



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

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2016

| TABLE OF CONTENTS  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:  |      |
| Private & Local Bills Comm.,<br>Mr. S. Gough.....  | 914  |
| TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS:   |      |
| Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act: Anl. Rept. (2015 - 2016)<br>- Table, Hon. L. Glavine .....              | 914  |
| GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:  |      |
| Res. 317, RCL - Anniv. (90 <sup>th</sup> ),<br>The Premier.....  | 915  |
| Vote - Affirmative.....  | 915  |
| Res. 318, Nova Scotians: Differing Abilities -<br>Contributions Recognize, Hon. J. Bernard .....               | 916  |
| Vote - Affirmative.....  | 916  |
| Res. 319, Sobey Cancer Support Ctr.: Cdn. Cancer Soc.<br>- Expansion Congrats., Hon. L. Glavine .....          | 917  |
| Vote - Affirmative.....  | 917  |
| Res. 320, Metallic, Prof. Naomi: Chancellor's Chair in Aboriginal<br>Law & Policy - Appt., Hon. D. Whalen..... | 918  |
| Vote - Affirmative.....  | 919  |

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| No. 59, Accessibility Act,<br>Hon. J. Bernard .....                              | 919 |
| No. 60, Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act,<br>Hon. David Wilson ..... | 919 |
| No. 61, Construction Projects Labour Relations Act,<br>Hon. K. Regan.....        | 920 |

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS:

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| MacKinnon, Alton: Boxing Achievement - Congrats.,<br>Mr. E. Orrell.....                               | 920 |
| Governance Structure - Marine Resources Protection Comm.,<br>Hon. S. Belliveau .....                  | 920 |
| Maguire, Rena & Brendan: Isla Rose Maguire - Birth Congrats.,<br>Mr. B. Maguire .....                 | 921 |
| Henwood, Ken & Doug: Miners' Museum - Volunteering Thank,<br>Hon. J. Baillie .....                    | 921 |
| Tidal Energy: Stakeholders - Min. Consult,<br>Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse.....                            | 921 |
| MacDonald, Joe - TCH No. 104: Twinning Efforts - Recognize,<br>Hon. R. Delorey .....                  | 922 |
| Betts, Bun: Good Health/Good Biking - Well Wishes,<br>Hon. J. Baillie .....                           | 923 |
| Law Reform Commn.: Gov't. (N.S.) - Funding Restore,<br>Ms. M. Mancini.....                            | 923 |
| Creative Gourmet Inc.: Success - Celebrate,<br>Mr. B. Jessome.....                                    | 924 |
| Hungarian Revolution: Anniv. (60 <sup>th</sup> ) - Commemoration,<br>Mr. T. Houston.....              | 924 |
| Hansen, Suzy: HRSB - Election Congrats.,<br>Ms. L. Roberts.....                                       | 925 |
| Job Shadowing Day - Activities,<br>Hon. M. Miller .....   | 925 |
| TIR: Roadside Vegetation - Budget,<br>Ms. K. MacFarlane .....   | 925 |
| N.S. Ground Search & Rescue - Donate,<br>Hon. S. Belliveau .....                                      | 926 |
| Walden Vol. FD - Anniv. (25 <sup>th</sup> ),<br>Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....                              | 927 |
| L'Île-des-Surette: La Restauration de la Chappelle - Messe commémorative,<br>Hon. C. d'Entremont..... | 927 |
| Nat. Res.: Species at Risk - Protect/Preserve,<br>Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse.....                        | 928 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Nicholson, Wendy: Bras d'Or - Welcome,<br>Ms. P. Eyking.....   | 929 |
| Men of the Deeps - C.B./N.S.: Contribution - Congrats.,<br>Hon. A. MacLeod .....                               | 929 |
| MacDonald, Laura - East Coast Music Award,<br>Mr. K. Irving.....   | 930 |
| Charles, Owen - Boxing Accomplishments,<br>Mr. E. Orrell.....  | 930 |
| Pickard, Reilly - Hockey Accomplishments,<br>Ms. P. Arab .....   | 931 |
| Non-Profit Child Care Centres: Work - Acknowledge,<br>Ms. L. Roberts.....                                      | 931 |
| Thanksgiving Flood (2016) - C.B.-Richmond MLA/NSP Employees:<br>Assistance - Thank, Mr. D. Mombourquette ..... | 932 |
| Melanson, Kenzie: Irish Dancing - Accomplishments,<br>Mr. J. Lohr .....  | 932 |
| Sackville-Beaver Bank - Commun. BBQ,<br>Mr. S. Gough.....  | 932 |
| Cape to Cape Trail - Construction: Women Vols. - Commend,<br>Ms. K. MacFarlane .....                           | 933 |
| Lyons-MacFarlane, Nikki - Natl. Student Day of Action,<br>Ms. M. Mancini.....                                  | 933 |
| Atl. Can. Career Wk. - Student Entrepreneurship: Madison<br>- Congrats., Ms. J. Treen .....                    | 934 |
| Howard, Sean: Book Publication - Congrats.,<br>Hon. A. MacLeod .....   | 934 |
| Marchand, Jayde - Volleyball Accomplishments,<br>Hon. M. Samson .....  | 934 |
| Stellarton Firefighters: Awards - Congrats.,<br>Hon. P. Dunn.....  | 935 |
| Muise, Chief Eddie: Serv./Volunteering - Thank,<br>Mr. Gordon Wilson.....                                      | 935 |
| <b>ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS:</b>   |     |
| No. 178, Prem.: Strike Avoidance - Plans,<br>Hon. J. Baillie .....   | 936 |
| No. 179, Prem.: NSTU Bargaining - Agree,<br>Hon. S. Belliveau .....  | 937 |
| No. 180, Prem. - Office: Ethical Problem - Reasons,<br>Hon. J. Baillie .....                                   | 939 |
| No. 181, Health & Wellness: Physician Billing Numbers<br>- Community List, Hon. David Wilson.....              | 940 |
| No. 182, Tourism N.S.: Threatening Letter - Details,<br>Ms. K. MacFarlane .....                                | 941 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| No. 183, Mun. Affs. - Mun. Gov'ts. Audits: Guysborough Co.<br>- Confirm, Ms. K. MacFarlane.....   | 942 |
| No. 184, Prem. - Tuition Fee Increases: N.S. Enrolment - Effects,<br>Hon. S. Belliveau .....      | 943 |
| No. 185, Health & Wellness: Dart. Gen. Hosp. Rept.<br>- Recommendations, Mr. A. Younger.....      | 945 |
| No. 186, Mun. Affs.: Richmond Forensic Audit - Trustworthiness,<br>Mr. A. MacMaster.....          | 945 |
| No. 187, EECD: School Purchases - Affordability,<br>Hon. P. Dunn.....                             | 947 |
| No. 188, Health & Wellness: Long-Term Care Beds - Needs Address,<br>Hon. David Wilson .....       | 948 |
| No. 189, Health & Wellness - Budget Cuts: Effects - Evaluations,<br>Mr. T. Houston.....           | 948 |
| No. 190, Health & Wellness: Long-Term Care Strategy -<br>Release Prioritize, Mr. T. Houston ..... | 950 |
| No. 191, EECD: Child Care Centres - Funding,<br>Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse.....                      | 950 |
| No. 192, Health & Wellness: Machinery/Technicians - Status,<br>Mr. L. Harrison .....              | 951 |
| No. 193, Health & Wellness: Nursing Homes - Violence-Related<br>Deaths, Mr. E. Orrell.....        | 952 |
| <b>OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS:</b>  |     |
| <b>PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:</b>  |     |
| No. 34, Homes for Special Care Act<br>Hon. C. d'Entremont.....                                    | 954 |
| Mr. I. Rankin.....  | 958 |
| Hon. David Wilson .....   | 962 |
| Hon. J. Baillie .....   | 966 |
| No. 45, Municipal Government Act<br>Ms. K. MacFarlane .....                                       | 970 |
| Hon. Z. Churchill .....   | 973 |
| Ms. L. Roberts.....   | 977 |
| Mr. A. MacMaster.....   | 979 |
| Mr. T. Farrell.....   | 982 |
| <b>ADJOURNMENT:</b>   |     |
| <b>MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5):</b>  |     |
| Health & Wellness - Fam. Physicians: Gov't. Provision - Failure:                                  |     |
| Hon. S. Belliveau .....   | 987 |
| Mr. D. Mombourquette.....   | 989 |
| Hon. A. MacLeod .....   | 992 |
| ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Thur., Nov. 3 <sup>rd</sup> at 1:00 p.m. ....            | 995 |

## NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):

Tabled 11/01/16:

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Res. 292, Grant, Patti - 4-H Pro Show: Competitors - Prep.,<br>Hon. M. Miller .....                      | 996  |
| Res. 293, Kendal, Jennifer - 4-H Pro Show: Competitors - Prep.,<br>Hon. M. Miller .....                  | 996  |
| Res. 294, Caswell, Cathy - 4-H Pro Show: Competitors - Prep.,<br>Hon. M. Miller .....                    | 997  |
| Res. 295, Fraser, Michelle - 4-H Pro Show: Competitors - Prep.,<br>Hon. M. Miller .....                  | 997  |
| Res. 296, Barrett, Ryan - 4-H Pro Show: Competitors - Prep.,<br>Hon. M. Miller .....                     | 998  |
| Res. 297, Morehouse, Kelsey - Awards Congrats.,<br>Hon. M. Miller .....                                  | 998  |
| Res. 298, IODE Edward VIII Chapter - Anniv. (80 <sup>th</sup> ),<br>Mr. D. Wilton.....                   | 999  |
| Res. 299, Coal Bowl: Members/Bd. of Directors - Congrats.,<br>Mr. D. Wilton.....                         | 999  |
| Res. 300, Gillis, Dr. John: Commun. Spirit - Applaud,<br>Hon. L. Diab .....                              | 1000 |
| Res. 301, Metlege, Andrew - Bus. Owner: Success - Congrats.,<br>Hon. L. Diab .....                       | 1000 |
| Res. 302, Ruan, Michael/ACPPA - Tournament Hosting,<br>Hon. L. Diab .....                                | 1001 |
| Res. 303, Zima, Ron: Activism - Thank,<br>Hon. L. Diab .....   | 1001 |
| Res. 304, Lane, Steve: Selflessness - Thank,<br>Hon. L. Diab .....                                       | 1002 |
| Res. 305, AeroVision Can.: Niche Market - Creation,<br>Mr. I. Rankin .....                               | 1002 |
| Res. 306, Duale, Ali: Accomplishments - Note,<br>Mr. I. Rankin .....                                     | 1003 |
| Res. 307, Fraser, Anita - Pub. Serv. Career (25 Yrs.):<br>Contributions - Congrats., Mr. I. Rankin ..... | 1003 |
| Res. 308, Durling, Craig/Gallant, David - BLT Rails to Trails Runs,<br>Mr. I. Rankin .....               | 1004 |
| Res. 309, Logan, Denise: N.S. Civil Serv. (35 Yrs.)<br>- Commitment Recognize, Mr. I. Rankin .....       | 1005 |
| Res. 310, Macdonald Mem. Legion Lakeside Br. 156/Exec.:<br>Contribution - Recognize, Mr. I. Rankin ..... | 1005 |
| Res. 311, MacNeil, Melina - Students: Dedication - Thank,<br>Mr. I. Rankin .....                         | 1006 |

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Res. 312, Wheadon, Ralph: Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area  |      |
| - Stewardship, Mr. I. Rankin .....                           | 1006 |
| Res. 313, Movember Fdn.: Awareness - Recognize,              |      |
| Mr. I. Rankin .....  | 1007 |
| Res. 314, Whites Lake Legion/Exec.: Commun. Contribution     |      |
| - Thank, Mr. I. Rankin .....                                 | 1007 |
| Res. 315, Schultz, Bernie: Personal/Vol. Commitments         |      |
| - Congrats., Mr. A. Younger .....                            | 1008 |
| Res. 316, Murphy, Timothy Richard: First World War Sacrifice |      |
| - Thank, The Speaker .....                                   | 1008 |



House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2016**

**Sixty-second General Assembly**

**Third Session**

**1:00 P.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy

**DEPUTY SPEAKERS**

Mr. Gordon Wilson, Mr. Keith Irving

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Before we begin the daily routine, the topic for late debate tonight, as submitted by the honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid, is as follows:

Whereas it was an integral part of the campaign platform of the present government when it sought the support of the electorate in 2013 that it would ensure every Nova Scotian had access to a primary care physician; and

Whereas the main action of government has been to establish a wait-list for access to a family physician, a wait-list which now has some 6,000 persons on it; and

Whereas the full extent of the shortfall in access to a family physician is not known, but clearly remains acute;

Therefore it be resolved that this House agrees that the government has failed in one of its prime duties to the public of Nova Scotia, to provide access to a family physician.

The topic of late debate tonight at the moment of interruption.

We'll begin the daily routine.

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

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

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: As Chairman of the Committee on Private and Local Bills, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bill:

**Bill No. 47 - Halifax Rifles Armoury Association.**

and the committee recommends this bill to the favourable consideration of the House, without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee of the Whole on Bills.

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I'm pleased today to table a report entitled Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act, Annual Report 2015-2016.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

**GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Before I read my notice of motion, may I do an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

THE PREMIER: I'm pleased to welcome with us here today in the east gallery, members and the executive of the Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command of the Royal Canadian Legion. The Royal Canadian Legion is Canada's largest veteran support and community service organization. In Nova Scotia, there are over 105 branches that serve more than 21,000 members.



As I call your name, I ask you to please stand so the House can give you a warm welcome: Command President Steve Wessel of Lake Echo; District F Commander Rita Connors of Sackville; Zone 8 Commander Conrad Gilbert of Newport; Zone 10 Commander Wilson MacDonald from Truro; Zone 13 Commander Darryl Cook from Bridgewater; Comrade Bob Henderson from Bridgewater; and Executive Director Valerie Mitchell-Veinotte. I see we have another member with you, and I'd ask you to stand as well. I apologize; I don't have your name.

We want to extend to all of you a very warm welcome here to the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 317**

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

Whereas the Royal Canadian Legion is Canada's largest veteran support and community service organization, with over 300,000 members in more than 1,400 branches across the country; and

Whereas the Legion serves veterans and their families, advocating on their behalf, and provides financial assistance while ensuring that Canadians remember the sacrifice made by our veterans through their annual poppy campaign; and

Whereas the Royal Canadian Legion celebrated its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this past year;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly, and all Nova Scotians, thank the Royal Canadian Legion for its 90 years of advocacy and for the important contribution it makes to Canada's way of life.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

**RESOLUTION NO. 318**

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

Whereas every Nova Scotian has the right to live, work, learn, and play, in an environment that is accessible, welcoming, and inclusive; and

Whereas Nova Scotians with differing abilities are stepping up to give their input and advice to help government work with its partners to reduce barriers; and

Whereas it is important to harness the potential of all Nova Scotians to strengthen the province's labour force, expand markets, and build the economy;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly recognize Nova Scotians with differing abilities for their tremendous contributions to communities across the province.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: May I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. GLAVINE: Joining us in the gallery today are several key people involved with the Sobey Cancer Support Centre's expansion. Could they please rise as I introduce them, so that we may give them a warm welcome to the House: Kendra Morton, Interim CEO, Canadian Cancer Society; Helle Haven Achurch, Senior Manager of Programs and Services, Canadian Cancer Society; and Kelly Cull, Manager of Government and Partner Relations, Canadian Cancer Society. I would ask members of the House to join me in giving our guests a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 319**

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

Whereas travelling to Halifax for medical appointments can be expensive and difficult for patients and their families, who are often under emotional and other financial stresses; and

Whereas the Canadian Cancer Society, Nova Scotia Division, officially opened the Sobey Cancer Support Centre in September, which was an expansion of The Lodge That Gives; and

Whereas the Sobey Cancer Support Centre's expansion includes a larger dining room, a restaurant-grade kitchen, programming rooms for yoga, Reiki, meditation, and exercise, expanded wig and breast prostheses fitting room, and approximately 30 new bedrooms;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Canadian Cancer Society, Nova Scotia Division, on the facility expansion of the Sobey Cancer Support Centre, for recognizing this important need and ensuring patients and families have access to a clean, safe place to stay when they are travelling for medical reasons.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to do an introduction if I may.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. WHALEN: I would like to draw the attention of the House to the east gallery today where we're joined by a very special guest. We have with us today Professor Naiomi Metallic who is a Dalhousie Schulich School of Law professor and the inaugural Chancellor's Chair in Aboriginal Law and Policy. I've had the pleasure of meeting Professor Metallic before, in her role with the Barristers' Society of Nova Scotia Racial Equity Committee, and I know personally of the work that she does to expand human rights, and Aboriginal law in our province, and her commitment to diversity and inclusion.

With that, I would like Professor Metallic to rise for the warm welcome of the House before I do the resolution. She is joined today by members of her family and by the Deputy Minister of Justice as well. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 320**

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

Whereas Dalhousie law professor Naiomi Metallic from the Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation in Quebec was the first Mi'kmaq person to be a law clerk at the Supreme Court of Canada, and continues to be a force for positive change in our legal system; and

Whereas Professor Metallic has recently been named the inaugural Chancellor's Chair in Aboriginal Law and Policy at the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie; and

Whereas in her new position Professor Metallic will contribute to teaching and research in the area of Aboriginal law, identifying opportunities to collaborate with scholars from other faculties to offer interdisciplinary courses, and most importantly of all, will help build stronger relationships between the university and Aboriginal communities in the Maritimes;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Professor Metallic on her historic appointment as Chancellor's Chair in Aboriginal Law and Policy, and wish her every success in her future endeavours.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, can I make many introductions?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. BERNARD: Thank you. As we're poised to introduce legislation about accessibility, we invited some of our partners to witness this historic first for the province. Today, in the Speaker's Gallery, it is my pleasure to introduce a few people who were instrumental in getting us to this point. From the Minister's Advisory Panel on Accessibility Legislation, we have Marcie Shwery-Stanley, who is also a member of the Nova Scotia Disabled Persons Commission; Cynthia Carroll, Executive Director of Autism Nova Scotia, with her daughter Rachel, who is here for Take Our Kids to Work Day; and Steven Estey from the Council of Canadians with Disabilities.

From the Disabled Persons Commission we have Brian Tapper, who is the Chair; Lynn Brogan, the Executive Director; and Sandra McFadyen and Craig MacKinnon, who did the extensive research that led to the legislation. From government we have Anne MacRae and Catherine Berliner, who are leading the development of the legislation.

From Nova Scotia's business community we have Jordi Morgan, Atlantic Vice-President for the Canadian Federation of Independent Business; also from the Minister's Advisory Panel, Darlene Grant Fiander, President of the Tourism Industry of Nova Scotia; and Dennis Campbell, CEO of Ambassadors.

As well, we have Henk van Leeuwen from Easter Seals. I'd also like to welcome the Speaker's parents, Ralph and Judy Murphy; the Speaker's wife, Stephanie Murphy; the Speaker's sister, Kim Murphy; the Speaker's in-laws, Larry and Sally Messenger; Jenna Murphy, who is the constituency assistant of the Speaker; and the Speaker's friends, Curtis and Joan Lavangie.

If we could give them all a very warm welcome to the House. (Applause)

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 59 - Entitled an Act Respecting Accessibility in Nova Scotia. (Hon. Joanne Bernard)**

**Bill No. 60 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 42 of the Acts of 2010. The Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act. (Hon. David Wilson)**

**Bill No. 61 - Entitled an Act to Provide for the Stabilization of Labour Relations Affecting Certain Construction Projects. (Hon. Kelly Regan)**

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

**NOTICES OF MOTION**

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

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

**MACKINNON, ALTON: BOXING ACHIEVEMENT - CONGRATS.**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate 45-year-old Alton MacKinnon of Sydney Mines, a coach at the Tri-Town Boxing Club in North Sydney. Alton has always had an interest in stepping into the ring to box competitively. This summer Alton took a team of young fighters to Kansas City to compete in the 2016 Ringside World Championship, billed as the world's largest amateur boxing tournament. Alton competed and won silver.

It's an honour to congratulate Alton on his boxing achievement and to thank him for all he has done for sport in our community.

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

**GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE  
- MARINE RESOURCES PROTECTION COMM.**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, peaceful coexistence in our waters continues to be challenged by increasing activities. Offshore drilling for oil and gas, and the push to develop tidal energy has fishers concerned about potential effects on their industry. Talk of a large-scale wind project off the coast of Yarmouth suggests that more challenges lie ahead.

Mr. Speaker, as activities increase, it is time to consider a new governance structure to ensure that all stakeholders are consulted and included in decision-making processes. I have suggested that perhaps it is time to consider something new; namely, a marine resources protection committee. This committee could include a wide range of interests, from academics to industry. It is time to renew peaceful coexistence in our waters.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**MAGUIRE, RENA & BRENDAN:  
ISLA ROSE MAGUIRE - BIRTH CONGRATS.**

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: On October 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. my partner Rena and I were proud to introduce the newest member of our family; Isla Rose Maguire was born six pounds and 12 ounces, healthy and full of energy. Mother and daughter are both at home and doing great. Brother Oliver and sister Rufina have both welcomed their new sister with open arms. To Rufina I say, dream big and you can be whatever you want to be and daddy loves you.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: May I start with an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

MR. BAILLIE: In the gallery today is Joyce Nickerson, a prominent Tory - I hope she doesn't mind me saying that - from the Yarmouth area. She is a real sweetheart. She has been here a number of times. I would like to invite all members to welcome Joyce back to the House of Assembly this afternoon. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

**HENWOOD, KEN & DOUG: MINERS MUSEUM - VOLUNTEERING THANK**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: I rise today to congratulate brothers Ken and Doug Henwood of Springhill on their volunteer efforts at the Springhill "Tour a Mine". Even though it has been years since Ken and Doug worked as miners, they are up at the crack of dawn each morning ready to go below into one of Springhill's last coal mines. Instead of picks and shovels they carry memories of what it means to be a miner, and they share those memories with visitors from around the world.

Ken and Doug Henwood know the toll that mining takes on Springhill families. Their father was trapped for almost 12 hours during the Bump of 1958. I want to commend Ken and Doug Henwood on volunteering at the Miners' Museum and thank them for their ongoing service to their community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret's.

**TIDAL ENERGY: STAKEHOLDERS - MIN. CONSULT**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, a judge recently denied the request of Nova Scotia fishers to halt testing of tidal turbines until at least the new year. However, I hope the Minister of Environment understands that there is more work to be

done to improve this situation. A recent DFO report was critical of the lack of environmental baseline data collected in and around the tidal turbine test site. This has added to concerns of the fishers who are worried that the tidal energy might be developed at the expense of the traditional fisheries. Having to resolve this situation through litigation should certainly be our last resort.

I call on the minister to continue to work with all stakeholders to ensure that if tidal energy is developed it is done so in a safe and sustainable manner for our province.

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

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: I would like to bring the attention of members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have Grade 9 students from Fairview Junior High who have the fortune/misfortune of shadowing me today. I ask them to stand when I call their name: Lucas Arab and Emmy Guye. If they could receive the warm welcome from the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

#### **MACDONALD, JOE - TCH NO. 104: TWINNING EFFORTS - RECOGNIZE**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I rise to bring to the attention of you and all members of the Legislature that Barneys River Fire Chief Joe MacDonald has been working to raise awareness and support for the twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway No. 104 from Sutherlands River to Antigonish, spanning constituencies of Pictou East and Antigonish. Through Mr. MacDonald's leadership two petitions have been established, an electronic petition hosted at change.org with over 8,000 e-signatures and a paper petition with over 6,500 signatures, requesting that this stretch of highway with an extension to and onto the Canso Causeway be completed to complete the twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway No. 104 on mainland Nova Scotia.

I look forward to meeting with Mr. MacDonald, along with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, to receive the petition later this month, and ask members to recognize Mr. MacDonald for his efforts.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, may I again make an introduction before my statement?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, go ahead.



MR. BAILLIE: Thank you. As many members know, it's "bring your son or daughter to work day." In the gallery opposite is the son of one of our staff members. Carson Harrison is here with his father, Peter, who works in the PC caucus office.

I understand that Carson met the Premier this morning when he was doing his rounds here at Province House. When the Premier asked him where his father works, Carson truthfully said that he works for the Opposition PC caucus, and they had a nice chat shortly thereafter.

I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming Carson to the House of Assembly this afternoon. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

**BETTS, BUN: GOOD HEALTH/GOOD BIKING - WELL WISHES**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: I wish to recognize Wyman "Bun" Betts of Wentworth. Bun is a 96-year-old biker who participated in the second Bordertown Biker Bash closing finale this summer. After some research, as far as anyone can tell, Bun is one of the oldest motorcycle drivers in North America. He enjoys driving his 2003 Honda Gold Wing, getting out on the road, putting on the cruise control, and watching the scenery. He mainly rides around Cumberland County; however, he is known to take a few trips to P.E.I. His fellow bikers report that he is a true inspiration to them and others.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Bun Betts for his inspiration to fellow seniors and wish him good health and good biking in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**LAW REFORM COMM.: GOV'T. (N.S.) - FUNDING RESTORE**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Last week here in the House, the Justice Minister tabled the annual report of the Law Reform Commission. Last year, at the request of the Justice Minister, the commission reviewed the Powers of Attorney Act, which was significantly out of date. It also reviewed the Matrimonial Property Act, which had not been amended in over 30 years.

Mr. Speaker, the work of the Law Reform Commission benefits all Nova Scotians. Last year's annual report provides ample evidence of the importance of the commission's work. The government's decision to cut the funding to the commission was short-sighted and unnecessary. The legal community has been critical of this government's decision, and rightly so.

I call on the minister to reverse her decision and restore government funding for the Law Reform Commission.

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

### **CREATIVE GOURMET INC.: SUCCESS - CELEBRATE**

MR. BEN JESSOME: I would like to recognize a small community business called Creative Gourmet Incorporated, located in Hammonds Plains-Lucasville. Creative Gourmet began by selling their delicious squares at a farmer's market in Alberta. By connecting with their community, their catering services were soon in high demand. The owners, Lyle and Laura Kennedy, moved to Nova Scotia and now live in Hammonds Plains, where they prepare the delicious meals and treats Creative Gourmet has to offer.

Creative Gourmet caters tables for two, cocktail parties, buffets, receptions, and barbecues. They will tailor their product to fit your needs. From set-up to clean-up, they offer it all. Lyle and Laura are also very involved in our community, and this year Lyle was named Member of the Year by the Hammonds Plains Area Business Association.

I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the success of Creative Gourmet and to congratulate its owners, Lyle and Laura Kennedy, and wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

### **HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION: ANNIV. (60<sup>th</sup>) - COMMEMORATION**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Szia, Mr. Speaker. Sziasztok, MLAs. Last night, members of Nova Scotia's Hungarian community gathered at Pier 21 to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, the Hungarian freedom fighters, and the many contributions Hungarian Canadians have made to our country.

Twelve 56ers were on hand as part of the ceremony. His Excellence Bálint Ódor, Hungary's ambassador to Canada, unveiled a plaque memorializing the revolution and the generosity of Canada, who provided hope, freedom, and a new life to thousands of Hungarian refugees.

The highlight of the evening was a performance by the Csillagszeműek Children's Hungarian Traditional Folk Dance Ensemble, and I must say, it was remarkable, Mr. Speaker. It was a true pleasure to learn about the bravery of the Hungarian people in the face of Soviet oppression and meet people who fled their homeland 60 years ago to build a new life here in Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**HANSEN, SUZY: HRSB - ELECTION CONGRATS.**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: I would like to offer congratulations to Suzy Hansen, who was elected as the Halifax Regional School Board representative in District 5, and who, with fellow members of the school board, will be sworn in today.

With four children currently attending elementary school in Halifax's North End, Suzy believes that education and support for youth create engaged citizens and strong leaders. With a background in community volunteering and working with Phoenix youth programs, Susie is a strong advocate for children, youth, and the importance of education as a vehicle for social change. I wish Suzy well in her new position with the Halifax Regional School Board.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East on an introduction.

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw the attention of the House to the east gallery where today I am joined by two lovely young ladies, also Grade 9 students at South Colchester Academy. The first one is not new to this House, my daughter Paige Christensen - I'd ask her to stand up, when she can - and her friend Summer Power, who are with me today. I would ask the House to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

**JOB SHADOWING DAY - ACTIVITIES**

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, today is Job Shadowing Day and I'm pleased to be able to bring my granddaughter Paige Christensen and her friend Summer Power to the House. So far they have visited the Department of Environment, the Premier's Office, where they had a picture with the Premier, the Legislature and more - so today is going to be a very full day.

Mr. Speaker, the privilege of having children is one thing, but having a granddaughter is truly a gift from God. Having a granddaughter so involved with me politically has been amazing. She worked in my campaign, she saw me sworn in as an MLA, and then again as a minister. We have travelled this bumpy road together, and most inspiring, she can't imagine anyone voting anything but Liberal. She's a smart girl.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**TIR: ROADSIDE VEGETATION - BUDGET**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise awareness regarding an issue that arose this past summer. Many constituents contacted me from every

corner of Pictou West to express concerns about the height of roadside vegetation. This became a safety hazard in many areas for drivers, walkers, and bikers alike.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to express that this is in no way a reflection on the local Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal staff, as they face budget constraints, forcing them to choose which jobs get done. In fact, in some cases, mowing equipment is shared between areas, and department staff must wait for it to return before the mowing can be completed. The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal must place greater importance on this part of his budget and ensure that DOT staff have the tools and the budget to keep roadside vegetation mowed.

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

### **N.S. GROUND SEARCH & RESCUE - DONATE**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, the Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue Association was started in 1992. This organization contributes to public safety in the province in many ways, including searches, training...

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

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, this organization contributes to public safety in the province in many ways, including searches, training, and prevention. Volunteers with the Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue say they need to increase their numbers in rural areas in order to be able to respond during crucial, early hours of search operations.

I ask Nova Scotians to consider if they can donate time or money to this very important group. Mr. Speaker, I also want to encourage this government to consider ways in which it could help Nova Scotia Ground Search and Rescue teams increase their personnel.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale on an introduction.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. We have with us in the east gallery today a young gentleman who is a Grade 9 student from St. Agnes Junior High. His name is Ian Radford. I ask him to please rise. He is accompanied today by his wonderful father, who is also a legal colleague of mine, Paul Radford; both are residents of Fairmount. I ask everybody to please give them the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**WALDEN VOL. FD - ANNIV. (25<sup>th</sup>)**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, a fire department is so much more than trucks and hoses. It is a family unto itself and it is a protector of the communities it surrounds. Its members take great pride in what they do, and are not recognized enough for their time they spend serving us.

Today I would like to recognize the Walton Volunteer Fire Department for 25 years of service. The department was formed not out of necessity, not because of a fire or tragedy, but because insurance companies were refusing fire insurance, due to the distance the community was from the nearest fire department. Regardless of the reason, the department has become an indispensable part of the community, continuing to provide an invaluable service to this day. Also, their Walden Summer Bash fundraiser, held every Labour Day weekend, is legendary in Lunenburg County.

I wish to congratulate the current and past members of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department on celebrating 25 years of service.

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

**L'ÎLE-DES-SURETTE: LA RESTAURATION DE LA CHAPELLE  
- MESSE COMMÉMORATIVE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Le samedi 6 août, une messe commémorative très spéciale a eu lieu à l'île-des-Surette afin de marquer la restauration d'une chapelle construite en 1934. La chapelle a été construite sur le site où la toute première messe a été célébrée en novembre 1855.

Le père Maurice LeBlanc a célébré la messe extérieure devant la chapelle, pour les nombreuses personnes présentes. Il a souligné qu'il avait seulement 10 ans et qu'il était présent à la première messe célébrée dans la chapelle en 1934.

Trois résidents de la région ont été responsables de la restauration, soit Darryl Crosby, Jamey Boucher et Warren Surette. Ils ont reçu un appui et des dons considérables des entreprises et des résidents de la région pour terminer le projet de restauration.

Un souper communautaire préparé par les résidents de l'île a eu lieu au club local, après la messe.

Je remercie sincèrement tous les participants à ce projet.

In English, Mr. Speaker. On Saturday, August 6, 2016, a very special commemorative mass was held on Surette's Island to mark the restoration of a chapel that was constructed in 1934. The chapel was constructed on the site where the first mass was

celebrated in November 1855. Father Maurice LeBlanc celebrated the outdoor mass in front of the chapel with many people in attendance. He noted that he was just 10 years old and present at the first mass in 1934.

Three local residents were responsible for carrying out the restoration - Darryl Crosby, Jamey Boucher, and Warren Surette. They received tremendous support and donations from businesses and residents to complete the project.

A community supper prepared by the residents of the island at the local club followed the mass. A heartfelt thanks to all those who participated in this great project.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret's.

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: May I make an introduction first?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: I would like to introduce in the west gallery a gentleman that some of you, I think, know because he used to be involved in the Halifax Regional Municipality School Board. That would be Mr. Mike Flemming, if he would stand. Mr. Flemming is a fantastic president of the Chester-St. Margaret's EDA. Let's give him a warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret's.

#### **NAT. RES.: SPECIES AT RISK - PROTECT/PRESERVE**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: A recent report by the World Wildlife Fund claims that global populations of mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, and reptiles have plunged by almost 60 per cent since 1970. Furthermore, if we continue on this path, the organization warns that the abundance of biodiversity in 2020 could fall by more than two thirds of what it was in 1970. These numbers are staggering.

Here at home, the Auditor General recently criticized the Department of Natural Resources for failing to carry out planning associated with protecting and preserving species at risk. The Auditor General noted that plans to act on the biodiversity goals are not detailed enough to clearly show what should be done.

Mr. Speaker, there is no time to wait. I call on the minister to address this situation immediately.

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

**NICHOLSON, WENDY: BRAS D'OR - WELCOME**

MS. PAM EYKING: I rise today to welcome Wendy Nicholson, owner of the new Kitchen 1409 restaurant in Bras d'Or, to our community.

Wendy has worked as a cook for 11 years and was a student from the culinary school of the Nova Scotia Community College Marconi Campus. She decided to pursue her dream of one day opening her own restaurant and, after choosing her location and completing renovations, she opened her new business on July 21, 2016. The support of the community has been overwhelming.

Wendy is another fine example of the great young entrepreneurs we have across this province. I would like to congratulate her on her success, and wish her well in the future.

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

**MEN OF THE DEEPS - C.B./N.S.: CONTRIBUTION - CONGRATS.**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, last night I had the honour and the privilege to attend a gala event celebrating 50 years of the Men of the Deeps, Cape Breton's singing ambassadors. It was 50 years ago, on a Tuesday night, November 1<sup>st</sup>, that the Men of the Deeps made their first public appearance at the Savoy Theatre in Glace Bay. It was a project brought forward to celebrate Canada's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

North America's only coal miner choir has been under the direction of Professor Jack O'Donnell of Antigonish, who made the trek to Glace Bay Sunday after Sunday, week after week, month after month, year after year. Jack is now assisted by the talented Stephen Muise as Assistant Director of this famous group. Stephen grew up with the group as his father, Yogi Muise, is a member of the Men of the Deeps and he took him to many practices and performances.

Mr. Speaker, a highlight of the night was when 83-year-old Bob Roper sang a solo. Bob is a founding member and has performed in each of the 50 years since the group started. I ask that all members of the House congratulate this group for all they do to promote Cape Breton and Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish on an introduction.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw the members' attention to the east gallery where I ask that Ms. Julia Shannon, from Hammonds Plains Madeline Symonds Middle School, please rise to receive the warm welcome of the House, as with many other students here today. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. IRVING: I'd like to call the attention of the members of the House to the east gallery where we are joined today by a Village Commissioner for the Village of New Minas, Mr. Ken Pineo. Ken, a constituent of mine, tells me his last visit here was when the famous Harry How sat in the seat of Kings South, so I'd like all members of the House to welcome back Mr. Pineo to the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

### **MACDONALD, LAURA - EAST COAST MUSIC AWARD**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Laura MacDonald of Gaspereau, who in April 2016, won the East Coast Music Award for Graphic Media Artist of the Year. Ms. MacDonald is the owner of Deep Hollow Print, a Kentville-based letterpress print shop and graphic design business she founded in 2013. Her posters are crafted by hand on an antique, old-fashioned letterpress, and she is one of the only people in Canada doing this.

Ms. MacDonald interned with Gaspereau Press in Kentville and with Hatch Show Print in Nashville, which has created posters for many music greats, including Elvis Presley. Valley artists such as the Hupman Brothers, and venues like the Union Street Café and the Rolled Oat Café are among her regular customers.

On behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, I congratulate Laura MacDonald on this award, and wish her continued future success.

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

### **CHARLES, OWEN - BOXING ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Northside boxer Thomas Foster, who earned a unanimous decision over Ontario's Owen Charles, a bronze medallist, at this year's junior nationals. The main event took place in the inaugural Cape Breton Cup held at the Joan Harriss Cruise Pavilion. Thomas's victory came in the 140-pound class. This Grade 11 student has a rocketing career in the ring. I wish Thomas great success in the ring as his career blossoms.

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



**PICKARD, REILLY - HOCKEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Reilly Pickard, a resident of Fairview-Clayton Park, and player in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, on playing great hockey and getting himself into the chatter for the NHL draft. Reilly has been praised by his teammates and coaches for being one of the best goaltenders in the league.

In discussing Mr. Pickard, his colleagues and fans have been quoted as saying that he really makes it look easy in the net. Pickard, 17, was a mainstay in his second season in the Quebec Major Juniors, recording 25 wins while posting a .902 save percentage, at 3.15 goals against average, and a whopping 3,139 minutes played. He made 1,516 saves this winter, and it only looks like nothing but improvement from Reilly from here on in.

I would like the members of this Nova Scotia Assembly to join me in acknowledging Reilly on his amazing accomplishments in his current hockey career, and wishing him the best in his mission on making it into the NHL.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East on an introduction.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to introduce the House to a young colleague from back home, Spencer MacDonald, studying Political Science at Dalhousie, and making his first trip to the Legislature. I want to get it in Hansard that he's here, so his mom knows why he's not in class today. Welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**NON-PROFIT CHILD CARE CENTRES: WORK - ACKNOWLEDGE**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: I want to again acknowledge the valuable work of non-profit child care centres that are like homes away from home for so many children in Halifax Needham, and elsewhere in the province. In particular, in the area I represent: Wee Care Developmental Centre, the Leeds Street Child Care Centre, Needham Pre-School, the Cunard Street Children's Centre, North End Community Day Care Centre, and I'm sure I am missing a few. These centres, which do not generate a profit, have always paid staff as fairly and generously as they are able. Parents and other community volunteers work with their executive directors to manage these facilities, and they actually saw a decrease in funding under this government's response to the review on regulated child care.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth on an introduction.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I would like to turn the House's attention to the west gallery. A friend of ours from Yarmouth is here in attendance - who is often here, actually - Joyce Nickerson. She is known as everyone's favorite Tory back home in Yarmouth, so

we're of course always happy to have Joyce here with us in the Legislature. I ask the members to give her a warm welcome.

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

**THANKSGIVING FLOOD (2016) - C.B.-RICHMOND MLA/NSP EMPLOYEES:  
ASSISTANCE - THANK**

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I rise to recognize all the employees of Nova Scotia Power who were in my community during the Thanksgiving flood. One of the stories that people have not heard is that during the storm, Loaves and Fishes in Sydney lost their power, and as result, all the food in the refrigerator was in jeopardy. With the support from the MLA for Cape Breton-Richmond and the employees of Nova Scotia Power, they acted quickly, knowing that if they didn't, we would have lost all the food in the community for the families that needed it the most. They acted quickly, and as a result of that, all was saved. I wanted to rise in my place today to thank the MLA for Cape Breton-Richmond for his support for the people in our community, and thank all the employees of Nova Scotia Power, who acted very quickly in that instance and supported our community through a very difficult time.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**MELANSON, KENZIE: IRISH DANCING - ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, in 2012 the Nova Scotia Irish Dancers group came together to perform for the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo. Kenzie Melanson, a young constituent from Port Williams, Nova Scotia, is the only dancer in that 15-member group who is from the Annapolis Valley. Kenzie started dancing at the age of three, and says she decided to concentrate on Irish dancing due to the fast footwork, and her Irish roots. Kenzie and her fellow dancers represented Nova Scotia in the Hamburg, Germany Polizei Show, which Kenzie affectionately calls "The German Tattoo". In an interview with Kings County News back in September, Kenzie said that she looks forward to representing Canada and Nova Scotia. I wish to congratulate Kenzie Melanson for her accomplishment, and wish her continued success with her future in dancing, and all her endeavours.

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

**SACKVILLE-BEAVER BANK - COMMUN. BBQ**

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: July 12<sup>th</sup> marked the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual community barbecue for Sackville-Beaver Bank residents, held at the St. John Vianney Church in Middle Sackville. It was a great opportunity to meet people in my constituency and discuss whatever was on their minds. Many new relationships came out of this community barbecue and was well

attended by all. The young ones really enjoyed the DJ music, hotdogs, burgers, cotton candy, and even the bouncy castle was a huge hit. I was very pleased to see the Sackville RCMP and Fire Department, who were on hand as well. A special thank you to my CAs, Lorraine and Tracy, and the many volunteers who came out and made this community barbecue such a great success.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

#### **CAPE TO CAPE TRAIL - CONSTRUCTION: WOMEN VOLS. - COMMEND**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I would like to rise today to highlight the work being done on the Cape to Cape Trail by a group of female volunteers. This will be the ninth year that a unique group of women will have come together to construct a section of the trail, which will stretch from Cape Chignecto in Cumberland County, to Cape George in Antigonish County. This is the second year in a row that they have worked on the Pictou County section of the trail. It is a weekend of camaraderie for this group of outdoor enthusiasts, spent taking down trees, moving rocks, clearing overgrown areas, building rock walls, and digging drain ditches. And I am happy to say that I was able to partake last year. I would like to thank and commend these women for taking on this project and for being non-traditional role models.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

#### **LYONS-MACFARLANE, NIKKI - NATL. STUDENT DAY OF ACTION**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, Nikki Lyons-MacFarlane is a second-year librarian information technology student at the NSCC Waterfront campus in Dartmouth. A full-time student who is in 24 hours of class per week, Nikki works part-time and sometimes full-time hours and holds volunteer positions with Frontier College and a school library at a public elementary school. Volunteer positions are necessary for library students to be able to access any form of employment.

Nikki is also a university graduate and has already incurred student debt before becoming a community college student. To compound this, Nikki lives with a chronic illness. Nikki wanted to share her experience today on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, the National Student Day of Action for Universal, Just, Public Education.

Right now Nikki is joined by hundreds of students across Nova Scotia, and thousands across Canada, in calling on provincial and federal governments to eliminate tuition fees.

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

**ATL. CAN. CAREER WK. - STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP:  
MADISON - CONGRATS.**

MS. JOYCE TREEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honour of Atlantic Canada Career Week and to speak of an 11-year-old student with the entrepreneurial spirit. I recently attended a local fundraising Fall Fair in support of Tallahassee Community School, where dozens of entrepreneurs showed off their products.

Among the vendors there was a young lady named Madison who stood proudly behind her table of Dog Treats by Madison. She spoke confidently about her business and the cost of her product. I purchased several jars, which my dog happily enjoyed.

It is wonderful to see the entrepreneurship in students so young. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this House to congratulate Madison on her success.

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

**HOWARD, SEAN: BOOK PUBLICATION - CONGRATS.**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Sean Howard of Main-à-Dieu who recently published a book entitled *The Photographer's Last Picture*. The book is a collection of poetry inspired by photographs depicting the First World War.

Sean is an accomplished poet, committed community volunteer, and a lover of the enchanted Main-à-Dieu coastline, which is the inspiration for much of his poetry.

I stand here today to congratulate Sean Howard on his publication. His community is incredibly proud of this amazing accomplishment.

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

**MARCHAND, JAYDE - VOLLEYBALL ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, over the years Cape Breton-Richmond has turned out its fair share of impressive student athletes. Jayde Marchand from Richmond Education Centre Academy is the latest in that long line.

The Grade 10 student and Louisdale native recently represented Nova Scotia as one of 10 young athletes competing on the Nova Scotia Under 17 women's volleyball team. They competed August 5<sup>th</sup> at the Eastern Elite championships in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The team finished in 4<sup>th</sup> place, in what was a great learning experience for all involved.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Jayde Marchand on her impressive accomplishment and wishing her much success in the classroom and in sports in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

### **STELLARTON FIREFIGHTERS: AWARDS - CONGRATS.**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place to recognize the importance of our volunteer fire departments. Volunteer firefighters are the true backbone of any community in Nova Scotia because we all depend on them 365 days a year, 24 hours each day.

I was unable to get an opportunity to recognize the significant Long Service Awards given to several Stellarton firefighters this past Spring. It is my pleasure to do this today.

Firefighters Charles MacLaren not only received his 40-year Town of Stellarton Medal, but was also presented with his 45-year service pin. Two other dedicated members received their 40-year Town of Stellarton Service Medal - they were Chief Dwight Campbell and Brian Campbell. Dave Field received his 25-year service medal, and Lee Caldwell was recognized for his 20 years of dedication to the fire service.

I would ask all members of this Legislature to join me in thanking these dedicated, committed firefighters from the Town of Stellarton.

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

### **MUISE, CHIEF EDDIE: SERV./VOLUNTEERING - THANK**

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I think it's appropriate to rise today, on the day that you tabled accessibility legislation, to recognize Chief Freddie Muise of the Hectanooga Fire Department.

In doing so, I not only want to recognize his 38 years of service at the fire department, but also to highlight his efforts to raise funds for a cause close to his heart, muscular dystrophy research. You see, Chief Muise has muscular dystrophy and is the only fire chief in Canada confined to a wheelchair. Despite this, he goes out to every call and instructs his team over the radio.

In addition to these responsibilities, Chief Muise has been involved in a number of MD fundraisers, including bass fishing tournaments and last July's ladderthon in the chief's riding.

Please join me in thanking Chief Muise for his years of service and all the volunteering, and all those who helped him in the ladderthon.

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

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

**PREM.: STRIKE AVOIDANCE - PLANS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Last night, the Premier basically admitted that he has no idea how to handle the teachers' impasse, when he said, and I quote directly, "How we're here, I'm not sure . . ." I'll table that quote for the benefit of the House.

This admission speaks volumes about how this government has messed up the negotiations with teachers, bringing us to the possibility of the first strike in our province's history. The Premier has missed every reasonable opportunity to get an off-ramp where he can sit down, talk to teachers, and work this out, which is what every parent and student wants to see happen.

Now that he's missed the most recent reasonable way of working out his differences with teachers, will the Premier tell us what his plan is now to avoid a strike?

THE PREMIER: As the honourable member knows, leading up to the strike, we've heard across the province that it was about classrooms. I did express last night that I'm not sure how we're here. We spent \$65 million, putting it back into the classroom, hiring more teachers, math mentors, and reading specialists. We put in new programs. We've gone through to continue to make sure we try to improve the learning environment in the classroom.

What I expressed last night was my genuine feeling that we were responding to what we believed teachers were looking for in the classroom, and it was an honest expression. I don't think anyone can fault their Premier for providing an honest expression.

MR. BAILLIE: We don't doubt the Premier's honesty that he has no idea what to do now. That's actually the problem, and he showed it again. The more he spouts those lines that no one is buying, quite frankly, the closer we get every day to a strike. The Premier told parents and students that he wanted to work with teachers. He had a golden opportunity handed to him when the teachers asked to put this all before a conciliation board. But rather than make that work, he chose to play political games, and missed the opportunity.

Parents and students are counting on the Premier to find a way to work this out as has always been done without a strike. How can they trust him now, when he messed up such an obvious, reasonable way to work out his differences with teachers?

THE PREMIER: Again, the honourable member is confused. We agreed to go to the conciliation board, and the honourable member has been told that multiple times in this House. As a matter of fact, I tabled, in this House, yesterday the very thing - the Teachers Union acknowledged that they were the ones who were not going to the conciliation board.

We continue to be prepared to sit down and talk about how we move forward and make the classroom and learning environment better. The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development has been reaching out and talking to teachers. We're going to continue to do so. They gave their union a strike mandate, and now the union will have to determine what is next for them. We were prepared to go to this board. They said no.

MR. BAILLIE: Quite honestly, it's the Premier that's confused. The teachers asked for the conciliation board; it's him and his government that said no. The fact that they were not able to reach agreement on conditions is, quite frankly, a sideshow.

The facts are, the teachers asked for a conciliation board and that request went to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. The government did not respond with a yes. They said no. That's why there's no conciliation board, Mr. Speaker. It's as simple as that. The Premier admitted last night that he had no idea how we got here. Now I hope we've cleared that up for all time.

The point is, no more political games. Parents don't want political games. Will the Premier commit today - no more games, just get back to the table, and work this out with teachers?

THE PREMIER: Again, I want to remind the honourable member that it was teachers who chose not to go to the table. We continue to focus on the things that we've been told by teachers across this province. Classroom conditions, we're going to continue to focus on that. We're going to continue to focus on kids.

It's my hope - I want teachers to be standing in front of students. That's my hope where they will be. They've given the union executive a strong mandate, the same union executive that negotiated two separate deals that they said no to. Now they're going to have to rely on what that union executive is going to do about whether or not to strike.

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

### **PREM.: NSTU BARGAINING - AGREE**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: My question is for the Premier also. This government has decided to play politics with public sector contracts. The Nova Scotia Teachers Union has requested the conciliation board, but unfortunately, the two sides are unable to agree on conditions around this process. This government's refusal to participate

in the collective bargaining process is moving all of us closer to the first-ever province-wide teachers strike.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier to stop playing politics and agree to bargain in good faith with the teachers.

THE PREMIER: I want to remind the honourable member that we went to the bargaining table with teachers. We came to a negotiated agreement. Their own lawyer sent a letter to every teacher across this province, telling them that when we were at the bargaining table on two separate occasions, we ended up getting a negotiated settlement. That is bargaining.

I will grant him this, Mr. Speaker - we didn't roll over. We bargained on behalf of the citizens of Nova Scotia. We provided what we believe is a fair wage increase, one that recognizes the hard work that teachers do across this province. At the same time, we've continued to invest in classrooms and replace the \$65 million that that Party took out of classrooms. We're going to continue to make sure we stay focused on kids.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, when I asked yesterday about collective bargaining, the Premier said that we all have to do our part for the solution. He told the teachers, ". . . the growth of your benefits has to slow down." This is the message that he has for teachers, for nurses, and for front-line workers, but it seems he has a very different set of rules for himself and for those working in his inner circle.

We all have to do our part for this particular solution. What is the Premier doing to be part of the solution?

THE PREMIER: Again, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As he would know, under this government there has been no increase in salaries. He also knows that the transition allowance that was afforded to members is gone as of a year ago. Those are all real challenges. All members who have been here for a period of time have made a contribution toward that.

What we're asking for is that across the entire public sector - what we have is an increase. No one is losing any benefits. Their Long Service Award is staying intact. We just said that we can't continue to allow it to grow.

It's unreasonable to suggest that we provide a bonus for those Nova Scotians who are going into the best pension plans we have in our province. It's simply unreasonable to ask 70 per cent of the population to contribute to give a bonus to those who are in the best pensions we have. At the same time, we provided a modest increase in salary that I believe reflects this province's ability to pay.



He made a choice. His Party made a choice. They gave a 7.5 per cent pay raise and cut money and took money from kids and classrooms. We made a different choice.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, this government is certainly painting itself into an ugly corner. They have passed legislation that they've proclaimed would set teachers' wages. The Premier has said that arbitration is not an option and that this government will not agree to continue negotiations through a conciliation board unless certain conditions are completely off the table. This is not, however - in my view, Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues' - when collective bargaining works.

Will the Premier admit that he has made a mistake and repeal Bill No. 148?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again, as I have said in this House to the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party time and time again, we were prepared to go to the conciliation board. It was the teachers who said no.

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

#### **PREM. - OFFICE: ETHICAL PROBLEM - REASONS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier has now lost three senior staff members to ethical violations. His chief of staff had to leave because he had disclosed private, personal health information; his director of communications had to leave because he had been charged with a domestic assault; and as of yesterday an outreach officer with the Liberal caucus had to leave because he conspired to get taxpayers' money from Richmond County and have it delivered to the Cape Breton-Richmond Liberal Association bank account.

I'd like to ask the Premier, why does he have such a serious ethical problem in his own office?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to thank all those Nova Scotians who accept opportunities to serve the public, whether it's in the Premier's Office or caucus offices or constituency offices across this province. Every Nova Scotian who enters into public life does so wanting to serve the interests of their community to make this province a better place, and I want to thank all of them - not only those who have come to work for me, but all those who step up to support whatever political Party or whatever way they believe they can serve public office to improve the lives of those in Nova Scotia.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Premier doesn't thank people for disclosing private health information or thank them for conspiring to take taxpayers' money from Richmond County and put it in the Cape Breton-Richmond Liberal Association bank account or thank them for committing domestic assault - even though he

hires them back quietly when they commit that offence. I'm sure he doesn't mean to thank those people who commit those kinds of offences.

Yes, they are in a position of public trust and yes, we need people to take positions of public trust. But we also have to hold them accountable when they violate that public trust, as is happening repeatedly in his office, Mr. Speaker. Maybe this is another example of where his answer is, I don't know how we got here.

I'd like to ask the Premier, in this case, does he truly prefer to be left in the dark or is he even aware of the pattern that is now coming out of his own office?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Again I want to thank all those Nova Scotians who continue to respond to the needs of Nova Scotians. I also want to acknowledge those Nova Scotians who, when they've made a mistake, accept the responsibility of those mistakes in this House.

The only member in this House, the member across, who continues to stand in this House pessimistic about the future of this province, continuing to condemn Nova Scotians, continually looking at the glass half-full, continuing to be negative, not the expression that I give when I go and see Nova Scotians. They will stand up, those Nova Scotians who stood up and accepted, Mr. Speaker, when they were wrong. I look forward to that member standing up and telling Nova Scotians time after time when he has been wrong.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: PHYSICIAN BILLING NUMBERS - COMMUNITY LIST**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, it was the Premier and the Liberal Party that promised Nova Scotians in the last election a doctor for every Nova Scotian. Tens of thousands of Nova Scotians are without a doctor today, and instead of spending their time and efforts finding those physicians, they amalgamated the district health authorities.

Last week a high-ranking official with the Health Authority said that every community cannot expect a family doctor. I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, when will the minister table a list of communities, like Weymouth, that will no longer have a doctor?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. He knows the strengths of a collaborative practice model for this province. We've begun that journey to look after Nova Scotians with the appropriate health care provider at the right time. Our recruitment is continuous.

The member opposite also knows that we have many situations now where we're actually having to hire two doctors to replace one of our doctors who is leaving practice and had 2,000 to 3,000 patients. Our new graduates are going to serve more in the 1,200, 1,300 patient load.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, what I do know is the benefit of issuing billing codes to physicians who want to go to communities like Weymouth. The residents of Weymouth have worked hard to get to a point where they are asking for the ability to do that.

I'd like to ask the Premier, will he tell Nova Scotians how the government is deciding which communities no longer will have billing numbers issued by the Nova Scotia Health Authority?

THE PREMIER: Again I want to thank the honourable member for the question, and I want to thank the member for Clare-Digby who has been working extremely hard with communities across that province.

The honourable member knows a physician is currently working in Weymouth, along with a nurse practitioner. We know there are challenges in communities across the province. What we've heard from health care providers is they want to work in a collaborative practice model. We're working with those communities to make sure that we have the infrastructure in place to provide that service.

There have been a number of steps that were brought in by Dal Medical School's Dr. Tom Marrie, the rural residency program which we're now starting to see the fruits of the benefits of that program, and through that, Mr. Speaker, we'll be able to build a collaborative practice team around communities across Nova Scotia. The announcement around the number of nurse practitioners and family practice nurses are all positive signs, and we continue to make sure that we're providing the environment where health care providers want to work.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

### **TOURISM N.S.: THREATENING LETTER - DETAILS**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: The Richmond expense scandal is now impacting government employees. Today I have a question for the minister responsible for Tourism Nova Scotia.

Ann Delorey, a seasonal worker at the Visitor Information Centre in Port Hastings, is a member of the Taxpayers of Richmond County Facebook group. Like many others in that group, she has expressed her opinions about Richmond County politics. Mrs. Delorey

received a letter from her employer, this government, not to be making comments they view to be political - and I can table that letter.

Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of Business now implicating himself in this mess by threatening the free speech of Nova Scotians who are upset with the way this government has handled the Richmond scandal?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. I don't know the specifics of what my colleague is referencing. I'm certainly more than prepared to speak with her and access that information, but let me say this - we all have a responsibility to be transparent, and I'd be more than willing to work with my colleague to get to the root of her concern.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned that the minister is not aware of this. I mean, this letter would be very threatening, I know if I received it myself. Mrs. Delorey did not make her comments during the months she was working; she did not make them to visitors. The policy actually states employees shall not make partisan political comments when speaking or writing as a Public Service employee.

The fact is that she made these comments as a free citizen, not as an employee. So why is the minister and Tourism Nova Scotia threatening to fire her? I believe she should have an apology.

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I just want to clarify for my colleague. Tourism Nova Scotia, if this is where this correspondence originated from, is an independent Crown Corporation and I have had no discussion with Tourism Nova Scotia relative to this individual or this subject but, again, would be more than willing to work with my colleague specific to the circumstances she shared and find some common ground on that position.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West, on a new question.

**MUN. AFFS. - MUN. GOV'TS. AUDITS:  
GUYSBOROUGH CO. - CONFIRM**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The minister's tune on municipal government audits has changed. First, they were not an efficient use of money. Now, after the Liberal Government has been rocked by scandal, he says he is considering a random audit of other municipalities. A random selection though may overlook some of the more troubling hot spots and political problems for the Liberals, and I consider this somewhat convenient.

Will any audit of other municipalities in the province include Guysborough County - yes or no?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, in fact, we haven't made a decision on how to proceed with that. What we've indicated is we're not interested in doing a wholesale forensic audit of 50 municipal units. I think the millions of dollars associated with that we can agree in this House would not be efficient. Municipalities do go through audits every year. They provide us with audited statements and management letters. That actually led to the red flags that had developed in Richmond County.

What I did indicate is that we are open to various options that were presented by the Ombudsman's Office. We are giving those full consideration because we do want to make all municipal governments fully accountable and transparent, and we're moving forward with our municipal partners to actually put all those expenses online because we know the best disinfectant is sunlight.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, the Ombudsman is currently investigating Guysborough County for its own expense scandal. Despite being asked, the minister has not said whether he has discussed the allegations of impropriety in Guysborough with his Cabinet colleague, the former Warden of Guysborough County.

Since government has been so reluctant to release information, will the minister commit today to releasing the findings of the Ombudsman's report as soon as he receives it - yes or no?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, the Ombudsman's Office is an independent office of our government. The Ombudsman made the previous report public, and we expect that to happen next time around. I mean, to have that Party continually infer that this government and our executive branch of government has the power to direct the courts, to direct the RCMP, to direct the Ombudsman's Office - I find very concerning, and I really want the members opposite to contemplate what those actions actually mean for the sake of our democracy and the powers that shouldn't be in Executive Council.

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

#### **PREM. - TUITION FEE INCREASES: N.S. ENROLMENT - EFFECTS**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Students in Nova Scotia graduate, on average, with \$39,000 in student debt. Tuition fees in Nova Scotia are the second highest in the country. This government has allowed fees to increase by as much as 37 per cent, and now almost 20 per cent fewer Nova Scotians are pursuing a university degree here at home, compared to just 10 years ago - and I will table that.

I ask the Premier, Mr. Speaker, is he concerned that fewer students are remaining in Nova Scotia because of his government's tuition fee increases?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As he would know, under the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education, we moved interest off student loans: it was being compounded on top of that. He would also know that we introduced legislation for Nova Scotian students who graduate in a four-year cycle that we will forgive the Nova Scotia portion of their student loan. We've also said to Nova Scotians with disabilities that we understand that it may take you longer than four years to finish that degree - we will provide you with a 10-year opportunity and at the end of those 10 years we'll forgive the Nova Scotia portion of the student loan.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, what's about to happen here is a lesson in listening. Students would not be marching outside right now if post-secondary education would be affordable. They are not out there celebrating; they are sending a message to all of us here in this particular Legislature, particularly the government is not making the proper investments. This government has cut \$50 million in financial assistance to graduates. Meanwhile, provinces like New Brunswick and Ontario are moving to make tuition free - I repeat, free - for more students. That is a clear difference.

I ask the Premier, why should Nova Scotian young people study here when they can receive a more affordable education from the start in other provinces?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member. He would know students across the country are marching on Legislatures across the country today; this is a national awareness for students. He would also know that if you are a Nova Scotia student and you complete your university degree in four years, we will forgive the Nova Scotia portion of your student debt.

As I said earlier, we're continuing to work to make sure that we continue to provide opportunities. He also mentioned about, I think he's talking about the Graduate Retention Rebate program, Mr. Speaker, that we repurposed some of that money in Graduate to Opportunity where we're seeing hundreds of Nova Scotians being given a job opportunity here in our province.

We're seeing those very university graduates getting their first job opportunity under our government in Nova Scotia, unlike when the New Democratic Party was in and they were leaving, not for their education, they were leaving to build a life somewhere else in Canada. Under this government, they are being educated in Nova Scotia and they are building their life in Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: DART. GEN. HOSP. REPT.  
- RECOMMENDATIONS**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. I recently received a copy of the feedback report from the Dartmouth General Hospital's design camp. The document states that in considering construction at the hospital, operational leadership of the Health and Wellness Department and the Health Authority were not supportive of consultant recommendations that the majority of rooms be private. This was despite previous information which had been provided indicating that shared rooms are associated with greater infection risk.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister be following the consultant's recommendation to ensure that the majority of new beds are private rooms, to ensure the best level of infection protection?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, first of all I'll say to the member opposite that I'm pleased with the work that is taking place on the third and fourth floors, which were the recommendation of the Auditor General, to make sure that infection control was indeed at the highest level. That work is now 60 to 70 per cent complete.

We will start the fifth floor in the Spring and the matter raised by the member opposite is one that I will certainly take a look at.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, it seems his department staff have already spoken on his behalf. In the document, which I'll table, the consultants talk a lot about the discussion with the province and they say that although discussion of the financial impact of not maintaining ward rooms included the potential loss of revenue stream, it did not include discussion around the cost savings and efficiencies derived from single-use rooms. Why is the Minister of Health and Wellness allowing people representing him, and the government, to prioritize revenue streams over infection control?

MR. GLAVINE: I know that in the whole design of the fifth floor, the new surgical tower, the ambulatory care, infection control will be top of mind, top of design, as that work moves forward. I'm pleased to say that that work will be underway in March 2017.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**MUN. AFFS.: RICHMOND FORENSIC AUDIT - TRUSTWORTHINESS**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: A question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. In Richmond, we have a forensic audit of about \$800,000 where there are 440 out of 603 transactions that are not supported with proper receipts. In the *Cape Breton Post*, the minister was quoted as saying, "We want the public to have full confidence in their municipal institutions." Many Nova Scotians have lost confidence in this government and

the role they played in pretending these inappropriate spending practices weren't happening in Richmond.

How does the minister expect Nova Scotians to have faith in this government's spot checks when they have people they need to protect, like the employee who was in their caucus office until yesterday?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I absolutely do reject the premise of that. I do find it offensive for that member to suggest that level of intent here. The Department of Municipal Affairs has been active on this. We were made aware of some red flags from the annual auditing report that all municipalities have to go through. We did move into action, recognizing that this is an independent organization, an independent level of government that is duly elected and autonomous. We moved in to try to provide advice. We offered a consultant to go in, courtesy of the province, to help them solve their financial management issues. I'll table two letters in that regard. That was offered at full price by the province; we would cover that. Unfortunately, that offer was rejected.

To suggest that we were not active on this I think is very unfair, and I think it's important that we recognize that these were decisions made by a group of people who were reimbursing themselves, it appears, for things that shouldn't have been reimbursed. I think those individuals need to be held to account, and through these investigative processes, I believe they will be.

MR. MACMASTER: The problem with the minister's answer is that this government, including the minister himself, has been in conversations with people. It has been well known, Mr. Speaker, that this has been going on for a long time. It wasn't until the Ombudsman's Office got involved that this government got involved. Batting .270 would get you near the top of the batting order if you were playing for the Petit-de-Grat Red Caps, but it equals pure corruption if that's your record for proper receipts for expenses, as is the case in Richmond.

We have an Ombudsman conducting audits of municipalities because there's no mechanism set up as a standard to do so, and because the government ignored the concerns of the citizens in Richmond. It has gotten to the point where we have the RCMP investigating. Will the minister hand over the responsibility for conducting municipal audits to Nova Scotia's Auditor General by requesting it, giving the authority under legislation, and providing necessary resources?

MR. CHURCHILL: I do appreciate the question. I appreciate the ire behind the question. We share that frustration here. This was an issue of localized government appearing to make reimbursements that they shouldn't have been reimbursing - on a wide range of things. We are considering a number of options, including an auditor general for municipalities; that is an option being considered. We have not landed on a direction on that yet. But the one thing we are focused on, and will move forward on quickly, is working



with our municipal partners to bring all expenses online, to ensure that every single municipal unit in this province is held to the same high standard of this House. For that member to suggest that that's not taking action, I think is absolutely ridiculous.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

### **EECD: SCHOOL PURCHASES - AFFORDABILITY**

HON. PAT DUNN: My question is for Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Today, taxpayers learned that their tax dollars will be used to purchase 12 20-year-old schools at a price tag of over \$86 million. This news comes at a time when the minister is embroiled in an impasse with the Teachers' Union about classroom improvements.

I realize we have to have schools in order to have classrooms. However, how can the minister tell Nova Scotians there is no money for classroom improvements and at the same time find \$86 million for schools we have been leasing for 20 years?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, I'm not sure what part of the dialogue over the last three years he has missed, but we certainly are the government that has invested heavily in programs for students.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I've also talked to hundreds of teachers, and these improvements - many of them are not reaching the classrooms. Successive Auditor Generals have criticized the Liberal P3 school scheme for a large number of problems. In some cases the Auditor General said it was unclear if school boards and schools were getting all the services they were entitled to or whether payments to the developers provided good value for money.

My question to the minister is, what steps has the minister taken to avoid repeating the mistakes of the P3 schools scheme in the future?

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, the announcement that was made today - the decision to purchase 12 of the schools was twofold. As we know, the lease is coming to an end in 2020, a decision had to be made and notify the partner what our intention was. We recognize that it's in the best interests of taxpayers' dollars to purchase rather than to continue a lease. We know these schools provide quality spaces, we know that the boards have indicated they need these schools to deliver program and, at the end of the day, we will own those schools.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: LONG-TERM CARE BEDS - NEEDS ADDRESS**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, over 700 Nova Scotians turn 65 each month in our province and the need for long-term care will continue to grow as our population ages. Of course since forming government, we know that the current Liberal Government has placed a moratorium on construction of new long-term care beds.

Mr. Speaker, this government likes to talk about their investment in home care, but I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, what are they doing to address the needs for long-term care beds in Nova Scotia?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the member opposite, who is a former minister, knows that we have the highest number of long-term care beds per capita in Canada right now. He knows that Nova Scotians want, first and foremost, to stay in their homes. We are investing and have invested \$59 million in home care. We are now down to almost a just in time home care service, the first province in Canada to reach that goal.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, we have one of the oldest provinces in the country. There's a reason for that, when we need investment in long-term care. This government applauds themselves, pats themselves on the back for kicking people off the wait-list for long-term care. But if you look at the time people are waiting to get access to long-term care beds, it hasn't really changed in three years. It is way too long, the length of time is about 340 days - a year to get into a long-term care facility.

Mr. Speaker, what is the government's plan to make sure that Nova Scotians can gain access to long-term care beds when they need it, rather than wait a year or more in the province, like we're seeing today?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I'm pleased to say is that the policy is working very well. If someone is called and they are not ready to go in a home, yes, they come off the wait-list, but what's really important is that should something happen to them during that time they are off the list, they become immediately the highest priority and they do get to a nursing home.

Our plan, Mr. Speaker, is that we will reduce the length of stay in a nursing home by providing high-quality, at-home care.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - BUDGET CUTS: EFFECTS - EVALUATIONS**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Health and Wellness.

As a result of \$8 million in budget cuts to long-term care homes, they are forced to cut staff, cut food items, baths, repairs, maintenance, and all these types of things. When asked this morning at Public Accounts Committee as to how they could be certain that the budget cuts are not impacting in the quality of care, both department staff and Health Authority staff said that they rely on inspections. There are inspections of the homes to make sure that the quality is not impacted.

Meanwhile, in September - one of the shortcomings that the Auditor General had found is that Health and Wellness does not evaluate how service providers are performing. On the one hand, you have the staff...

MR. SPEAKER: Does the member have a question?

MR. HOUSTON: Yes. How can the minister reconcile the department saying one thing, and the Auditor General saying another?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: The member opposite would know that the Auditor General is talking about the number of contacts. We currently do announced visits to homes and unannounced visits to homes, depending on what the nature of the issue is. In fact, we can also provide an inspection through unknown people going into the nursing home, looking at the quality of care that residents are receiving. We also deal with loved ones of those in a nursing home, to make sure that quality care is there at all times.

MR. HOUSTON: As much as the minister says that, the Auditor General saying that Health and Wellness has not provided written guidance to the inspectors, so they don't have any real way to evaluate the services being provided; they have no written procedures for the inspectors. We have nurses in long-term care facilities calling their work conditions deplorable; 64 per cent have said they have considered quitting in the past year.

These are not good signs and there are only certain places that you can cut your budget - some of your costs are fixed, you can't cut those. Your variable ones, you can try to cut but there's not that much room. Is the minister's message to Nova Scotians today that the state of long-term care, as it stands today, is as good as its going to get?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, in the province we have some outstanding administrators who make sure that even though there may be a reduction, that the quality of food, the number of nurses, the number of CCAs, are in fact following the policy of the department.

What we know, and what I can tell the member opposite, and all Nova Scotians is that we take the Broken Homes Report of the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union very seriously. We are now working with the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union, with Workers' Compensation, to make sure that nurses, and all those that work in our nursing homes, go to work and have a safe environment.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East, on a new question.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: LONG-TERM CARE STRATEGY - RELEASE  
PRIORITIZE**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: In today's Public Accounts, the Health Authority staff confirmed that during the last year, 852 people died while waiting for a spot in long-term care. They're coming off the wait-list because they're dying, Mr. Speaker.

Meanwhile, we're facing yet another delay in the release of the continuing care strategy. Members opposite will remember this continuing care strategy as the one they promised within 100 days of being elected. Last week, the minister said that it would be out in the Fall. This morning, the deputy minister said it would be Fall 2017 - I guess we should have asked which Fall. When will this government start to make the release of the long-term care strategy a priority?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, when we came to government, first of all we had to move the first strategy of 2006 forward, because it had made no development around it. The dementia strategy, the acquired brain injury strategy - those are the areas, in fact, that we have moved forward, and we know will serve Nova Scotians extremely well.

MR. HOUSTON: Oh yes, Mr. Speaker, but the strategy was promised in 100 days, and that was three years ago. Meanwhile, we have this government boasting about reductions in waiting lists. We just know that over 800 of those people passed away waiting for long-term care, over 600 of them were taken off the list because of policy changes - you do the math. This government has only added 12 long-term beds in three years. We haven't started consultations yet on the continuing care strategy.

Maybe I'll ask the minister a straight-up question. When will consultations on the continuing care strategy start?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what I can say is that the staff of our Continuing Care branch work overtime because it is one of the most demanding areas in the Department of Health and Wellness. We are trying to finish off the original strategy before we move to a new strategy, one that will outline for five years what those in continuing care will have. One of the things that's very obvious about the member opposite is that he cannot stand good news.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret's.

**EECD: CHILD CARE CENTRES - FUNDING**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Child care providers across the

province are voicing their concerns about the recent changes the government has made to their funding. When the minister decided to set wage and cap fees, dissenters were sent a threatening letter telling them to get on board if they wanted to continue to receive government grants. This seems to be a pattern in the government's relationship with educators in this province. So I'd like to ask the minister, what is the minister doing to address concerns that child care centres may have to close?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, if I could just speak to the relationship that we currently have with our early childhood sector, we did a review during the last year and came up with a number of recommendations. The most alarming and the most in need of attention had to do with some of the legacy of the previous government where we had early childhood educators who were the lowest paid in Canada, we had hundreds of low-income families who were not able to access child care because they couldn't afford to pay the difference between what operators were charging and what the fee was. So we immediately recognized those were in crisis, we needed to respond to those, and we did.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Thank you very much for that answer. Mr. Speaker, when the minister announced changes in the Spring, child care providers welcomed the news that government was interested in making sure they had enough money to pay all staff a fair wage. Unfortunately, the plan was rolled out without discussion with the sector. The result is that many workers have seen no wage increase and long-serving educators are feeling disrespected. So what does the minister have to say to early childhood educators who did not receive the much-deserved increase they were promised?

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I would agree with something that the member has said that when we started talking to the sector they were interested because - and I will table this, but I would like to share it with you - of the significant decrease in funding that went to the child care sector during the previous government.

In 2010-11, it was \$61 million, it dropped to \$57 million the next year, it dropped to \$56 million the next year, and it dropped to \$52 million the next year. That's the kind of attention and care that that government gave to the sector. We immediately turned that around - \$56 million, \$58 million, \$65 million, and we will continue.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: MACHINERY/TECHNICIANS - STATUS**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. In my former life, I officiated at approximately 600 celebration of life services. Now, some of those were people - a very small minority were people, even when too many were misdiagnosed or did not have a test done soon enough. I don't want to blame any one person for this, but I think the system might cause some of the difficulties.

Doctors are being overworked because we don't have enough of them; we all know that. To have a test done that might make a difference is delayed even to the point of being too late. An operation might be in order, but when the operation takes place, it may be months or years down the road. We know the problems regarding . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Does the member have a question?

MR. HARRISON: Yes, I do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is, what is the status of machinery and technicians within the system?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: One of the areas that we have started to not just take a look at but change policy around is actually using that very expensive equipment, scanners, and MRIs, in the evening. We now have scheduled appointments for people outside of the traditional day of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This is one of the reasons why now our MRI wait-list has been coming down steadily since last September when this policy was introduced. Also, of course by combining the nine districts into one, we are able to utilize that diagnostic equipment that is close by that used to be in another district and never have access to, we're now using the province in terms of its resources.

MR. HARRISON: I mentioned the other day that a 95-year-old lady went to emergency because of a fall and after six days of thinking that it might be a stroke or something else, she finally had an X-ray done and found that she broke her neck. This kind of thing is something that shouldn't happen.

So I guess my question is, is there any money available to increase the number of scans and MRIs, X-ray machines, that the province really, really needs to get a lot of this looked after?

MR. GLAVINE: Again, one of the improvements that we have made at the QEII is in fact procure through the foundation, through the department, the latest MRI machine that is also being used for research. What it has been able to do is dramatically increase the number of MRIs per month now that we have at the Halifax Infirmary.

We continue to make both policy changes, investment in diagnostic equipment. What I can assure the member opposite is that we are working full-out to make sure we provide all Nova Scotians with high-quality care.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: NURSING HOMES - VIOLENCE-RELATED DEATHS**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the Minister of Health and Wellness.

In the past year a number of incidents have been made public regarding violence, injury, and unfortunately sometimes death caused by violence in the province's nursing homes. The public, the minister, and the media all express the need for such matters to be public. The minister said I absolutely believe in 100 per cent transparency in any death.

My question to the minister is, since these sad situations were brought to the attention of the public, how many violence-related deaths have occurred in nursing homes in Nova Scotia?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure of the exact number. I know there have been one or two. What I can tell the member opposite that's very important to nursing homes, to all who work there and to Nova Scotians and their families, is that we have taken the Broken Homes Report put out by the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union very, very seriously. They've had their first meeting to in fact decide what should be the top three or four recommendations that they have made out of the 15.

So to have AwareNS, the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union, the Department of Health and Wellness, the Nova Scotia Health Authority, all the bodies and groups involved now working on how they can take concrete measures and steps to improve the workplace, the nursing home in this case, in terms of making . . .

MR. ORRELL: The minister cited one reason for assessing the violent trends was to ensure that seniors were, in fact, placed in the appropriate units. The program in place for all nursing home facility staff has only received a 40 per cent pickup rate in the past. Meanwhile, budget cuts to nursing homes is causing a flux in staff numbers and, quite frankly, Nova Scotia seniors deserve more.

My question to the minister is, did your government consider the impacts of staffing cuts and patient safety when implementing the reduction . . .

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

### **OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Private Members' Public Bills for Second Reading.

### **PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 34.

**Bill No. 34 - Homes for Special Care Act.**

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to stand, especially after we've had a vigorous debate in the last 20 minutes of Question Period. We've all been around long-term care - continuing care - and especially after having a long discussion in Public Accounts when we had the Department of Health and Wellness before us. The Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness and then the CEO of the Health Authority were here talking about the issues with long-term care.

The minister has had quite a number of questions in this session revolving around the issue of funding when it comes to long-term care facilities - the funding that shows what this province thinks of care of our seniors.

Let's talk about seniors for a minute, and why, in my career as a member, I've had an opportunity to affect policy on the care of our seniors, going back to 2006, when it came to the issue of the continuing care strategy. The continuing care strategy was a 10-year document that should have finished in 2016. That would have set forth a number of very important issues - not only the issue of reconstruction of long-term care facilities but the addition of better home care - a whole raft of different issues that are important to seniors' care in the province.

But what we're seeing today - and I don't know whether it was an issue for this government. I have to say, they've had three years to make a difference here, to truly communicate how that issue is going to go forward and how they're going to be taking the next steps in seniors' care in this province.

I do agree that there was a little neglect from the previous government on this issue, too, where there were a number of issues that weren't brought forward on time. The acquired brain injury issue never really got off the table, and the reconstruction of a number of beds was not put forward. There's a gap between where we said we were going in 2006 to 2016 and where we are today. We're almost in 2017, and the existing continuing care strategy is now, in my mind, expired.

We do need to have movement from this government on what is happening next. We've brought in a number of bills to this House to try to at least provide ideas to the government. We know that in this world of Opposition, our bills, as good as we may feel they are, will not get passed by government. But what we hope happens here is that they at least adopt the principles or the ideas that we have for them.



What we have before us is a specific section that we want - that I think will affect how the continuing care strategy will get rolled out by this government. This provides the issue of a seniors' Bill of Rights, so that when a senior goes to long-term care - whether by their own decision or by circumstance - there should be a number of responsibilities that we have toward their care.

It's not good enough to just say "of course we're going to care for our seniors." There are a number of things that I think we forget when we get caught up in the whole management of the long-term care system that may be forgotten, and those may be some very basic rights.

Number one, we cannot forget that the seniors in those long-term care facilities are individuals. They're human. They need protection. They have certain rights, which is why, over the last number of weeks, we've been talking about the funding that goes to long-term care.

The food issue is the one we heard about the most, but when it comes to feeding our seniors in these homes, that's taking a bit of a toll. Quite honestly, food for our seniors in long-term care should not be compromised. What else do they have in that home? They have some comrades there to talk to, activities, and visits from their family. What else do they have to look forward to? Food is a very important part of their daily routine.

We've heard from Northwood and from a number of different long-term care facilities that they're finding that the cuts by this government are impacting their care towards seniors. I know the Premier has stood here and said that patient care is not affected. That's probably very true, but I think patient care is affected. It is affected because the quality of the food, as you look at that long-term care budget, is going to be affected in one way or another.

Long-term care is a very expensive endeavour, and we know it's hundreds of dollars a day, if not \$1,000 a day, depending on where you are and your level of infirmity. There's a lot of fixed costs when it comes to taking care of our loved ones. As you factor in the human resource costs, it's not easy to take of that many people in a home, so of course you need the human resources, the CCAs, the LPNs, the RNs, and the administrators. There's quite a team that we have to pay for as taxpayers to take care of our loved ones. There are overhead costs, of course, that are important. You've got to keep the lights on. You've got to keep the heat on. You've got to have your insurance. You need to buy equipment. It goes on and on and on from there.

The fixed cost for a long-term care facility is pretty darned high. When they try to make changes, of course they cannot hit those fixed costs. Those fixed costs are dictated or required by their licensing or required by the department or required by human decency in some cases. So where do they get to cut 1 per cent or 2 per cent from their budgets? The

non-overhead costs - even though I would debate anyone who said that food is not an overhead cost. It's a fixed cost; you need to provide food to those residents.

I know they're trying their best to provide excellent care. I know, looking at the long-term care facilities across my constituency, whether you're looking at Bayside Home in Brass Hill or you're looking at Nakile Home for Special Care in Argyle Head - those are the two main ones. But of course, I do have a number of my friends, my family, and people I know who end up in the Meadows or who end up in the Villa Saint-Joseph du Lac. All of those facilities provide, I would say to you, excellent care (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Could I ask members to keep the chatter down? The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington has the floor.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Looking at those facilities, I know they're trying very, very hard to meet their budget expectations without impacting the care of their residents, yet they are finding it difficult. There are things that need to be left off in some cases.

I know the experience that we've had here at Northwood has been more around the issue of food, but if you look at the other facilities, it really is starting to impact the number of human resources that they're able to gather. I think it was in the Annapolis Valley, maybe in Annapolis itself, where one of the facilities there was actually having to lay off a couple of individuals in order to meet their budget. I know there's a number of facilities that have had to defer some maintenance to another year so that they can meet their budgets. That is not fair, I believe, to any resident that we have in long-term care.

An issue that I have beyond the cuts to long-term care, which I'll get to the rights that this bill truly hits, is the issue of policy changes that continually impact what happens there. So on one side, you have a budgetary issue that continues to happen, and on the other side you have new policies that are put in place for long-term care facilities that, of course, impact how they operate, which, of course, have a direct issue of affecting the budgets as well.

One of them which I wanted to make the minister aware of has changed the amount of time that a person is placed, which is starting to cost long-term care facilities some money. When there was a vacancy in a long-term care facility in one of these homes, it would take about a week, in some cases, to put a new senior, a new resident, into that bed. So there's a cost incurred there. You have an empty bed sitting there that, of course, is continually being staffed, with no resident in there.

A number of policies that have changed I think as you look, like I said, was typically about seven days, has now increased, as an average, to about 14 days. So not only the week, to my mind, was a little long, because we know there's a number of people sitting on the wait-list today who should be in a long-term care facility, but now there's actually waits of

up to two weeks for some cases, there's some caring costs. So we pay for those beds whether there's an individual in them or not.

The Continuing Care Association's calculation estimates that roughly \$70 million was wasted last year by having empty beds. That could be for a bunch of reasons, but a lot of it has to do with policy changes in how the district health authorities were dissolved, how the division of long-term care, or continuing care, was chopped up a little bit. Some of it was sent off to the Health Authority, some of it wasn't, and it really required that division to re-learn how they were dealing with their clients.

Mr. Speaker, if there's a way that this minister can involve himself a little bit more in order to try to stop that wait of up to two weeks to fill a bed, we'll actually end up saving, I guess, on the other side. At least it won't be \$70 million of wasted money, it will be \$70 million of actually taking care of a loved one. That's just from a few of our operators who have come to talk to us to tell us their stories about funding cuts continually as we've gone along, where they've talked about spouses being separated. For their quality of life, for their mental health, of course they should be placed together.

We have people who are still a long way from their home communities, where they are placed on that 100-kilometre rule, far outside their communities, and continually have to fight their way to get back closer to home so they can get visits from their loved ones. Those are some very basic rights that we should actually have built into our long-term care system, and the right of the patient, the right of the senior, should be the first thought in anything we do.

These are again, as I said, huge systems that we get caught up in, and I think the department gets caught up in, because we look at the system. So we've got the health care system, as an offshoot of that we have the long-term care system. As we talk about those systems, as important as that may be, we un-personalize how we should be there to take care of the patients. The patients should be the first thought and how do we respect their needs and then build a system around them.

They deserve our care - they deserve more than our care. These are individuals who have given their lives to our communities, they have given their lives to their families, they have built businesses, and they have had a tremendous effect on us. All we can say is that as they age, as they go along in their life path, that we are there for them. I think the bill we had before us today is a simple Bill of Rights for our seniors to ensure that they are taken care of the best way possible, so that some of those system problems that we have can be addressed by the minister, or by the department, to make sure we are doing the best we possibly can do.

Again I thank you for the opportunity to speak quickly to this bill. I know there will be some more interventions on this one. I look forward to it, and I know that together, I

think we can make a difference in the lives of those patients. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this Bill No. 34, the Homes for Special Care Act. There are some good principles in this bill, I recognize that, and the member for Argyle-Barrington makes some good points. It's no secret that our province has one of the oldest populations in the country, and I think the last time I looked, every single day 35 people reach the age of 65 or over. That means that today about 180,000 people are at that state.

If this trend continues, we're going to have 30 per cent of the population over that age of 65 within the next 25 years. That presents cost pressures in the health care system, Mr. Speaker, and that is a recognition that our current system, designed for primarily acute care, needs to change to address the chronic care issues that present themselves with an aging population. That is what we are doing today, we are transitioning a lot of our funding towards the home care model. This is something that many members support, and I know the previous NDP Government started down that line of more home supports, and I think that was a positive one.

So far we've injected an incremental increase of \$59 million, over the last three budgets, into home care and we're seeing positive outcomes from that. We're seeing a wait-list reduction of 70 per cent. Also, in the long-term care, our reduction has been 50 per cent on that wait-list, and I know there has been some talk about how the policy changed, and how people were taken off that list, but the reality was that when they were called to go into the homes, they weren't ready to. So the long list was a cause in itself to exponentially add more to the wait-list, and if people aren't ready to go into long-term care, I personally don't believe they should be on that list, because the people who need it should get the placement in long-term care the fastest that we can do that, with limited funding for something as important as that.

We do need to support our older adults as best we can. As I said, chronic care, as much as possible, should be in the home, and should be in the community. It's not just the members in this House who are saying this, you look across Canada, the economists have said this, because frankly, it's a cheaper model financially, to have someone in their home rather than in an institution. The medical experts have been saying this for decades and even CARP, the national non-profit group, has been advocating for this shift of funding towards the home care model, and no longer building more and more long-term care beds.

As I said, this situation we have in Nova Scotia is not unique to our province, and it's certainly not unique to Atlantic Canada. We have exasperating challenges here, and part of this means we have to look at the labour costs, too. It would be nice if the Parties opposite support us in our efforts to control the costs, because we know labour costs are

over 50 per cent of government. So, if we want to put more money into things like home care and long-term beds, we need to have checks and balances to control those costs.

The Department of Health and Wellness oversees the governance of the continuing care system, and they set policies and standards and is accountable for the quality and integrity of the system through licensing, investigation and auditing programs. Mr. Speaker, the department actually does spot checks, quality assurance checks, and they do unannounced visits, especially when there are any complaints of any issues that are happening at the long-term care facilities. We know there's more work to do, and we're investing wisely in long-term care so we can meet current and future needs of Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of today's topic, we are open to looking at some of these bills being brought forward. As I said, there are good principles in this bill itself, but some of these things can be dealt with through policy and regulation. I think this morning the deputy minister actually said explicitly that all elements of a bill of rights already exist today in legislation. Anything that underscores the importance of the rights of the residents in these long-term care facilities, I believe, is a good thing, but it's important to note and after I read this bill some of the - actually most of the items identified are included in the current long-term care program requirements.

This a very heavily regulated sector, Mr. Speaker; and we talk about red tape a lot in our efforts to reduce regulation because that's what red tape is in a variety of areas in the private sector. But this is one where regulation is actually a good thing when it comes to safety and the right food nutrition-wise, labour standards, the clothing that the seniors are able to use, personal items in their rooms, visitation, the right to be with family members in the same home when it's practical - and they do have the right to be obviously treated with courtesy and respect.

So in terms of food, which the member spoke about, there are licensed dietitians in these facilities - that's a regulation itself, the licensing part, but they do look at a plan twice a year. It's mandated that they have a plan in place, and the Department of Health and Wellness monitors that. So, all the nursing homes and residential care facilities licensed by the Department of Health and Wellness must comply with these requirements which are monitored through the licensing process not only relative to food but as well clothing, labour standards, and so on down the line.

The requirements were updated earlier this year and shared with all facilities. They were done in consultation with service providers, other government departments, external stakeholders, and other relevant parties. Mr. Speaker, some of the rights identified through Bill No. 34 are also included in legislation through the Homes for Special Care Act and Regulations, and the Protection for Persons in Care Act. The right for a couple to live in the same long-care facility was identified in this bill. That is a positive goal, and that should

be the case when practical. The Department of Health and Wellness recognizes the importance in balancing health system needs with individual needs.

The current long-term care placement system is designed to ensure that a person gets the level of support that best meets their health care needs. This is important because we don't want to place someone in a nursing home if they are better suited to be in a less intensive service of care, and we want to ensure the space is available for someone who really needs nursing home care. Within the long-term care placement policy, family reunification is recognized as a priority for placement and is an essential part of providing client-centred care. We know couples want to stay together even when one of them needs long-term care. We're looking at changes to the long-term care placement policy that will put more priority on keeping loved ones together. During the assessment process, potential long-term care residents can request to be reunited with family members.

People entering our nursing homes have different needs or levels of care. We have to make sure they're getting the level of support that meets those needs, so when someone needs a bed we want to make sure that it's there for them. It really goes back to providing the services when people need it and where they need it - what's the best, most appropriate care, what's the most effective care for the health care patient?

As you know, government is working to build on the success of the 10-year Continuing Care Strategy launched in 2006 - and I will note during those 10 years costs have gone up 70 per cent during that time. So can we continue to go down that same path, continuing to put money in the same strategy, building more beds when seniors are asking that they want to stay in their home longer and the experts are saying that that's the way forward, and we need to do what's best for the patients and what's financially viable for the province?

The Department of Health and Wellness is currently in a planning phase which will be launched in late 2017. The strategy will consider updated population projections, needs-based data, and the fiscal environment of the province. It will also reflect the fact that we are embarking on this work within a redesigned health system that better aligns the roles and responsibilities of the department, the Nova Scotia Health Authority, and the service providers. Together these things will support better planning for future home care and long-term care needs.

We will engage Nova Scotians in developing the five-year strategy and identify short-term, medium-term, and long-term outcomes that will help shape the future of continuing care in Nova Scotia. The Continuing Care Strategy will support individuals living at home and provide long-term care for those who need it in an appropriate and safe setting.

Government will continue to work with the Nova Scotia Health Authority, service providers, employees, unions and others to provide the care Nova Scotians need, make it available sooner, and ensure services continue to be there when people need them.

I wanted to talk about a report I remember seeing back 2012 when an economist with TD Canada Trust released something in Ontario where he reflected on how no province was able to in the last 30 years to sustain growth in the health budget of 2.5 per cent or less. The average for provinces in Canada was about 7 per cent incremental increases, so these are big challenges we have in front of us - how we are able to keep seniors in their homes, which they want to do longer, and continuing into invest where the money will be most effective. The status quo, continuing to allow these health budgets to rise at those levels, is not sustainable. There were some pretty rash recommendations in the report, but mainly what every report has said in every province that I have seen is home care is the way forward.

As the minister has said, now were getting very, very close to having just in time home care, being the first province in Canada to being able to achieve that. That's a big deal for a province with one of the oldest population in the country and being able to do that while still investing in long-term care. The member opposite was speaking to the budget reduction and that is something no entity, government or otherwise, likes to see in their budget. But sometimes that is the way you drive efficiencies - they are not going to go ahead and find efficiencies on their own, that was pressure. Government asked for facilities to look at the way their administration costs were delivered.

If they could find efficiencies and economies of scale in bulk purchasing and procurement and they do have funding requirements for capital for a new roof, that there is an extra fund and I think it is \$6.5 million globally that is available to different long-term care facilities should they have issues with some of the maintenance of the buildings - and I understand out of the 132 I believe its long-term facilities, I think the Department of Health and Wellness went to visit 83 to see how the reduction in the budget is going. As the Premier said, the level of care and quality of food and everything else, we expect that to remain the same. We expect the experience for the clients to continue to be top-notch as much as possible.

I think the minister should be commended, we have been able to do that and will continue to look after the patients that are in the long-term care facilities and to the home care patients in their home. Obviously with the Department of Health and Wellness growing, the costs growing, it is important that we are looking at every line in the budget. It's no easy task, but health care costs in the 1980s were 20 per cent of the budget; in 1990s is quickly got up to 40 per cent; and now we are close to half the budget so if it continues in this trend we cannot keep doing the same things over and over again.

I saw an article on the weekend where they compared us to the western part of the country and how the trend - if we don't find a way to get our house in order, we won't be

able to keep up with our health care costs. So in order for us to make a good case to the federal government that we should get more funding based on our demographics, we can't do that unless we get our house in order, we can't do that unless we make some tough decisions, unless we control labour costs. It's not easy especially when you have demographic trends going in one direction and your economy is not growing more tax revenue and we have obligations with collective agreements - I think that's the one most important thing that this government is not wavering on.

It is so critical that we have to have that money for services. We will not let services slide while increases are going three or four per cent while economic growth is under 1 per cent. I just saw a study that this year, it is going to be a 1 per cent growth, so by definition, if you increase 50 per cent of the labour costs, you are already overspending there, right off the bat.

All we want to do, Mr. Speaker, is ensure that money is best spent in the long-term care facilities, in home care, in the operating rooms, and the capital projects like the schools - which we've taken over a few schools from the P3 model, which was the right thing to do. We're going to embark on a replacement of the VG Hospital which was the right thing to do.

All these things cost money, it's all one pot of money, that's why we need to continue to hold the line on labour, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to rise to speak for a few minutes on Bill No. 34. Legislation that is tabled in this Chamber is often - you look at it and it's about timing - is it the right time to introduce legislation that will support and help Nova Scotians? I would hope that's really the essence of what we do here, as an MLA, no matter what side of the House you sit on.

I think the timing for this piece of legislation is quite appropriate. I say that for a number of reasons, Mr. Speaker, that I'll get into over the next few minutes. The main reason is I think it could be a commitment, a commitment on behalf of the government, a commitment on behalf of all members of this Legislature, when you could stand up in your place and maybe vote in favour of either Bill No. 34, or a piece of legislation that would do the same.

I know often it's not seen upon as a government to look at Opposition bills and pass them in the Chamber, so with that, Mr. Speaker, I ask the government, why not introduce your own legislation? If a bill like Bill No. 34 is important, and it's a commitment that government is willing to make, and tell Nova Scotians how important it is to make sure that the residents of our province who live in a long-term care facility, or who live in a



residential care facility, should have certain rights, I think the government should look at this legislation, consider supporting it.

If they don't want to support this bill because it was introduced by Opposition, then introduce a government piece of legislation by the end of this session that does what I think all Nova Scotians would expect would happen in a residential care facility, or a long-term care facility. The previous speaker from the government caucus just indicated that many of the things in Bill No. 34 are in policies concerning long-term care and residential care, but not all of them. I think this would be a strong message to communities, to seniors, to Nova Scotians, that the government recognizes that those Nova Scotians who find themselves in need of living in a residential care facility or a long-term care facility would have certain rights.

I think the timing of this legislation is appropriate because of the action of the government over the last two years, Mr. Speaker, and further than that, over the last three years, since they formed government in 2013. We know, and I know, and I think Nova Scotians are starting to know, that the current government has put a huge emphasis on investing in home care. Any time Opposition members question the government, ask the government about their support for long-term care, they automatically turn the channel to home care.

Mr. Speaker, I've said it many times in my place here, I've said it in Question Period, I've said it in debates, and in other forms, that it is important to invest in home care; I support that. As a former minister, I pushed an initiative to support home care. I agree that Nova Scotians want to stay in their homes as long as possible, as they age here in our province. But there comes a time when that's just not the option.

I've seen first-hand, and MLAs know and hear about the situations that some families find themselves in, trying to take care of a loved one who has Alzheimer's, who has aged, who has maybe some kind of illness that prevents them from staying at home. Many Nova Scotians are trying to work a full-time job and also take care of a loved one - husband, wife, father, mother, brother, sister, or grandparent. There comes a time when home care support just is not enough, so there is a need for them to move into a long-term care or residential care facility.

The government needs to recognize the importance of not only investing in home care, and I just acknowledged that I believe the government is moving in that direction, but they need to move in the direction to ensure that long-term care issues are also addressed. You cannot meet the needs of Nova Scotians, especially seniors, just by investing in home care. You need to move both home care and long-term care along a process that sees improvements - improvements in access to care, hence getting into long-term care.

We questioned the government over the last number of months around wait times, for example. Wait times just give you a snapshot of what's happening. If there are 4,000

on the wait-list to get into long-term care - I'm not saying that's the accurate number, whatever it is, but say there's 4,000 people waiting. When we try to push the government on what they are doing to address the long waits that people are seeing before they can get into long-term care, the government often goes to a recent policy change that they made around the criteria to get on the list for long-term care. Today we learned in Public Accounts some 300, 400, or 500 people were removed from the list because they didn't want to go into long-term care when they were given that option, which is fine. Making the decision to put a loved one in a long-term care facility is not an easy thing to do.

The policy change that the government implemented two years ago, I believe, requires an individual, a spouse, or a family member to make a decision in one business day. You get a call from Continuing Care, we have a place for your loved one - your husband, your wife, your family member. You have one day to say yes, or you come off that list. There has to be an ability for that family to have some time to let that sink in and make a decision that changes the way that person will live the rest of their lives unfortunately. You have some people who have lived in the same home for 50 years. Think about it, Mr. Speaker: in one day, you have to make a decision to go into long-term care. I was very critical of that change a couple of years ago because I think it is unfair.

I don't dispute that people have been on the list who might not be ready to go into a long-term care facility. I know that. Listen, seniors don't wake up one day and say, I'll go on the long-term care wait-list. Something happened, maybe an assessment through their family physician or in the emergency room, a change in their health care or their health that indicated, listen, potentially that person needs to go to a long-term care facility. To have to make that decision in one day, I still think is wrong, and I think the government needs to revisit that.

What we don't see from the government when we ask the question around how long those people are waiting, is that hasn't really changed in the last three years. Yes, the number of people on the wait-list has changed; I agree. It's gone down by over 1,000 people. We hear some pass away, but that's natural; that happens year after year after year after year. And some have decided not to go into long-term care. Of those who are on that wait-list, I believe the medium length of time three years ago was around 350 days, so a year. As of last month, it's at 313 days, I think they said, or 340 days. Not much has changed. Yes, you have fewer people on the wait-list, but that person on the wait-list is still waiting a year.

That's what we're trying to get across to government about the importance of investing not only in home care but in long-term care. Think about a family who's at the end of being able to take care of a loved one, and they say, "you can get long-term care, that's an option, but it'll be about a year" - and that's the average. We know that in Cape Breton there are facilities where it's over 1,000 days to get in.

Families are made to make decisions that tear families apart because they have to leave the community in which they've probably lived for many, many years, and move to another community - change the environment that they've lived in and been accustomed to for a long time. That's the critical point of ensuring that the government moves forward on both streams: investing in home care but also in long-term care, and meeting the needs.

We have 700 people turning 65 every month in Nova Scotia. Today the Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness said that in 20 years over 30 per cent of our population will be 65 - and I'll be one of them. In 20 years, I'll be 65. I may require a long-term care facility. I hope I don't.

AN HON. MEMBER: I thought you were 65.

MR. DAVID WILSON: I'm not 65. I might look 65, but I'm not 65 yet.

Our population is getting older, more than any other jurisdiction across the country. When the Minister of Health and Wellness stands up and says we have the most long-term care beds per capita anywhere in the country, it's fine to say that, but there's a reason for that. It's because we have one of the oldest populations.

If the minister could stand in his place and say, "listen, the wait time for an individual to get into long-term care is 30 days," then I would applaud the government. I would say, "what you're doing is the right thing, and we should be continuing to do that." But in three years, we see hardly any change to how long someone has to wait to get into long-term care, so whatever the government is doing is not right. It's not working, and the government needs to re-evaluate it.

It's cheaper to invest in home care, I agree. But that doesn't mean the government needs to ignore the demand. It's similar to a business: supply and demand. I mean, if there's a demand and people are waiting a year to get in, then that's unacceptable. I don't think it's acceptable today to tell a family that they have a year's wait - try to manage for a year, and then you'll get into a long-term care facility. I know there are crises that come up, and emergency situations, but on average, Nova Scotians wait a year for placement into long-term care, and that's just unacceptable.

We hear now that the government is trying to be fiscally sound and that they need to make savings and get savings in places in all kinds of departments. Well, I don't believe long-term care is the area they need to go to and look for funding cuts and savings. I think residential care facilities and long-term care facility administrators are more than willing to work with the government, to bulk-buy purchases, and to look at how they can improve the administration side of things.

But when you have a government that, over the last two years, have cut - they say 1 per cent last year and 1 per cent this year, but we know, through the admission of the

minister and others in the Department of Health and Wellness, that there are a number of streams of funding that long-term care facilities access.

I've been trying since summer to get an accurate number for the cuts to long-term care. The Minister of Health and Wellness agreed last week that he would provide me with those numbers after we did a freedom of information request; I haven't received that number yet. Today at Public Accounts the Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness agreed that by the end of today I would have those numbers; I still haven't received them, Mr. Speaker.

All we're asking (Interruption) It was by the end of the day. I was sitting there. It came out of my own mouth to the deputy minister, "Can you provide that to me today?" And the deputy minister said yes. I can get Hansard next week for the member across the way, if he's unsure of what he heard in the Chamber today.

But why would you not provide that information? It's a simple question. What we're trying to tell the government is that there is an impact when you cut funding to long-term care. When we get information that one facility was cut \$65,000 but yet it was actually \$128,000, that leaves us wondering, what are the cuts? It's a simple question. I don't know why and what the government is hiding from. I believe that the impact is greater than what the government's saying is going to happen to these long-term care facilities and residential care facilities.

I think this is the appropriate timing to have a bill like Bill No. 34 pass in the Legislature so that those people have rights when they have to enter a long-term care facility or a residential care facility. I would approve this bill if the government would allow it to go to a vote.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, let me just begin by saying how much I appreciate the support of my older colleague who just spoke. (Laughter) It is only through these bipartisan efforts that we can make a change here in the House of Assembly. I'm not sure I can say that about the member who spoke before him, but I might get away with it in this case.

When you look at Bill No. 34 to provide for a long-term care Bill of Rights, I think you could summarize it in one sentence. I wish that we could actually pass the bill to cover this issue off in one sentence, because that one sentence would be that our seniors, our parents and grandparents, when they finally reach that point where they need to go into long-term care, have the right to live the rest of their days in long-term care in dignity.

That's really what this bill is about: providing dignified care to our parents and grandparents who have reached the stage of life where they need to be in a nursing home.

With that one principle as our guiding light, debates over the food budget and the staffing ratios and the amounts transferred to long-term care, whether they're for profit or not for profit, would be a lot easier. I just invite all members to contemplate the right to dignity for our seniors who have reached this stage in their lives.

I can tell you that as the MLA for Cumberland South I have the honour and privilege of visiting the nursing homes in my own constituency on a regular basis, and of course, as the Leader of my Party, it is an extra honour to be able to be a visitor to many of the nursing homes across our whole province - if not most of them, by this point. I can tell you that the staff I meet in each and every one of those facilities, without any doubt, are committed. They are caring and they are hard-working and they are doing their best.

Having said that, the quality of the facilities varies widely. The amount of funding for the basics like food or staffing also varies widely, and it should not. When a person has been assessed as needing advanced-level care in a nursing home and when they go on the list and when they get called that a bed has become available, it should not be like the lottery whether they end up close to home or far from home, whether they end up in a high-level facility or an older facility needing work. We should have standards in place to make sure that every senior gets the high-level dignity care that they have earned, wherever they live, wherever they end up going for long-term care. That's what this bill does.

There has been a lot of debate in this House about the government's cuts to our long-term care facilities, and there is no doubt that there have been cuts. There's no debate about whether they have been cuts - 1 per cent across the board last year, 1 per cent across the board again this year.

The Minister of Health and Wellness insists that he wrote a letter to the nursing home providers that those cuts are not to go to front-line care. Mr. Speaker, I will say to you that is easy to say, but for the administrators in our facilities and the staff that deliver the care, to implement the cuts is not that easy because they know they can't cut the mortgage payments, they can't cut the heating bill, they can't cut the property tax bill; in fact, most of the costs of our nursing homes are fixed costs that can't be cut. So whether the minister likes it or not, they are left with no choice but to look at things like the food budget and the staffing ratios.

The best way to protect our seniors and the staff that service their needs every day is to put in place concrete, legislated standards, the rights that our seniors enjoy such as the right to a nutritious meal three times a day that meets their own unique dietary needs. No Nova Scotian would disagree that we want to provide that level of service to our seniors in long-term care, Mr. Speaker. If we establish that right here in this House, then that debate becomes moot because we'll have agreed three squares a day, nutritious meals meeting their dietary needs.

Funding would have to follow that; we would all agree to that. We would vote for a budget that makes that happen right now if we had a chance to, Mr. Speaker, from this side of the House.

Northwood in Halifax made the news because they actually showed publicly, and in writing, the effect of the recent cuts on their food budget, but they are left with no choice but to try to pay for three meals a day for their senior residents on \$5.12. That is not possible, Mr. Speaker.

The senior residents of Northwood spoke up, recognizing in the media that the quality of the meals provided to them has declined in the last few years as these cuts have taken effect, Mr. Speaker, including the lack of fresh fruits and vegetables, including the switch from real mashed potatoes, believe or not, to powdered potatoes to try to actually take effect a budget cut that was imposed on them.

If we had it as a right for seniors to nutritious meals, that would not be allowed to happen and any government that was reaching for savings would not be allowed to go there, as they should not go there anyway, Mr. Speaker, because we want to fund a dignified retirement in long-term care for our seniors. That is one big example and it's in this bill.

I remember a few months ago, Mr. Speaker, speaking of Northwood, that when I was visiting the residents there I met a married couple, they had been married for 54 years, but because of their different levels of care needs one lived in one tower and the other lived in a different tower - against their wishes, I might add. When, and I say "when" staffing was available, they would sometimes be brought together in the common courtyard to see each other. That is not a dignified way to live. Married couples of all kinds should have their marriages respected to their very last day - full stop.

We brought an example to this House earlier in this session of a married couple who are not only not in the same facility, separate tower or not, they are miles and miles apart, with one here at Camp Hill because he is a veteran and his wife of 60 years miles away at home. They wanted to stay together. The provincial government pointed its finger at the federal government; the federal government pointed its finger at the provincial government. That married couple of 60 years did not have their marriage vows respected by their government. They need the right to have their marital status respected to the very last day. This bill does that; they will find a way if we put that right in law.

When we brought Northwood to this House the government said, well, that's just one facility. The fact is, there are cuts in most of the long-term care facilities across the province. High-Crest in Springhill is an example where the food budget there has been cut by force of this government, like all the other long-term care facilities. That is not fair to those residents.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we raised High-Crest in this House last week because they are across the street from All Saints Hospital where there are doctors who used to be able to cross the street and provide medical attention to the residents of High-Crest, but the order went out from the Nova Scotia Health Authority that those doctors are not to cross the street anymore. If the senior residents of High-Crest need help, they can come over to the hospital.

Mr. Speaker, imagine for the sake of crossing the street, telling an 80-year-old resident in a wheelchair in the middle of February, when it's minus 20 degrees, you have to come to us. That is not acceptable. Or imagine someone who actually can't even do that and they need to call and engage an ambulance just to cross the street. Those seniors deserve the medical care that is available to them in their own facility. Let those doctors come across the street like they have been doing, and want to, and help the citizens living in High-Crest.

This bill provides that right; they have that right. They have earned it - they have worked all their lives, they have paid taxes all their lives, they have lived by the rules, they have raised their kids, they have paid off their mortgages. In some cases they helped raise their grandchildren. They were there for us, and they have the right to a dignified retirement in long-term care. They have the right to nutritious meals, they have the right to good medical care, they have the right to live abuse-free, and they have the right to practise their own religion in their own facility, whatever that religion may be, or no religion at all. They have those rights and they should have that right in every facility - that's what this bill does.

I'll give you another example, Mr. Speaker, while I have some time. There are facilities like the Advocate Manor in Advocate Harbour, they have empty rooms while the wait-list goes on. They have empty rooms that the government will not fill, caught up in the bureaucracy of whether they are a Level 1 facility or a Level 2 facility. So in Advocate Harbour, where there are currently five empty rooms, somewhere on the wait-list there are five seniors who did everything right their whole life who are waiting for long-term care who can't get in and there are five rooms available. They have the right to access those rooms. Let's make sure that there are no rooms left empty while there are seniors on the waiting list. Let's show them our thanks, our appreciation, our respect for the lives they lived here in the Province of Nova Scotia and give them that right as well.

All this can be done by passing this bill, by then putting in place the standards for all of our long-term care facilities, whether they are a for-profit facility or a not-for-profit facility and then writing their contracts to align them to the rights that we want to provide to our seniors. That would be good management, Mr. Speaker. That would be doing something positive for the seniors of this province. That would be doing something that we could all, on all sides of this House, be proud of - that's what this bill does.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this bill would put an end to the painful debates about how much the food budget should be, how many staff we should have on the dementia ward floor, what kind of wheelchair we provide to people, how often those who need help get a bath or have their incontinence products changed. We can solve that. We can fix that right here. We can absolutely provide seniors with the dignity of all those things going in the right direction if we make a loud and clear all-Party statement that our seniors have the right to dignified life in a long-term care facility that includes all the items listed in this bill. I call on all members to take that step.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: That was a great round of debate. Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 45.

**Bill No. 45 - Municipal Government Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I move that Bill No. 45, the Municipal Government Act, respecting expenses of elected officials, now be read a second time.

I'm very pleased to be able to stand and rise to speak to this bill, Bill No. 45. To say that this piece of legislation is timely would be an understatement. We all know that it has been pretty intense in the Chamber the last couple of weeks. Believe me, it puts us all in an awkward position. But I certainly feel that some of us have no choice but to represent our constituents and ask the questions that are sometimes difficult but that the constituents definitely deserve to get answered. This piece of legislation would help us all not have to be in these awkward positions.

This Fall session of the Legislature has been dominated by this expense scandal that we have witnessed in Richmond County. Now we're seeing it unfold in Guysborough County as well. Who knows what municipality county will be next, Mr. Speaker? It's a situation where taxpayers are paying for hundreds of dollars of alcohol from NSLC, hundreds of dollars in donations to the Liberal Party, and countless drinks bought in restaurants. Who knows what they paid in a Houston, Texas, strip club?

It's something that I don't think anyone would want to be a part of. This piece of legislation that I have introduced would help all Nova Scotians build their confidence in their municipal leaders, and make sure that their elected provincial MLAs would not have to bring up these situations here in the Chamber.

This scandal has raised a question that I never thought I would have to ask in this historic place. Basically, we see that a Texas strip club and the Liberal Party of Nova Scotia have some common denominator in the sense that (Interruptions)



MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The member for Pictou West has the floor.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I didn't even get to finish my statement. The fact that this story has made national news is unbelievable. Unfortunately (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The member for Pictou West has the floor.

MS. MACFARLANE: Again, this story has made national news. It's something that we're all ashamed of as Nova Scotians.

This unpleasant affair really has claimed two jobs and has insulted and threatened a government employee. You all know that I tabled that letter today. It's a shame, it really is, that a young lady who makes \$9,000 a year and goes on EI the rest of the year is being threatened.

We know that it is being investigated by Elections Nova Scotia and the RCMP, but we also feel that this government is refusing to act. I think where I get most bothered is the fact that we know - I have been called by many constituents from Richmond and Guysborough who tried to settle this back in 2013 and 2014 but there was no response; no response from the Department of Municipal Affairs, there was no response from the Premier's Office. That's a shame. It really is.

This bill is simple; it's truly simple. It simply asks municipal politicians to provide proof of payment when they submit expenses. That seems fair, it seems logical. Exactly, I'm glad to hear that. So why wouldn't we expect that from our municipal councillors? This is what this bill will do, and it also says that municipal representatives cannot expense alcoholic beverages and that, too, is something we can't do, so why can they? That is reasonable, it truly is. You know, Mr. Speaker, it truly is a clear, simple bill and it isn't a lot to ask of those who are given the honour to represent their communities.

I have spoken to many councillors who agree with this bill and actually want it. This bill basically is something that we all here in this Chamber live by. Why wouldn't we expect that from our municipal councillors? It's definitely similar to the rules that HRM Council abides by and kudos to HRM; I think it's fantastic that they have a policy in place where they can't expense alcohol. Why isn't that the norm across the province? So I congratulate HRM for putting that policy in place.

These are simple things that the Minister of Municipal Affairs could do immediately to start to restore transparency and repair the public confidence that has fundamentally been shaken in the last several weeks. You know, I've heard the minister say he doesn't want to paint all municipalities with the same brush and no one does. No one wants to do that, but we have to look into this.

I say let's make sure that all taxpayers are given the same respect no matter where they live. Let's tell Nova Scotians who work hard for their paycheques that their money is being used to better their community; to build roads; to maintain roads; to build parks; invest in their infrastructure; invest in their hospitals, their schools. After all, councillors who already abide by these sorts of rules will not be bothered if they are enshrined in law. Those who don't follow these simple rules definitely should, and that's why this bill is so important. It's important that we all agree to pass this bill.

Before the last election, the Premier said he would make Nova Scotia the most transparent province in the country and I want to help make that statement come true. Just yesterday, and in fact I believe I heard it today in this House, the Minister of Municipal Affairs repeated the same line - I want to be transparent, and I believe him, and I believe that this bill will help do that.

I just hope that this government will consider this bill. It certainly is only modest steps that we're taking, and Bill No. 45 will help the government, councillors, and everyone to be so much more transparent and our constituents deserve that. I really believe if the minister and his government and the Premier were truly serious about transparency we would have a healthy, positive debate on this bill. They would vote on this bill, and they would make it law. They would stand with taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a good bill, and as I stated, it does two simple things. I really can't see how anyone can argue this bill. I truly can't. I think that it sets a standard of expectation - and more, expected behaviour - in black and white. It proves that you spent what you said you spent on municipal business and not to expect our constituents to pick up a tab at a bar or an upper-class gentlemen's club.

Taxpayers don't only want to know how their money is being spent. They want to know that they aren't being taken advantage of, and that's what they've been feeling lately. They want to know that their tax dollars are not going to councillors who are funding their lifestyles on their dollar.

I believe in Bill No. 45. I think it is a modest first step in the right direction, and I urge my colleagues to support it for the sake of all the people we represent in Nova Scotia.

I will leave the House with these few comments, but first, I did hear the member for Victoria-The Lakes shout out, "Who wrote this for you? That's not like you." Well, I'll tell you what: I'm not known to stand up and say a whole lot and call people out on much. But when I know something is definitely corrupt, I am standing up for the constituents (Interruptions)

I guess what I'm saying, Mr. Speaker (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order. The member for Pictou West has the floor.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I will finish off with this, but once again, this is me speaking. I've heard from, I would say, 30 or 40 people. This is no laughing matter.

Do we want to be the government known for accepting the normalization of bad behaviour that breeds corruption? Because that's what we all, in this Chamber, will be known to be doing if we do not accept and pass this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I do want to commend the member on her comments. I want to commend her on bringing this bill forward. I know that member is speaking from the heart on this issue, and I believe we do all agree in this Chamber and share the member's indignation over the events that have transpired here. (Applause)

Where there is disagreement on this matter relates to the member's inference - and other members of that Party's inference - that somehow government has been complicit in these activities and applying guilt by association, because there were known members of the Party involved in this. I do not think that is fair, nor do I think that is reflective of the facts of the situation.

What we have is a situation where a group of individuals, of councillors and a CEO, who allegedly, or seemingly - we do have ongoing investigations that we are awaiting the conclusions of - made decisions to reimburse themselves for things that we all know are inappropriate and that they should not have been reimbursed for. This is a pattern of behaviour that has become apparent through these investigations, a forensic audit and an ombudsman's investigation.

I don't think to imply intent or complicity on government's part or on the Liberal Party's part is right. If what the member says were the case, if there was this guilt on the part of these other parties, then why isn't Elections Nova Scotia investigating the Party? What they're doing is investigating a transaction that transpired after an event, that related to a transaction that transpired between the Municipality of Richmond and individuals who bought a ticket to an event. I know that is an ongoing investigation and we do await what the findings are, but that is my opinion and my understanding of those events to date, Mr. Speaker.

That is where there is disagreement here. I do not believe that those allegations that the member has put forward are fair or accurate. I know it's an easy story, and of course it's an easy story in the context of this House, where we are always pitted against one another and do sometimes want to believe the worst of one another. That is an easy story to believe and to sell in this context, but I do not believe that it is reflective of what has actually transpired here. These were decisions being made by individuals who we now know have displayed a certain pattern of behaviour that I think we can all in this Chamber

agree is wrong, but it is those individuals who need to be held accountable and responsible for their actions.

I do appreciate the intent of this bill, Mr. Speaker, and I do want to let the member know that we will give this full consideration. I would go as far as to say that I do not think this bill goes far enough. We have a desire in our government to ensure that all expenses are put online so that they are out there for the public to consume and place judgment on. We all know there's no greater disincentive to poor behaviour than to make sure that transactions related to expenses are fully transparent. We've all experienced how that has been beneficial for us, for MLAs who have put our expenses online. Now I have full confidence that the public can have confidence in me and where their dollars are going, because they can see, and if they have questions, they are able to ask.

I do appreciate the intent of this bill. In consultation with our municipal partners, we will give this bill full consideration. In fact, there might be some changes that we bring forward in the MGA that are reflective of this and other changes we want to achieve. But I do want the member to understand that the disagreement is not on the intent of this legislation. It is on the inference that there are somehow other people besides those involved who are responsible for this behaviour. I don't believe that to be the case, and I don't think it's fair to say otherwise, Mr. Speaker.

As the Leader of the Official Opposition has said in this House, consultation is important. I have some quotes here from when the member for Pictou East presented a hoist motion because he didn't believe there was enough consultation with one of the bills that I brought forward, and other quotes where the Leader of the Official Opposition said “. . . the government has brought a bill to this House, enabling legislation . . . but has not actually consulted.”

I know that this bill has not undergone proper consultation with our municipal partners so we will include this conversation, and this bill, in that consultation. But in the spirit of knowing what the members opposite want, we'll make sure there is full consultation involved here.

Other things I do want to reference - it has been mentioned in this House that, related to the specific situation in Richmond, there has been some level of inactivity on behalf of the department. Members have implied complacency, which I do reject and I do not think is fair. We did respond. I fundamentally believe that these issues are the issues of a localized decision-making body that was making decisions that they probably should not have made and that have led to certain investigations.

In bringing to light these issues through the annual auditing process, Mr. Speaker, there were red flags that were presented. Municipal Affairs did respond in what I believe to be an appropriate and measured way. Obviously our desire at the beginning of this was that council would take the responsibility on themselves to fix this situation and make

adjustments in their behaviour and their policies so they could improve outcomes for themselves.

Our hope at the beginning of this was that council would take on this responsibility. What became clear through the process is that this issue is actually leading to a gridlock in council. It led to a paralysis of that council and an inability to govern on behalf of people. So at that time we did believe it was absolutely critical that the department involve themselves.

We did offer - and I tabled letters earlier, Mr. Speaker - to pay for an expert. Ken Meech was the man we suggested go in, who has an incredible amount of experience. He was the chief executive officer of the Strait Regional School Board; he was the chief administrative officer of the council and city manager for Halifax Regional Municipality; and he is former CAO of Halifax County; and at one point he was the chief administrative officer of the Municipality of Kings and did have employment in Richmond as well. This is an individual who had a very keen grasp of the situation that can arise around financial expenses, and our recommendation, which we articulated twice to the Council of Richmond, was that we would pay for this individual to go in and help them sort out this financial management problem that they were experiencing

I think that was a fair and measured approach considering this is an autonomous and independent organization that is duly elected, I know that there is sometimes a desire for the minister to act in a way that I believe and I perceive to be dictatorial to go in and overturn decisions of these various governing bodies. In reality the ability of the minister to do that is very limited and restricted to times of crises, either financial or a public safety standpoint. And so we have to treat these municipal government as partners, as the duly elected bodies that they are.

We were encouraged when we received this report that said the Municipality of the County of Richmond, where they indicated that it would be moving forward with the recommendation we made to send Ken Meech in - and I will table that. This was in February. That made us very excited; however, when council convened to discuss the issue they did reject that offer. And after that we did supply another recommendation offer to pay for Ken Meech to go in and help sort this situation out. So I believe the actions of the Department of Municipal Affairs were measured.

However, since that there was an Ombudsman report and forensic audit that gave us new information on the situation and it has become very clear, as the member opposite mentioned, these events are disturbing for all of us and we all know that they cast a shadow on every single person who is elected. They cast a shadow on every single government in the province and I do think that is unfair, but we know it's the nature of the game. That's what happens when these events happen.

So we are moving forward, I think, in a way that's positive. The members opposite have said we are doing nothing, but the opposite is the case. In fact we are going far beyond what I believe the recommendations are in the bill that has been tabled here. We sent a letter to the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities asking them to work with us - and I will table that letter again - asking them to work with us to bring the best standard policies available in the province to bear, and have a standardized approach to expense regulation in the province so that we can have a system in place that is consistent from one municipality to the other and that is open and transparent. That's our goal, because the best disinfectant we have is sunlight - and having people being able to see what these expenses are.

Mr. Speaker, I will quote from a release here: "The Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities and the Association of Municipal Administrators are pleased to work with the province to increase accountability and transparency in municipal government." That is very exciting news. We have buy-in from our municipal partners and I think we are charting a course forward that is going to be to the great benefit of the people of this province.

I do want to thank the UNSM for recognizing the challenge this situation has presented and agreeing wholeheartedly to work with us to make this system better, because we will have changes in our MGA that I think will give great confidence to the public, great confidence to our municipal leaders, and we will avoid situations like from happening in the future. And we are taking a look at the recommendations that were made by the Ombudsman Office, as we mentioned earlier in Question Period. We are giving them full consideration - that would entail seeing how other jurisdictions handled situations like this and what is feasible and what is appropriate. We will be discussing those issues with our partners.

I do want to mention, in closing, my opinion on some of the directions members opposite indicated that they want this government to take, and I said in Question Period and I do mean it, and I believe that the members opposite should contemplate the repercussions of some of the suggestions they made. There have been recommendations that this government somehow direct the RCMP or direct the courts or direct the Ombudsman Office or direct Elections Nova Scotia, and the members have said we've been hiding behind those organizations. I do want to make it clear these are organizations that have separate powers from the executive branch for good reason and I do not see any reason to involve ourselves in interfering in their work. We do take at times our democracy for granted, how it works, and the separation of powers that we've achieved here which create a very important balance when it comes to how we govern ourselves and that keeps people accountable and governments accountable.

There's a good reason why these organizations - and along with the Auditor General I would say the Conflict of Interest Commissioner as well - why they cannot be interfered with or controlled by Executive Council because you know, we are seriously - if that is

where that Party wants to go we are looking at dictatorial powers. I don't say that lightly; I seriously mean that. I do want the members opposite to contemplate those recommendations that they've made because I think that is a very slippery slope where we are taking power away from those independent bodies and their ability to keep all of us accountable and give that power to an executive branch of government. I think that is very dangerous and not in the spirit of what we want to happen in our democracy and not in the spirit of transparency and accountability that I know we all want to achieve in this House.

So, in closing, I do want to say I just want them to contemplate that because I do see looks of dismay and it might seem intense but I do want those members to contemplate that because I think there are grave repercussions involved with moving in that way. But I do want to thank the member for this bill, I want to assure her and the House that we will give these recommendations full consideration in our consultation with the UNSM, and I look forward to bringing a piece of law into this House that that member can be excited about, that all members can be excited about, that our municipal partners are excited about and the public will have full confidence in because I believe that is the action that Nova Scotians require at this moment. Thank you so much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak to this bill. Really I welcome the opportunity to put my own words on the record so that if I should be so lucky to serve Halifax Needham for a long time, I will live in constant awareness of having spoken early on in my political career to the need to hold ourselves to high standards as elected officials because we can all look up Hansard and see what we've said.

I kind of welcome the opportunity to serve the people who elected me with a slight fear that I will slip, because most of us do slip sometimes, and it's necessary to be constantly vigilant that we exercise good judgment because even the best policies require that there's an awareness of the intent of those policies for them to be effective.

I recognize also that it's easy to join in on the pile-on. I feel like anytime there's an expense scandal, what it provokes is like a pile-on in the comments, online media, pile-on in the conversations that happen here or elsewhere. Of course, it was only six years ago that the pile-on was happening right around here and members of this House were at the bottom. So we may not be in a glass house now because of the work of the Speaker's Office, because random expenses of MLAs are tweeted, though the odd beach ball and fly swatter get through, and still my old colleagues in the press gallery manage to find a story.

I think it's worth thinking about why stories about expenses have such legs. I think they have legs because so many Nova Scotians don't have the privilege and the opportunity to make frivolous decisions about what they spend their money on. I was speaking with a constituent this week who lives on OAS and CPP and she cannot afford to replace her winter boots because she's making \$1,200 to \$1,300 a month, and she pays \$895 in rent.

So that's why expense scandals make for good stories. It's because it does horrify people who - you know, the median individual income in Nova Scotia is \$31,000. So a lot of people are making decisions with very little room for error and that's why expense scandals offend our sensibilities to such an extent.

I do support the intent of this bill and many of the details of the bill. I think it's probably realistic and timely, given the work that has happened at the provincial level, for a more rigorous oversight of expenses at a municipal level. If MLA tweets are randomly generated based on what we submit to the Speaker's Office, maybe there's an app for that such that municipalities can replicate that at the municipal level, but that it be an onerous administrative burden. Likewise, if MLA expenses are available online surely there are some efficiencies in using some of the same systems that are used provincially to, as the member opposite said, add some sunlight to municipal expenses.

At the same time I am wary of placing administrative burdens on municipalities that have so many things to do and without the sorts of resources that the province has, at least in some cases. I mean I think those 51 municipal units, one of which is Halifax, that encompasses a pretty wide range of different budgets, of different sets of resources, and I certainly wouldn't want to be tying up administrative staff on calculating - I mean the idea of any administrative staff at a municipal level having to literally enter in and tabulate expenses from that bar in Houston is just offensive. Certainly my suggestion would be to move to per diems and let people make their own choices and, hopefully, they are better choices than that.

So yes, I think there's a balance to be struck between transparency and administrative burden. I think the vantage point always has to be what would seem reasonable to an average Nova Scotian - what would you be comfortable defending at the doorstep?

I do think some provincial direction and leadership and investment of resources, using best practices, makes sense because I don't think it's productive, given all the issues that are facing municipal units across the province to have 51 councils having conversations about expense policies. I mean it can be simpler than that. I'm glad certainly that Halifax has already taken a lot of steps. I think in many ways Halifax has to be treated in a different way than other municipal units, simply because of its size and its budget and the fact that councillors are paid salaries that allow them to be working at a different level.

Quickly, the specific provision around alcohol, I support this 100 per cent. The Chief Medical Officer, Robert Strang, has been talking for years about the problematic drinking culture in Nova Scotia. In 2013 he and Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed actually presented to municipal units, to the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, about how municipalities could bring in alcohol policies to try to combat binge drinking, which we know affects one in five Nova Scotians, and it particularly affects young Nova Scotians.



They have been working at the level of the medical officer of health to enlist municipal leaders to combat binge drinking.

I think it's impossible to show leadership on that file while also allowing any elected official to be reimbursed for drinking as part of their work. As much as I would like to think that I could work more productively after a glass of wine, I know that in fact that does not help, as painful as it is to realize that.

So I, 100 per cent, agree with that provision, and again why we're asking anybody - I know what it's like to administer expenses. I once had a job where I had to administer expenses and people were handing me receipts and then we were also paying them a per diem and I'm like hold on a second, if I am paying you a per diem, why am I also having to add your \$4.50 for a laundry to your \$7.50 for orange juice - come on, my time is worth more than that, and I am confident that the time of administrative staff at municipal units across this province is worth more than that. Let's make sure that we are using all of taxpayers' resources well, which includes not asking people to prioritize that over building inspections, over land-use planning, over all of the many other things that need to be done by municipal units across the province.

I look forward to the change that I'm confident will come and is coming. It's unfortunate, again, that it has taken an episode of shame to propel change, but I think all of us together as a province have moved forward, and we will move forward again. At some point, we will all be the politicians that our taxpayers and our residents and our constituents deserve.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: I was listening to the minister's response, largely to my colleague's speech. I know he was saying we should contemplate the repercussions when we put forward ideas in the Legislature like we have here with this bill to protect against the abuses that we've seen in Richmond County.

To that I would say, look at the bill. The two points are that we would require that municipal politicians provide proof of payment for expenses and that there not be any expensing of alcohol. What is so terrible about those two things? What is there that needs to be consulted upon about those things? Haven't Nova Scotians expressed their outrage on these things enough in the past? I think they have, but the government thinks that we need more consultation.

The minister says he doesn't like this idea of us becoming dictatorial. I know he referred to me last week as Putin and Trump. I almost wore a comb-over today, but all jokes aside, I think resorting to calling somebody Trump or Putin or anyone else is no way to respond to this issue. In fairness to the minister, there are other people responding in the same way. We need only look at *The Chronicle Herald* cartoon, which I guess is a reference

to Hillary Clinton because it has Mr. Sampson saying that he needs to have his own email server. That was in the *Herald* today. I guess it's not just the minister who is reaching for these comparisons to people who are in the news, especially with the U.S. election going on. But I can tell the minister one thing: it's not the Russians behind what we're trying to do here; it's the people of Richmond County, and they have come to us.

Another thing the minister said is that there's no disagreement on the intent of this bill. It's a very simple bill. If there's no disagreement, Mr. Speaker, then why don't we pass it?

Another thing the minister said is somehow government has been complicit, or there has been guilt by association, and he's saying that there has been none of that. But let me remind people, Mr. Speaker, that until yesterday, one of the main people involved in the Richmond spending scandal was an employee of the Liberal caucus office.

We've never seen the minister table the evidence that it was he who triggered the audit. I was told by somebody who attended a council meeting in Richmond that Mr. Sampson said otherwise when the matter was discussed at Richmond Council. What are we to take from this? I think we're to take from it that when you see something wrong, and you have the authority to fix it, you should fix it, even if that means that friends, people you may feel you need to be loyal to, are the people who are going to be impacted by it. Instead, we've heard from people from Richmond County who have come forward to this government, telling them about what was going on, and the government just ignored their concerns.

I think a lack of good policy leads to complaints. I think about one person who complained - it was brought up today in Question Period. She is an employee of the government, a Tourism Nova Scotia employee - the minister said he was not aware that this employee had been basically threatened with the security of her very employment because of comments she made.

Mr. Speaker, I don't doubt the minister perhaps not hearing about this. However, think about this for a minute. Do you think there are people working in Tourism Nova Scotia who are scouring the Internet, looking at Facebook pages, trying to see if anybody is making political comments? That is ridiculous. They would not care. That leads us to the question, who would care?

In this case, the minister would need to look no further than the row ahead of him in this Legislature to the member for Cape Breton-Richmond. Of anybody in here who is most affected by this, it is that member. I have no doubt that that member is probably upset by a comment that a citizen, a constituent of his, made about him and about this government and about handling this situation. I have no doubt that a phone call would be made from him, and just like that, the hand comes out from the darkness and taps the employee on the shoulder and says, you had better stop making those comments.

I know I was told in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker, my question was ruled out of order the other day because of a comment I made. But doesn't this seem like something you'd see in another world, where people are told, you watch what you say or else?

We think about how we're here, how we're living on the edge as politicians. We face an election, we don't know if we're going to get dumped to the side of the curb or if we are going to be given another chance to represent the people we represent.

But think about this person, Mr. Speaker, whose job it is to help visitors to come to our province and enjoy their stay. It's a seasonal position. Think about that person, what it's like for them. They are not coming in and sitting in some high and mighty Chamber like this. They are going to work every day, making ends meet, helping people, and they get a threat, a letter written to them: We've seen what you've been saying on Facebook, and by the way, if you say that again, you're fired.

That really bothers me. People who are working are not doing it for fun. They are doing it to put bread on the table. And for somebody's personal security to be threatened like that because of a comment they've made as a free citizen, that disgusts me.

Now, if that employee was saying it on the job and saying it to visitors, well, that's a different thing. But what they do on their own time, this government should respect. I think that matter should be looked into, Mr. Speaker.

I know I was making the comparison and my question was ruled out of order the other day, but really that kind of behaviour and that kind of treatment of people makes us think about another organization, the one that I mentioned the other day, and I think that's awful.

Mr. Speaker, we know about the connections, we know about an expense claim on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Warden and CEO of Richmond County went to the swearing-in of all the members of the government side here. They probably shook hands with them that day, but I want to give you a little timeline, you know, about how all this went down and why we need a bill like this in the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, in December, the councillor in question, who was the former employee of the Liberal caucus office as of yesterday, actually went to the point of trying to discourage people from putting money into an audit because of the expense. Now, if you can believe this - I wasn't at the meeting but I was told - one of the excuses he gave was think of the Syrian refugees, we should be putting money towards things that are more important. You know, what more do you have to say than that? Let's help the refugees.

So, that was in December. Then, in January, the Ombudsman got involved and in February, citizens filed a freedom of information request, got information; they sent emails to the minister in February. They weren't responded to until May and in a phone

conversation, the minister indicated to one person that the member for Cape Breton-Richmond was getting him up to speed on the situation. Well, we know now that the member for Richmond thought this was all just an honest mistake; but I think he knew better.

So, we need legislation like this. We don't need the government to ignore legislation like this today like they've ignored the situation in Richmond. We need a government that's engaged. We need a government that doesn't see this as an exercise that is dictatorial because if a member of this Legislature, especially a member who has authority, sees something wrong happening I think that member should do something about it. I think this legislation and I think all members in this Legislature should think about this bill right now and they should think, you know, do we kick this can down the road or do we act? I'm ready to act today and I think there are others in here who are ready to act today.

So, why don't we send a message to Nova Scotians? Why don't we send them a message that we don't want municipal politicians expensing purchases of alcoholic beverages? Who can debate that? Who needs more consultation on that? Why waste more tax dollars on consultation? Why waste more time of people who are processing the expenses itemizing the alcohol that's being purchased? Or, in this case, it's not even happening so I guess I have to refute my own point there because they don't even have to show that right now.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, it appears that - I'll defer to the Official Opposition House Leader if he intends to close business.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader has the floor.

MR. FARRELL: I intend to continue speaking on the bill, Mr. Speaker. How much time is left?

MR. SPEAKER: Eleven minutes.

MR. FARRELL: Eleven minutes, thank you.

I think this is obviously a very important issue that has come before the House and it's something that in the political process we've dealt with over and over again over the years. I think for a whole number of reasons, Mr. Speaker, we're finally getting this right, we're finally headed in the right direction with respect to the issue of expenses and with respect to the issue of how, as members and as elected people, we interact with the system and we use taxpayers' money, because it is essential that there are expenditures of

taxpayers' money for the remuneration of members at all levels of government and for the reimbursement of expenses that are incurred during the course of that.

It's something that I think in my understanding and the impression that I have from over the years is that it has definitely been misused in the past, there have been many, many examples of that and there have been many people who have been caught - and I am sure there have been many, many more people who haven't been caught.

It's something that we, in Nova Scotia, are very well aware of and we have seen very recent examples of how this can go wrong - and Richmond is only one of those. Richmond is just one situation where this has not gone well, if you will, Mr. Speaker. It has not gone well for the taxpayers. It's an example of how human nature goes in the wrong direction by times and things don't go well.

Regardless of that, Mr. Speaker, there are processes that have to be undertaken and there are processes that have to be adhered to in dealing with that. My colleague, the honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs, has pointed out over and over again that we have safeguards and we have checks in our system and we have integrity in our system that has - while it may not have been there to prevent this from happening in the first place, it is certainly there now to deal with it. These actions are taken by arm's-length institutions, the Ombudsman's Office, the RCMP, the auditors. These folks are all there to help us put together what happened, help us to make decisions and judgments about how the current situation should be dealt with, and help us understand and decide how to go forward and to ensure that this doesn't happen again.

We're in a system of government, Mr. Speaker, that has evolved over time. It has taken hundreds of years for our parliamentary democracy to become what it is today. One thing that I like to say over and over again is that we have the worst form of government, except for all the other ones, because it's not perfect, it's a work in progress. It will never be perfect and that's why we are continually changing it and working on it and improving it.

I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, the one thing that we have to be careful of and that we have to make sure does not occur in this situation or any other situation is that we make snap reactionary decisions, based on circumstances (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order, please. The member for Cumberland North has the floor.

MR. FARRELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Based on individual situations, because let me tell you, in law we have a saying and the saying is "hard cases make bad law." In a situation like this we have the instruments in place to deal with these individuals. We have the Elections Act, we have all the instruments in place to deal with these individuals in this situation. I'm confident that if the system finds that there has been wrongdoing and finds

the people who are responsible for that wrongdoing, then there will be consequences to them.

But, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Municipal Affairs has a broader mandate and has a more expansive role in this situation than to react like that and try to usurp the role of all of these other authorities that are involved. The role of the Department of Municipal Affairs is not simply reaction but action. It's a role that they take very seriously, in a considered fashion, based on evidence, study, facts, and the long-term view.

The Department of Municipal Affairs is in the course of a broad review of the Municipal Government Act right now, and during the course of time since that has happened, many issues have come up in municipalities. There is one that came up in my own local municipality with respect to the conduct of a councillor, and that is all going to form part of the collective wisdom that is going to go into this review and the updating of the Municipal Government Act.

I seem to recall from the last session, that when we brought in some small amendments to the Municipal Government Act - I might say small, necessary amendments - we were accused by the Opposition of taking a piecemeal approach to the review of the Municipal Government Act and to the amendments of the Municipal Government Act. Now the shoe is on the other foot. They want us to react to every little incident and every little situation across the province and legislate in reaction. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order. The honourable member for Cumberland North has the floor.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: I guess when the inconsistencies in the position of the Opposition are pointed out, it really gets under their skin. They seem to have a really hard time dealing with that.

The things that were important enough for legislation in the last session, the Spring session, from the point of view of the Department of Municipal Affairs and the honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs, were small potatoes to them at the time, and why are we wasting the time of the Legislature on that? (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I would ask all the members - I don't want to call them by their position - to please be polite.

The honourable member for Cumberland North has the floor.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: I'm not sure what I have that causes this reaction, but it seems to happen over and over again. I do like to talk, and like to talk without interruption. I guess maybe they think that they're going to get me on that.

I think what we have to recognize, and it's the same as other similar situations that have happened in the past, where politicians run afoul of the rules, that you can't paint everybody in that situation with the same brush. We have strong administrations in the municipalities across this province. We have integrity in the administrations across this province.

I have to say, I don't have experience serving as an elected municipal official, but I have experience serving for 19 years as a volunteer with the Town of Amherst on their planning and advisory committee, most of that time as the chair of that committee. I had the opportunity during those years to work with three different municipal CAOs of the Town of Amherst, and I have to say, they all had their strengths. They weren't all the same strengths that each of them had, but each one of them had a strong moral compass and a sense of what was right and the ability to direct their municipal unit and the people who were under them, both elected and employed, to create a climate where something like this would not occur.

I know that the other main municipality that's covered by my riding, the Municipality of the County of Cumberland County, also has a strong municipal administrator who has provided the same kind of leadership and guidance in that municipality and who has made it sure and clear to the elected and employed people who work in that organization that there are rules that relate to the claiming of expenses and to the other remunerations and reimbursements that occur in that municipality. I have confidence that something like this would not and could not happen in that administration because of that strength.

Those two guys that are there now, Greg Herrett and Rennie Bugley, I don't think they're unique across the province. I think they're representative of the municipal administrators across this province. Just like I don't think that the councillors who have caused this situation to occur in Richmond are representative of the elected municipal officials across this province.

I think we have integrity, Mr. Speaker; we have a good sense of the propriety of what these people are doing and the work that they have to do; we have a high sense of responsibility in these employed and elected municipal officials across the province, a high sense of responsibility of how they handle the taxpayers' money and how they are good stewards of that money. I really don't think that the situation in Richmond is anything other than an unfortunate set of circumstances.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Time has expired.

The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: That concludes Opposition business. I want to thank everybody for their vigorous debate on all of these items. Mr. Speaker, I pass it back over to the Deputy Government House Leader to call business for tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, we will sit between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., at which time we will call Government Business, Public Bills, and Committee of the Whole House - Bill Nos. 33, 36, 41, and 44; and for second reading - Bill Nos. 52, 55, 59, and 61. We will also call the Committee on Private and Local Bills, Bill No. 47; Address in Reply; and such other government business as may be deemed appropriate at that time.

I move that the House do now rise to meet tomorrow between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet again on November 3<sup>rd</sup> between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

We stand adjourned until November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

We have now reached the moment of interruption. The Adjournment motion was submitted by the member for Sackville-Cobequid and reads:

“Whereas it was an integral part of the campaign platform of the present government when it sought the support of the electorate in 2013 that it would ensure every Nova Scotian had access to a primary care physician; and

Whereas the main action of the government has been to establish a wait-list for access to a family physician, a wait-list which now has some 6,000 persons on it; and

Whereas the full extent of the shortfall in access to a family physician is not known, but it clearly remains acute;

Therefore it be resolved that this House agrees that the government has failed in one of its prime duties to the public of Nova Scotia, to provide access to a family physician.”



**ADJOURNMENT****MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)**

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - FAM. PHYSICIANS: GOV'T. PROVISION - FAILURE**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, it's certainly a pleasure, and I'll just read the last sentence there: "Therefore be it resolved that this House agrees that the government has failed in one of its prime duties to the public of Nova Scotia, to provide access to a family physician."

Mr. Speaker, if your memory serves you correctly, you know that this was an election promise made by this present Premier; it was also brought to our attention during the most recent Throne Speech that this government will continue on its path. If your memory serves you correctly, you'll know in the last session I raised each and every closure of Roseway Hospital. Basically, it took me the whole term to do that. I brought to this floor the closures not only at Roseway but throughout Lunenburg, Pictou, Digby, Cape Breton, and now most recently in Dartmouth, and this issue is not going away.

First of all, before I get into the heart of my notes here, I want to thank the opportunity for talking about this subject tonight and I want to thank my colleague to my right here, our Health Critic, the member for Sackville-Cobequid, for giving me the opportunity to speak to this because he is definitely more qualified than I. But he knows how passionate I am about this issue.

There was a trial balloon that was floated here a week ago by the member for Clare-Digby. Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize to all the members here, this is not a personal grudge or anything; this is about policy. I know that we have differences at times, and I can tell you that I respect every individual - he or she - in this place. It's about policies. I really believe that this was either a trial balloon, or the individual misspoke. I make notes frequently here, and to my knowledge, there has never been a recognition or an opportunity to address that and say, well sorry, member for Queens-Shelburne, we're still on the right track, and we expect to get a doctor for everyone.

What I want to emphasize here as I move into this is not only is this an election promise; this has to be addressed. This is the number one issue facing Atlantic Canada, facing Nova Scotia, and facing our nation. I am serious about that. I believe this is one of the reasons the member for Sackville-Cobequid let me have this opportunity: because this is not going to go away.

It's as simple as this, Mr. Speaker. It's about caring for others. I really truly believe that we have an obligation here. We can all make a difference in the lives of others who are in need because it is the simple single gesture that makes the most significant difference in people's lives. Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community. I suggest community is the country of Canada, which we all call home.

We have something that's called a universal health care system. When we have Canadians who are good physically and in good mental health, they are able to work better, they're more productive, and they contribute more fully to the economy, living healthier and happier lives. One of the things that I'm deeply interested in in Canada is that we have a universal health care system. That is financial protection that makes sure that all of our citizens are treated equally and have access to health care.

What I'm going to get into here right now is the issue which is at hand. It's as simple as this: there were a number of references today to the baby boomer population iceberg that is moving through our system as I speak. I made reference to this, and I can tell you that my speeches in this House are getting limited. I want people to remember that the baby boomers will have an influence regardless of where they're at in life. Now, where they're at in life, they're having an influence on the health care system.

What the word "universal" means is that every one of us should have access to the health care system, regardless of whether you're in Nunavut, or you're on Vancouver Island, or you're on Cape Sable Island. But that's not happening. That is not happening in this province of a little under a million people. We now have numbers adjusted to this day of 100,000 people without a family doctor. I'm saying that is simply unacceptable. What needs to be done is, we need to recognize that we have a problem.

We have a fundamental change that has to happen with our health care system. It's called the Health Accord. If you think the individual provinces are going to do this alone, you are certainly not going to believe your own comments. It needs to have help from the federal government. We need to change the formula that our health care system is based on, that each province gets reimbursed based on its population. This simply has to change. We need our collective Ministers of Health going and speaking in Ottawa and talking about it's time to change the Health Accord. These discussions are going on as I speak and I know that these are the voices that have to come especially from Atlantic Canada because we have to change that, based on our aging population.

It's a simple concept, and to me if you are basing it on your population it is a flawed process and it needs to be corrected. To me that is simple and you have to understand this and until we continue to try to address some of these issues we are going to see hospitals close, we're going to see doctor shortages, and to me that is simply unacceptable.

I ask the Minister of Health and Wellness every time I get an opportunity here, I know how large this issue is, I think we have to go as Atlantic-wide and start negotiating a new Health Accord in Ottawa and raising the concerns based on our aging population.

My problem, Mr. Speaker, is I am a politicalholic and politicalholics do not have meetings to attend; there are no meetings for politicalholics. What is done here is a politicalholic knows that there's an issue and you go and say that you need to change this and you need to change the way our health care is set up and it's through the Health Accord, and it needs to be based on our aging population and this not being done.

One of the things the federal government said in their last federal election is that the federal government would fulfill the election promise and they would reach out and they would adjust and look at addressing a new Health Accord. Well, Mr. Speaker, that was sunny ways, and I can assure you for 100,000 people in Nova Scotia it's not sunny ways - it's certainly a cloudy day when you do not have access to a doctor.

This is something that I think there has to be a need to address. Again, I look forward to the comments. I know that you are the first one in the debate and you are going to have two other people here to go out, especially the Liberal Government. They floated out this trial balloon, Mr. Speaker, and it's interesting that the member for Clare-Digby may stand up and address this debate tonight. I'm looking forward to the Liberal Government standing there and defending this trial balloon or misspoken. It's going to be interesting as to who addresses this, particularly on the Liberal side.

I look forward to those comments and I look forward to the comments from the Official Opposition because I know this is not a new idea when you suggest that your funding should be based on your aging population, not on simply the population of your province. This is something that I think is recognized around the world, the Canadian universal health care system, and it's something that I'm willing to stand here and fight for.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to know whether it was a trial balloon or was misspoken, and I can assure you that 10 years is too long to wait for a family doctor. Thank you very much.

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

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise in my place tonight and talk about this very important issue for all of us. Listening to my colleagues' comments there are some things we agree with and there are some things that we may disagree with, but the one thing that we all know is that this is a very important issue for all Nova Scotia.

I can say, and I said this the last time I had the opportunity to stand and speak on this issue as a councillor back in 2008; this was a hot topic, and I remember at the time

talking about what the future held in our community across Cape Breton Island for family physicians and how we had to try and address the issue then because we knew that looking down the road the map showed us that we're going to have some challenges and that was true.

As an MLA in Cape Breton I, too, receive the calls, as my colleagues do, regardless of whether you are on the government side or the Opposition, for the need of physicians at home. People are looking for access to care and we do what we can, as local representatives, to support those families. We do what we can, as government representatives, to set policy and set direction that will allow Cape Bretoners and all Nova Scotians access to primary care.

The one thing that my colleague was talking about a few moments ago was change, that change was needed to address the issue, and he is absolutely right. Change was needed to address the issue. Mr. Speaker, I believe that government is making the necessary change to try to address the issues and the concerns that residents have in regard to access to primary care.

I have the opportunity to talk to doctors in my community. We have some long-standing family physicians, as my colleagues know, who have supported our communities for decades and have looked after the health and well-being of the residents for 30 or 40 years and even longer. I can't thank them enough for that. They hold very large practices, they've held very large practices, and they continue to hold very large practices in our communities.

I also talked to doctors who I went to university with, some who have graduated through the system. They are starting to practise. Some of them have come home. Some of them have practised in other communities across the country. When I talk to them, they talk about some of the changes that government is making, and they look at them as very positive. I was honoured to announce at Cape Breton Regional Hospital the addition of nurse practitioners and family practice nurses who will serve in clinics across Cape Breton. That's very exciting for us because we're going to see thousands of people have access to primary care.

That is a very important step moving forward, and that's what new doctors in the community are telling me is the right direction. That is the right direction to take. It allows for more collaborative practice. It brings more expertise into communities. It allows our citizens, when they need access to primary care, aside from just being able to access a family physician, to access dietitians, to access nurse practitioners, to access a various array of services under one roof. I am hearing from doctors that it is a very positive step forward.

It also goes into talking about life balance for our family physicians. We have physicians at home who are carrying very large practices. Traditionally that's the way it

was. In my community, one doctor has 3,500 patients. He has been a long-standing doctor in our community, and he has been great for us.

We hear through Question Period, and we hear through discussions here in the House, about a doctor leaving who may have had 3,000 patients, but a doctor is coming in who will service 1,200 to 1,500 to 1,800 patients. That's the reality of the situation. The traditional model or the traditional practice of having 3,000 or 4,000 patients is the past. What doctors are telling us, and what I hear from doctors in the community, is that it's about work/life balance. They want to support as many people in the community as they can, but it's not just going to be under a singular practice. It's going to be under a practice that consists of other supports, other professions, and other expertise that will provide that primary care.

I know that those nurse practitioners are Cape Bretoners. A lot of Cape Bretoners are taking (Interruptions)

With those announcements we're hoping that those Cape Bretoners can stay home. Across the province, we know that collaborative care is going to play a big part for rural communities outside of the capital. So it's exciting for me. We have one in Sydney. We have one coming in New Waterford, we have Northside, we have Ingonish, and we have Richmond County. These are all areas that needed support, and they are going to have the support.

I'm very excited about that. I think it's a very important step forward. I can tell you from the residents in my riding that we talk to on a daily basis through the office, from the constituents, it's a very positive step forward. It's a very positive step forward for us, and it's a very positive step forward for the province.

As we move forward, I believe you're going to see more of that. That's going to be the model, as I said. That's what new doctors are telling me is the best environment for people to succeed. It's the best environment for them to have that expertise with them to support them, to offer a much more vast array of services to communities. We're excited about the announcements that are happening in Cape Breton, and we're going to see over 4,000 people have access to primary care who never had it before.

Again, it goes back to having a plan. We've debated this issue in the Legislature numerous times. We're presenting a plan that says here's a way that we can address primary care. With all due respect to everybody in the House and the Opposition Parties, I haven't heard a plan. I haven't heard a plan yet. Here's our plan: collaborative care (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Sydney-Whitney Pier has the floor.

MR. MOMBOURQUETTE: Again, that's what it is for me. I've been here for 13 months in this role. I'm very honoured to be the MLA in Sydney. I've dealt with this issue, and I take as many calls as my colleagues do on this very important issue in Cape Breton. Here's our plan. We continue to build on our plan. We're bringing in nurse practitioners. We're encouraged by what we're hearing from new doctors coming into the community. More people will have access to primary care.

But I haven't heard a plan from the other two Parties on how they want to address this issue (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Sydney-Whitney Pier has the floor.

MR. MOMBOURQUETTE: In my final minute or so here, as we move forward with our plan, the plan to support Nova Scotians' access to primary care, I've said this before, and I'll say this again: there are a lot of good people on the ground in my community, with the Health Authority, and across the province who are working day and night to recruit family physicians, who are competing against communities all over Canada and beyond to recruit doctors. I've seen first-hand how hard they're working to bring those professionals to our community. I'm saying this because it gets lost in the debate. It's not (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Sydney-Whitney Pier has the floor.

MR. MOMBOURQUETTE: It's not about what the other Parties - what I'm trying accomplish here (Interruptions)

I just want to say to all the people both at home and across the province who are working day and night to bring primary health care to our province, thank you very much. That's what I want to say.

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

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: I first want to say that I am pleased to have another opportunity to talk about doctors in the Province of Nova Scotia and, in particular, in Cape Breton Island. I listened to my colleague from Queens-Shelburne and my colleague from Sydney-Whitney Pier talk about where things are and where they need to be. I think Mr. Speaker, if you listen to what's going on and what's being said, we're all very much on the same page in the sense that we actually want something to take place.

I want to clarify at the beginning of this whole thing that I'm certainly no expert, but I do agree that the people we have working in the system - whether they're doctors, nurses, or technicians in the hospitals - everybody that is involved in the health preservation

of our people are good people doing the best that they can with the tools that they are provided.

However, I listened with intent to my colleague, the member for Sydney-Whitney Pier - who I consider to be a friend as well as a colleague - and I heard him say it's very difficult to recruit doctors here in Nova Scotia, and I would not dispute that. What I haven't heard him say, or the Premier or the Minister of Health and Wellness, is why it is that the doctors we have here are leaving.

MS. PAM EYKING: Your negativity, that's why. You're scaring them away.

MR. MACLEOD: Well, I hear the member for Victoria-The Lakes saying we're scaring them away. It was her government and her people that said there would be a doctor for every Nova Scotian. (Applause) That's what she ran on and she has not been able to deliver that. As a matter of fact, she has chased people out of practices in her constituency.

MS. EYKING: Watch the old heart.

MR. MACLEOD: My goodness, it is so refreshing to see that the member for Victoria-The Lakes has finally found her voice; Halloween has worked for her. This is more serious than her worrying about my heart because at least I have one. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'll ask the honourable member for Sydney-Whitney Pier to retract that.

MR. MACLEOD: You have to remember, sir - if somebody wants to play that game, I'll play it back with them. I want to talk about doctors . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I will ask the honourable member for Sydney-Whitney Pier to retract that.

MR. MACLEOD: It's up to him.

MR. SPEAKER: Pardon me, Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg. You guys look so much alike with that new haircut, I can't tell the difference.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, because you've asked, I will retract it. However, I want you to understand that I am the member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg. He's the good-looking one.

On this subject of doctor shortages and a province of our size wondering where things are, I do know I attended the meeting in Sydney, as did the member for Glace Bay, the member for Victoria-The Lakes, the member for Cape Breton Centre, the member for Northside-Westmount, and the member for Sydney-Whitney Pier. We heard people say

that they're worried about their situation when it comes to the lack of doctors. What they are looking for is a solution today.

When we talk about collaborative practices and we talk about how doctors want to practise medicine differently than they have in the past, I don't think anyone will dispute that's part of the solution. But the people calling my office are saying to me: I need a doctor today; it has been two or three years since I've had a doctor. I've had a number of people who have called me since this 811 announcement where we're talking about this "Need a Family Practice?" solution, and they're saying to me, I'm already on all kinds of lists, I don't want to be on another list. I want to have a doctor, I need someone to look after me.

When I was a young fellow - which I can vaguely remember - I was always taught that in order to find a solution to a problem, you first had to admit that there was a problem. In this House, the Minister of Health and Wellness and the Premier have never said that there is a problem with a lack of doctors, but there's 10,000 Cape Bretoners who say they have an issue and they want help. A lot of those people voted for this government in the last election because of six words: "A doctor for every Nova Scotian." That's what they said. That's what this government said when they were looking to be elected, and that's what people put their faith in.

Now when we hear about doctors leaving and doctors coming in and taking on half the practice of the doctor that is leaving - 30 doctors, Mr. Speaker, leaving Cape Breton Island. Earlier in the week the Minister of Health and Wellness - or it could have been last week - was taking great pride that there was a new doctor coming to the Northside, which is very good, going to take on 1,000 people. He failed to mention about the doctor who closed his practice had 2,200 patients and he wanted to continue on and he wanted the help of a nurse practitioner and the Health Authority denied him. The Health Authority denied a doctor the use of a practitioner because he wasn't a collaborative practice.

Mr. Speaker, is it about helping the people of Nova Scotia or is it making sure that everybody fits in that box that the Health Authority has said is how the world has to be? In the world I live in, it's about making sure we help the people who gave us the honour to represent them here; it's about making sure that people have an opportunity to get the doctor's care that they say they need and want.

Mr. Speaker, we can talk all day about how medicine is different and how we're going to change it in the future - and my colleague says that we have a plan. We don't. My plan would be very simple, my plan would be to sit down and talk to the people who are delivering the service, the doctors, and say to them, what is it you need to make it easier for you to do your job? What is it we need to do, as a province and as a government, to keep you in this province?

Mr. Speaker, these people came here; they came here for a reason. They saw something about Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island, they saw something in the quality



of life that it offered, they saw something in wanting to serve the people - and now they're leaving in droves; they're leaving in droves. So if we don't ask them why it is you are leaving, why is it you will not stay - we hear time and time again from the Minister of Health and Wellness, that indeed it's hard to keep people here and get them to come back.

Why is that? I've asked some doctors who were leaving, have you had an exit interview, because when I talked to people in the Health Authority they told us they were going to have exit interviews. Well do you know what? They give the exit interviews, if they give them at all, with people who are right in the system where the problems are. Wouldn't you think that if you were going to do an exit interview that you would take somebody from another area who doesn't already have any biases in his place and ask them to ask the questions and find out why it is that doctors don't want to stay here on Cape Breton Island?

Mr. Speaker, this is a subject that is ongoing. It hasn't been created with this government, and by the looks of things it's not going to be solved by this government. But I can say this: this government was a government that was elected by telling people there would be a doctor for every Nova Scotian. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The time allotted for the Adjournment debate has expired.

The House stands adjourned until tomorrow.

[The House rose at 5:23 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**  
**[Tabled 11/01/16]**

**RESOLUTION NO. 292**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Environment)

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

Whereas the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Nova Scotia 4-H Pro Show took place this Fall in Truro at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition Grounds; and

Whereas the 4-H leaders are integral in assisting 4-H members to gain skills and knowledge through hands-on education and to develop leadership skills; and

Whereas Patti Grant is a leader of the Hardwood Lands 4-H Club of Hardwood Lands, Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Patti Grant for her role in preparing the 4-H members to participate in competitions such as the 4-H Pro Show so that they may expand their future potential.

**RESOLUTION NO. 293**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Environment)

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

Whereas the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Nova Scotia 4-H Pro Show took place this Fall in Truro at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition Grounds; and

Whereas the 4-H leaders are integral in assisting 4-H members to gain skills and knowledge through hands-on education and to develop leadership skills; and

Whereas Jennifer Kendal is a leader of the Hardwood Lands 4-H Club of Hardwood Lands, Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Jennifer Kendal for her role in preparing the 4-H members to participate in competitions such as the 4-H Pro Show so that they may expand their future potential.

**RESOLUTION NO. 294**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Environment)

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

Whereas the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Nova Scotia 4-H Pro Show took place this Fall in Truro at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition Grounds; and

Whereas the 4-H leaders are integral in assisting 4-H members to gain skills and knowledge through hands-on education and to develop leadership skills; and

Whereas Cathy Caswell is a leader of the Shu-Mil 4-H Club of Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Cathy Caswell for her role in preparing the 4-H members to participate in competitions such as the 4-H Pro Show so that they may expand their future potential.

**RESOLUTION NO. 295**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Environment)

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

Whereas the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Nova Scotia 4-H Pro Show took place this Fall in Truro at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition Grounds; and

Whereas the 4-H leaders are integral in assisting 4-H members to gain skills and knowledge through hands-on education and to develop leadership skills; and

Whereas Michelle Fraser is a leader of the Hardwood Lands 4-H Club of Hardwood Lands, Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Michelle Fraser for her role in preparing the 4-H members to participate in competitions such as the 4-H Pro Show so that they may expand their future potential.

**RESOLUTION NO. 296**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Environment)

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

Whereas the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Nova Scotia 4-H Pro Show took place this Fall in Truro at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition Grounds; and

Whereas the 4-H Pro Show provides a venue for competing 4-H members to showcase their skills and learn from their competitors; and

Whereas Ryan Barrett of Hardwood Lands, Nova Scotia, is a member of the Hardwood Lands 4-H Club;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Ryan Barrett on winning the Champion Woodworking Judge Competition at the Nova Scotia 4-H Pro Show.

**RESOLUTION NO. 297**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Environment)

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

Whereas the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Nova Scotia 4-H Pro Show took place this Fall in Truro at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition Grounds; and

Whereas the 4-H Pro Show provides a venue for competing 4-H members to showcase their skills and learn from their competitors; and

Whereas Kelsey Morehouse of Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia, is a member of the Shu-Mil 4-H Club;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Kelsey Morehouse on winning the following: Champion Dairy Goat, Reserve Champion Dairy Goat, Champion Goat Judge, Champion Miniature Horse Judge, Champion Goat Showman, and Goat Clipping Competition at the Nova Scotia 4-H Pro Show.

**RESOLUTION NO. 298**

By: Mr. David Wilton (Cape Breton Centre)

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

Whereas 80 years ago 14 women from New Waterford came together to form the IODE Edward VIII Chapter; and

Whereas the IODE's aim and goal is still the same, to make a better life for women and children through education and service; and

Whereas as community-minded individuals who volunteer with fundraising events throughout the year are able to help out the local library, the local St. Vincent de Paul, the Transition House, and fund two bursaries at the local high school;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate the members of the IODE Edward VIII Chapter on their 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and their contributions to our community.

**RESOLUTION NO. 299**

By: Mr. David Wilton (Cape Breton Centre)

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

Whereas in February of this year the Annual Coal Bowl Basketball Tournament celebrated its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; and

Whereas the Coal Bowl is a week-long basketball tournament with teams coming from all over Canada to compete, have fun, and learn about our Island and its famous hospitality; and

Whereas this tournament could not take place without a dedicated board of directors who oversee everything from feeding and housing teams, events for the players, canteen services for the spectators, annual variety show, ticket sales, and countless other behind-the-scenes involvement;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly congratulate the members of this board of directors and their assistants on a fabulous week of activities and hospitality for our community.

**RESOLUTION NO. 300**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas Dr. John Gillis is a valued community volunteer and an accomplished physician and has been working as an emergency room physician at the Dartmouth General Hospital since 2001, while also running the Centre for Pain Management in Dartmouth since 2007; and

Whereas Dr. Gillis produces Doc Talk on Eastlink, a show where he and guest experts discuss relevant health issues, and also appears on the News 97.5 Maritime Morning weekly House Calls segment; and

Whereas Dr. Gillis, a very busy husband and father, also serves as the Chief Medical Officer for Rugby Canada and volunteers as president for the Liberal Party of Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly applaud Dr. John Gillis for his ample community spirit and his commitment to helping Nova Scotians have better lives.

**RESOLUTION NO. 301**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas Andrew Metlege, my uncle and lifelong supporter, is the founder and president of Templeton Properties, a prominent development firm in Halifax which has erected exceptional properties across the city bearing the names of his beloved family members; and

Whereas Andrew is now passing the reins to his sons, Joseph and Matthew Metlege, so that they may continue with his development vision and allow him to focus on charitable causes and providing support in the construction of a new church; and

Whereas Joseph and Matthew have extensive plans for a South Village development project on the Halifax Peninsula, including a sweeping renovation of Fenwick Tower, the creation of a renewed commercial and cultural hub, and a number of multi-unit buildings aimed at both our younger and older demographics;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Andrew Metlege on his tremendous success as a business owner, and wish Joseph and Matthew, my cousins, the best of luck as they continue along the path their father charted.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 302**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas on October 23<sup>rd</sup> the Atlantic Canada Ping Pong Association held their 8<sup>th</sup> annual tournament, the Atlantic Table Tennis Cup at Saint Mary's University, featuring 20 invited teams from across the Maritimes; and

Whereas fun and exhilarating sporting events like these are excellent ways to make friends and build community, and I am proud of the effort the ACPPA has put in over the last eight years to growing the sport of ping pong and supporting young athletes of all skill levels; and

Whereas ping pong is especially popular with our multicultural communities, and events such as this one are great opportunities for immigrants to Nova Scotia to share a special part of their culture with others;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking Michael Ruan, honorary president of the ACPPA, and his team for hosting another exciting tournament and wish them continued success.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 303**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas Ron Zima, otherwise known as the Idle-Free Guy, was inspired by his children to take action against the excess and unnecessary vehicle emissions that are created when cars are allowed to idle with the engine running; and

Whereas Ron took it upon himself to launch a grassroots anti-idling campaign in 2006 to educate drivers about this issue and formed the Children's Clean Air Network to inspire Canadians and all North Americans to go idle-free for the good of our budgets, our children, and our planet; and

Whereas Ron and the CCAN have partnered with our schools, businesses, media outlets, and health and environmental organizations to raise awareness and change drivers' behaviours;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly thank Ron for his decade of activism and wish him and his campaign continued success.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 304**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas Armdale resident Steve Lane has made major efforts to help new Syrian families in Halifax thrive and he exemplifies the generosity of spirit that Nova Scotians are known for; and

Whereas Steve has, through his role as a volunteer English teacher with Halifax Public Libraries and ISANS, gotten to know three local families quite well and has dedicated countless hours to helping them adapt to their new home; and

Whereas Steve has helped these families navigate medical appointments, get involved in community soccer teams, learn about environmental responsibility by touring the recycling depot, learn about local democracy by observing how a polling station operates, prepare for their first Halloween, get extra math homework for their children, and much more;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly thank Steve for his selflessness and his welcoming spirit and wish him continued success.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 305**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas AeroVision Canada, owned and operated by Trevor Bergmann and Jean Racine, is an innovative new business located in Beechville that provides the unique services of unmanned aerial operations; and



Whereas AeroVision Canada has serviced clients across multiple industries with projects ranging from simple to very complex, including a voluntary mission to Ecuador to survey earthquake damage using high-end drones; and

Whereas drones are flying to the rescue in the emergency response sector, helping police record and analyze crime scenes, and assisting search and rescue teams in identifying victims lost in the wilderness: not only can a drone collect precise detailed footage and data from the air, it can also help crews cut down on expenses, keep workers safe, and ultimately speed up efforts in a sector where every second counts;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating AeroVision Canada on creating a niche market for this new technology and wish them well in the future.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 306**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas Ali Duale, his wife, Sudi, and three children aged two, three, and four, fled a brutal civil war in Somalia, lived as refugees in Kenya for seven years before arriving in Halifax in 1997, and both worked hard to support their growing family (now eight children) as they educated themselves and gained new skills while consistently giving back to the community; and

Whereas Ali helps and supports “newcomers” with sports and making sure they graduate high school with a program he runs at the St. Andrews Community Centre and the Canada Games Centre, is actively engaged in the local Somali community, is on the Maritime Muslim Academy Board, and helped to plan the new mosque; and

Whereas in 2004, Ali became a firefighter and was recently promoted to diversity and community liaison coordinator, reporting directly to the chief of Halifax fire;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly take note of Ali’s accomplishments and extend best wishes to him and his family.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 307**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas Anita Fraser of Brookside was originally hired by Hansard Reporting Services in February 1988, when Legislative Television was created in 1991 with the support of the Hon. Arthur Donahoe, and Anita was one of the original employees; and

Whereas Anita has seen many changes since those early years, both in government and at the House of Assembly, where she had the privilege of working for LTV's first director, Donald Ledger, until he retired in the early 2000s, originally employed by LTV as an administrative assistant, with graphic design added to Anita's duties in the early 2000s until July 2013; and

Whereas Anita created many segments for air, including those on Joseph Howe, the Lieutenant Governor, Premiers of Nova Scotia, Symbols of Nova Scotia, Black History Month, and MLA information pages, and also designed the LTV logo in 1991;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Anita on her many contributions during her 25-year career in public service and wish her well in her retirement.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 308**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas Craig Durling and Dave Gallant started a group called BLT Runners in 2016; and

Whereas every Monday evening and Tuesday morning a large group of dedicated runners gather to run the BLT Rails to Trails; and

Whereas the following BLT runners all ran the 5K Epic Canadian in July, 2016 - Scott Keeping, Cathy Macphee, Danielle Marchand, Christine Sands Shulba, Wendy Boutilier, Riley Chamberlain, Harm Geurs, Laureen Hansford, Heather Hudson Travis, Natalie Scully, Danica Scully, Tracy Belliveau, Lori Gilbert, Amber Collins-Grimmer, Kim Field, Cari Barnes, and Meredith Chamberlin;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly acknowledge the leadership of Craig Durling and David Gallant for bringing neighbours together and fostering a healthy lifestyle, and encouraging all participants to continue to utilize the impressive Rails to Trails system that surrounds them.

**RESOLUTION NO. 309**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas Denise Logan of Terence Bay began her career with the provincial Government of Nova Scotia in September, 1981; and

Whereas Denise has worked in a number of positions for the Province of Nova Scotia over the years and developed strong skills in research, policy development, strategic planning, project management, and community outreach; and

Whereas on September 16, 2016, Denise celebrated 35 years as a civil servant with the Province of Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing Denise's commitment and dedication to serving the people of Nova Scotia, and wish her continued success and happiness in the future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 310**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas the Macdonald Memorial Legion Lakeside Branch 156 serves the communities throughout Beechville, Lakeside, and Timberlea by hosting events and celebrations such as the Remembrance Day Service that bring residents together and builds a strong sense of community; and

Whereas membership in the Legion is generally in decline, Branch 156 relies heavily on some of their long-time volunteers who consistently step up to the plate to ensure that the Macdonald Memorial Legion Lakeside Branch 156 stays current and meets the need of community; and

Whereas the Executive for the Macdonald Memorial Legion Lakeside Branch 156 is comprised of the following individuals - Calvin Boylan, President; Cathy McCulloch, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President; Larry Marriott, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President; Ann Marie Smith, Treasurer; Tammy Chouinard, Secretary; David Smith, Service Officer; Mike Shea, Sergeant-at-Arms; Blanche Boylan, Sick and Visiting; Myrna Nicholson, Membership; and Eric Morrison, Poppy Chairman;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing the significant contribution made to the community by the Legion, and thank those named above for their steadfast service.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 311**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas Melina MacNeil has taught overseas in underdeveloped countries and has welcomed many students from all over the world into her home in Beechville; and

Whereas Melina has taught at Riverview Rural High School, Queen Elizabeth High School, Musquodoboit Rural High School, and currently at Sir John A. MacDonald High School, where she strives to be creative and fun with the curriculum she delivers to ensure that students learn to be lifelong learners; and

Whereas the subjects Melina has taught include science, mathematics, chemistry, human biology, food science, and biology, to well over 2,000 students;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking Ms. MacNeil for her spirit of generosity to people from different backgrounds, and for her dedication to her students over the years.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 312**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas Ralph Wheadon was a long-time employee with DNR and the Chief at the Lewis Lake Fire Department for many years and builder of the Lewis Lake Fire Road; and

Whereas Ralph knows well the lands of the Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area and is known by many as a mentor and strong promoter of the beauty of the lands and waters of this pristine area; and

Whereas on Saturday, June 25, 2016, a ceremony was held to rename a portion of the Lewis Lake Fire Road as it runs through the wilderness area to the Ralph Wheadon Trail;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Ralph and thanking him for his stewardship of this valuable community asset.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 313**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas the Movember Foundation is committed to help stop men dying too young, and the Movember Foundation is committed to raising awareness about men's health issues and their effect on fathers, sons, brothers, uncles, husbands and boyfriends across Canada and in the world; and

Whereas during this month, Movember encourages men to grow a moustache for 30 days or commit to move or host in an effort to promote and raise awareness of prostate cancer, testicular cancer, poor mental health, and suicide prevention; and

Whereas together Mo Bros and Mo Sistas start conversations about men's health, raise much-needed funds for research and projects, and dedicate themselves to the appreciation of moustachery to help stop men dying too young;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing the Movember Foundation for their work in raising awareness of men's health issues.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 314**

By: Mr. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas the Whites Lake Legion, Branch 153, serves the communities along the Prospect Road by hosting events and celebrations such as the Remembrance Day service and the annual seniors' dinner, which brings residents together and builds a strong sense of community; and

Whereas membership in the Legion is generally in decline, and Branch 153 relies heavily on some of their long-time volunteers who consistently step up to the plate to ensure that the Whites Lake Legion stays current and meets the needs of community; and

Whereas the executive for the White Lake Legion is comprised of the following individuals: Robert Purdy, president; Keith Pike, treasurer; Dale Pike, 1<sup>st</sup> vice and bar and kitchen manager; Gary Cullen, 2<sup>nd</sup> vice; Rhoda Mitchel, secretary; and Directors Craig Findley and Peggy and Art Gilbert;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing the significant contribution made to the community by the Legion and thank those named above for their steadfast service.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 315**

By: Mr. Andrew Younger (Dartmouth East)

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

Whereas Bernie Shultz is a dedicated community member who commits himself to multiple community initiatives, such as the Last House on the Block Society, which he and his wife Nancy founded; and

Whereas on November 30, 2016, Mr. Shultz will celebrate his 19<sup>th</sup> year of sobriety, an achievement he uses to publicly support and inspire the efforts of others in overcoming challenges;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Bernie Shultz on both his personal and volunteer commitments and successes and wish him all the best in the future.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 316**

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 Timothy Richard Murphy was born in Gold River, Nova Scotia, on January 18, 1892; and

Whereas Timothy answered his country's call to serve in the name of freedom as part of the 25<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Canadian Infantry, in the First World War; and

Whereas Private Timothy Richard Murphy made the ultimate sacrifice in the Battle of Vimy Ridge on April 8, 1917, on behalf of his country;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join in me in posthumously thanking Timothy Richard Murphy for his sacrifice in our country's effort to preserve the rights and freedoms that we enjoy today.