucks are very modern and extraordinarily well serviced by these fire

departments. I think you, Mr. [Deputy] Speaker, would agree with that statement. It is my privilege to acknowledge them.

Not only that, we have the search and rescue which has now moved into Middle Dyke Road. They actually had a church, the Church of Christ, which was a church that was growing smaller in number. That church donated their facility, the property, to Valley Search and Rescue in a remarkable move. I just want to acknowledge that. I have a number of friends in search and rescue there, and I want to acknowledge the director and the president of the search and rescue, President Ashley Perry, and Search Director Stephen Best. We are remarkably well serviced by this group of volunteers, who are very dedicated.

It was only about two weeks ago that I was driving in the Annapolis Valley and saw all the search and rescue trucks on the road. I thought, oh my goodness, what happened? And then I thought, no, it's Monday night; it's practice night. Very, very dedicated - the Canning Fire Department also. Practice night, Monday night.

Not only are they servicing our communities extraordinarily well, but they are constantly training and upgrading and practising. It results in lower insurance for us, but more importantly, the kind of response we get to civic responsibilities of any sort, which we experienced ourselves, of motor vehicle accidents or a heart attack in your home, any of those emergencies - we are remarkably well serviced. And all by volunteers, I will add - volunteers who, when they have fire department competitions, stand up very, very well to the professional firefighters and often win.

The time, Mr. Speaker, is going very quickly.

I want to just say a few words about the summer that we've had. We had a remarkably sunny summer, and of course, the dry weather has negatively affected some farms. But what we've seen is a remarkable increase to visits to farms in the Annapolis Valley this summer; in particular, the wineries have been incredibly busy. It seems like there's been a sea change or some sort of shift in agri-tourism in the Annapolis Valley. I think this has been far and away the most successful summer that the agri-tourism operations and the wineries have had, and I just want to give a hat off to those operations and those (Interruption) You threw me off.

We've seen a number of new businesses come into Annapolis Valley in the last year. I want to acknowledge two new businesses in Port Williams that opened up within the past year or year and a half. One is the Wayfarers' Ale Society - Chris Killacky and John McNeil - I believe over \$2 million invested in that business. It's a microbrewery. It starts to stretch the definition of "microbrewery" - they have the capacity to brew 1.5 million litres of beer in a year, so they have already built to a very large scale in an area next to the Port Pub, where Sea Level Brewing is also brewing - my friend Randy Lawrence is there at Sea Level Brewing, and has been there for many years.

Right opposite that, we have Barrelling Tide Distillery, which is also a brand-new business in our community, and I want to acknowledge that.

I do want to say - I realize that my time is running down, but I do want to acknowledge my family. I know that without the support of my wife, Heather, and my sons I would not be able to be here. I want to acknowledge them and say thank you to them.

I want to acknowledge my CAs, Martha and Susie and JoAnne. JoAnne is no longer with me; she and her husband have decided to sail and are on a five-year sailing voyage down into the Caribbean, and I believe they have maybe departed right now.

I want to acknowledge our previous MLA, Mark Parent, who is my long-time neighbour and friend. Some of you may have heard of Mark's accident. He fell off a ladder. I can let the House know that Mark has rebounded from what could have been a fatal fall, and would have been fatal if it had not been for the first aid responders. The EHS saved Mark's life immediately after the fall, undoubtedly. (Applause)

Mark, as recently as a few days ago, spoke at a funeral for a neighbour of his, a mutual friend of ours, a long-time resident of Delhaven who passed away, Emerson Thorpe, a beloved resident. Mark was at the funeral in Kentville and was able to speak, and get up and move around, so he's rebounded remarkably well from what could have been a fatal fall.

All of the things that my family has been through in the last couple of years - I want to tell people that there are three things that have gotten us through all of our challenges, including this latest fire. I do love to work - I find that is very good. We have family and friends - even the odd caramel on my desk here, all those things help us. My faith, too, has helped me get through all the challenges of losing my son and my father within a three-week span two years ago.

It's been a privilege to serve Kings North in this House, and the work of doing this has been a wonderful distraction. Serving the public has been very good for my family and me, and we continue to love life and enjoy all of the many friends we have in this job. We do find redemption in small things or big things.

I just want to take my last 10 minutes to acknowledge the work of the Minister of Immigration. My son who passed away had a first-year roommate who was a young man from Zimbabwe. His father lost his job in a mine in South Africa - he was a machinist - and this young lad had no real support to stay as an international student at Memorial University of Newfoundland. We, as a family, decided to support him. I don't know if I can tell this story - but one of the things that I said to McDonald was, give me your dad's resumé. He was a machinist, so I thought, well, this is possible, so, I pitched it to two companies.

Lunenburg Foundry picked up that resumé. I contacted them and said look I wouldn't look at any random resumé from Africa, let alone Zimbabwe, which, if you know anything about Africa, is one of the most terrible places that you could live in - one of the most dysfunctional countries in Africa. I didn't do this, but the family put in an application through the Provincial Nominee Program, and to my gratitude and amazement, they're now here in Lunenburg. (Applause) I hope someday they'll hopefully be able to vote for the member from Lunenburg - and it was the staff of the Minister of Immigration that made all that happen.

I can tell you that this family said, when they got here, that their friends and relatives in Zimbabwe said, there's no way that's actually happening, that you will ever get to Canada. They just couldn't believe it, it's such a miracle. And if you've been following the news in Zimbabwe, that country is descending into even worse conditions. This is such a miracle to our family, and I just want to acknowledge that to the Minister of Immigration and her staff who made that happen. This process worked for them. It is one small piece in us dealing with our grief that we were able to help our son's friend. (Applause)

So there is redemption in those things, and I think I will stop now. Thank you for the opportunity, it's been a privilege to be serving as MLA, and I'm just happy to be here with all of you. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I can think of no better way to finish the day.

That concludes the government's business for today. The House will meet again on Tuesday, October 25th, from the hours of 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Following the daily routine, we will have second reading of Bill No. 41 as well as continuation of Address in Reply.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House now rise to meet again on Tuesday, October 25th, from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House rise to meet again on Tuesday, October 25, 2016, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 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 Tuesday, October 25th, at 1:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 12:20 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 111**

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Bart and Sharon Whalen are residents of Porters Lake and have owned and operated Cicero's On The Water, an award-winning authentic Italian restaurant located in Porters Lake, for the past five years; and

Whereas Bart and Sharon maintain their mission of offering their guests a casual fine dining experience which includes top customer service, quality food, reasonable prices, and lakeside relaxation; and

Whereas Bart and Sharon have maintained an entrepreneurial spirit that offers rewarding employment to many local residents;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Bart and Sharon Whalen for having the vision and courage to operate their small business, Cicero's On The Water, for the benefit of residents and visitors of the Eastern Shore.

RESOLUTION NO. 112

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Logan Pettipas is a 10-year-old resident of East Chezzetcook and loves to entertain others with his musical talents; and

Whereas Logan has learned to play guitar, piano, and fiddle and started volunteering his talents at local concerts at the age of three; and

Whereas Logan has volunteered his talents for such causes as President's Choice Children's Charity, Give a Little Campaign, the IWK, and the local food bank, and this year alone he has raised over \$1,000;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Logan Pettipas for giving his time and talents for the betterment of residents of the Eastern Shore and Nova Scotia.