



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Third Session

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2016

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2016

Sixty-second General Assembly

Third Session

1:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Mr. Gordon Wilson, Mr. Keith Irving

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

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction first?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. HOUSTON: Seated in the west gallery today we have Fire Chief Joe MacDonald from Barneys River, well-known to many members of this House if they read the news very much, but he is a dedicated community person, compassionate about safer highways. With him we have his lovely wife Laura.

I'll ask them both to stand and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition that calls on the government to twin a certain stretch of highway and, specifically, to come up with a plan to do that over five years. The petition reads:

Stephen MacNeil [sic] - Twin Trans Canada Highway 104 from Sutherlands River to Antigonish. There has been 15 deaths and 343 accidents on this stretch of untwinned highway since 2009. This dangerous stretch of highway needs a plan to be twinned within the next 5 years with the extension of and onto the Canso Causeway to completely twin the Trans Canada Highway in Mainland Nova Scotia. Anything less is not acceptable.

They are calling on the Premier to twin that stretch of the Trans-Canada, and the petition has been signed by 6,543 people. There is an online version that has over 8,000 signatures. I have affixed my signature to it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: I'll take the petition under advisement and report back to the House after I've had a chance to review the prayer.

The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret's.

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction, please?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Thank you. I would like to take the opportunity to introduce a very special group in southwestern Nova Scotia, and we also have a representative from Halifax, the Campaign to Protect Offshore Nova Scotia. I would ask each one to stand up as I introduce them: Marilyn Keddy, Connie Duchene, Marion Moore, and Robin Tress.

I would ask the members of this House to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave - and I'll read the operative clause to the petition:

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia to instruct the Government of Nova Scotia to initiate steps to reform the appointment and decision-making processes of the CNSOPB, so that Nova Scotians' socio-

economic interests, as well as the health of the offshore fisheries and marine life are not at risk as a result of offshore drilling activity.

There are 801 signatures, Mr. Speaker, and I have affixed my signature to the petition.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a report, the Annual Report of the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'll get the honourable minister to hold that, it falls under the next item of business.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Law Amendments, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bill:

Bill No. 22 - Halifax Regional Water Commission Act.

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

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

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

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

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I know you come here with lots of exuberance and energy, so you've gotten ahead of yourself, but I do beg leave to table the Annual Report of the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation.

MR. SPEAKER: We'll chat later.

The report is tabled.

The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the Standing Committee on Economic Development Annual Report for 2016.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 355

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

Whereas Hector MacNeil has been a long-time community advocate, educator, Gaelic cultural tradition-bearer, and supporter of Gaels and the Gaelic language learners in and outside the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Hector MacNeil was instrumental in supporting the creation and establishment of the Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia and the Christmas Island Festival, taught Gaelic language at Cape Breton University, served as Gaelic director at the Gaelic College in St. Ann's Cape Breton, and coordinated and taught Gaelic language and cultural expression programs in Gaelic communities around the province; and

Whereas in July 2015, the Ceilidh House at the Gaelic College was dedicated to Hector for his dedicated work on behalf of Gaels and the Gaelic language and culture in the province;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Hector MacNeil, a Nova Scotia Gael, for his ability to inspire others to learn the Gaelic language and for his spirit of sharing.

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 Finance and Treasury Board.

RESOLUTION NO. 356

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

Whereas Seumas Watson, a manager of interpretation at the Nova Scotia Highland Village Museum, has been nominated for a Scottish Gaelic award for his efforts to maintain, grow, and preserve the Gaelic heritage; and

Whereas Saumas Watson has taught the Gaelic language, recorded many elders in the Gaels' community, developed teaching materials and published research about Nova Scotia's Gaelic culture, and has initiated and been involved in numerous Gaelic development initiatives and programs, such as Am Bràighe Gaelic newspaper, the Gaelic Folkways School, Gaelic in community language learning, and Bun is Bàrr Master Apprentice cultural learning through language program; and

Whereas Seumas Watson's nomination acknowledges his extensive work over many decades for Gaels as a people, through their language, and attendant cultural expression in Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Seumas Watson for receiving this prestigious nomination and for all his work on behalf of Gaels in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: I would like to do an introduction, if I could, first.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. WHALEN: We are joined in the east gallery by a number of individuals who are here today who worked on the Public Navigator project, which was led by the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia to increase access to justice. I would ask that they would rise as I introduce them so that we can give them a warm welcome. Here from the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia is Heather de Berdt Romilly, the executive director. She is joined by Wendy Turner, manager of legal information services. With them are some of the very important supporters and volunteers of the project: Tina Connors, Krista Garber, Larry Power, Julien Matte, Robert Street, Josh Skaarup, Joe Giles, Ollando Brown, Dominic Collie, Gilroy Gordon, Tapiwa Munyanyi, and Sue Street - and one more, the Eastlink representative on the group, Rob Curley. I would ask the members of the House to give this group a very warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

RESOLUTION NO. 357

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

Whereas the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia is a community-based charitable organization that provides information and resources about our justice system to thousands of Nova Scotians each year, and has provided these services since 1982; and

Whereas in Spring 2016, the society launched the Public Navigator project, an important pilot project to help the ever-increasing number of self-represented litigants navigate the justice system, through the provision of legal information and resources; and

Whereas this pilot has received both national and local recognition as a ground-breaking, new initiative, receiving support from the Chief Justice of Nova Scotia and winning the Law Day Award from the Canadian Bar Association's Nova Scotia Branch;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly recognize the outstanding contributions that the members of the Public Navigator Project are making to ensure that Nova Scotians have the tools that they need to navigate our justice system and commend them for their work on such an important access to justice initiative.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Immigration.

RESOLUTION NO. 358

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

Whereas high school students from across Canada have been gathering each Fall for a national debating seminar; and

Whereas last week I had the pleasure of opening the Canadian Student Debating Federation's 50th annual national debating seminar at Pier 21 hosted by the Nova Scotia Debating Society and Middleton Regional High School; and

Whereas the organizers of this year's national debating seminar chose "Immigration/Emigration: Then and Now" as the theme of this year's tournament, sparking lively debate about increased immigration, welcoming refugees, and retaining international students.

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature congratulate the Nova Scotia Debating Society and Middleton Regional High School for hosting an excellent tournament, and congratulate all participants.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Business.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I beg your permission to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to the east gallery where we are joined today by Dr. Patricia Bradshaw. I'd ask Patricia to stand. Dr. Bradshaw is the Dean of the Sobey School of Business at Saint Mary's University, Atlantic Canada's largest business school. Saint Mary's University is well on its way to its goal of being the university of choice for aspiring citizens of the world. I'd ask my colleagues in the Legislature to give Dr. Bradshaw a warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Business.

RESOLUTION NO. 359

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

Whereas the Sobey School of Business at Saint Mary's University delivers top-quality graduates every year, and is an important asset to both Nova Scotia's academic and business communities; and

Whereas the school has shown leadership and initiative by being the first post-secondary facility of business in North America to undergo a rigorous evaluation by the Business School Impact System, which measures economic, social, and cultural impact on the local environment; and

Whereas that evaluation found that each year the Sobey School of Business creates \$329 million in economic impact, helps 250 international students find their first job in our region, and 45 per cent of graduates stay right here to work;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature offer the Sobey School of Business at Saint Mary's University congratulations on its accomplishments, and wish it the best of success with future graduating classes.

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: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. GLAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Joining us in the gallery today is Dr. Christine Chambers from the Centre for Pediatric Pain Research at the IWK Health Centre. She is here with her children, Curtis and Ryan Simms, and if they would stand and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 360

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

Whereas poorly-managed pain in children is a serious health problem that results in unnecessary suffering and long-term negative effects; and

Whereas the social media campaign “It Doesn’t Have to Hurt,” led by Dr. Christine Chambers from the Centre for Pediatric Pain Research and Erica Ehm from the Yummy Mummy Club, helps parents obtain critical research and helpful information on managing their child’s pain; and

Whereas it can take up to 17 years for research findings to translate into improvements in clinical care, but social media can get the information parents need in a timely manner;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature thank Dr. Christine Chambers and Erica Ehm for their initiative, success, and ongoing efforts to reduce children’s suffering.

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 the Public Service Commission.

RESOLUTION NO. 361

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

Whereas November 2nd was Take Our Kids to Work Day, a day when Grade 9 students across Canada take part in job shadowing and learn more about the world of work; and

Whereas several civil servants brought their sons, daughters, other family members, and friends to our workplace so that they could learn more about government and how government operates, including a meeting with the Premier at the Legislature; and

Whereas government encourages young people to think about careers in the civil service and provides opportunities through summer jobs, co-ops, internships, and entry-level positions;

Therefore be it resolved that the government is committed to helping Nova Scotia's young people learn more about working in the civil service and the many career opportunities they have here at home, both now and in the future.

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 Environment.

RESOLUTION NO. 362

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, the MLA for Preston-Dartmouth, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Vintage Cuvee Rose 2013 from L'Acadie Vineyards was awarded the bronze medal ranking by the National Wine Awards of Canada for 2016; and

Whereas L'Acadie Vineyards has been producing award-winning wines since its inception in 2004, while honouring the rich Acadian heritage of the Gaspereau Valley and pioneering organic wine production to great acclaim; and

Whereas this year marks the award's 16th Anniversary and includes over 1,500 nominations from 230 different wineries across the country;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating L'Acadie Vineyards and its Vintage Cuvee Rose 2013 on this recognition of their excellent product and for continuing to contribute to the growth of the wine industry in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. REGAN: Thank you. Clearly we were saving the best for last.

I would direct the honourable members' attention to the east gallery, where we are joined today by some of the participants in Nova Scotia's first-ever Workplace Mental Health and PTSD Conference. I would ask these folks to stand as I mention their names.

We're joined today by Chief Jean Michel Blais of the HRP; Starr Dobson of the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia; Dr. John Whalen, a psychologist; Christine Penney, our executive director of Occupational Health and Safety at Labour and Advanced Education; and Gail Keeping, who is the project lead at LAE who organized this meeting.

I would like the honourable members to give them the warm welcome of the House.
(Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 363

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

Whereas this week Nova Scotia held its first Workplace Mental Health and PTSD Conference, hosted by the province, the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia, and the Tema Conter Memorial Trust, which was attended by more than 180 participants; and

Whereas the room was filled with first responders, government staff, mental health professionals, educators, and community advocates, all talking about the importance of workplace mental health and discussing ways to increase awareness, decrease stigma, and create positive outcomes for emergency and first responders; and

Whereas all those involved have shown persistent dedication to improving mental health wellness for the people of Nova Scotia and were an integral part of this week's conference;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in thanking these individuals, as well as all those involved in planning the conference, for their hard work and expertise, and for helping us take positive steps forward on our journey to better workplace mental health wellness, especially for the dedicated members of our first responder communities.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. GLAVINE: Over the past 15 years the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation has played a crucial role in our strong and growing health research community. I want to recognize two key people involved in that today. Could they please rise as I introduce them so they may receive the warm welcome of this House: Marli MacNeil, who is executive director of Innovation and Collaboration; and George Collier, acting director of programs. I would ask members to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 364

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

Whereas Nova Scotia recognizes the important role that skilled trades and technology play in promoting the growth of our businesses and communities, and in providing opportunities for our young workers; and

Whereas government and industry are working together to break down barriers for apprentices, improving access to training and to the many rewarding opportunities that exist here in the province; and

Whereas National Skilled Trades and Technology Week is an opportunity for all of us - government, employers, industry, educators, and parents - to reach out to our youth and encourage them to consider skilled trades and technology careers as first-rate options;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize the contribution of skilled trades and technology in providing opportunities for our youth and helping to move our province forward.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 62 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 18 of the Acts of 1998. The Municipal Government Act, and Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008. The Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. (Hon. Zach Churchill)

Bill No. 63 - Entitled an Act Respecting Osteopaths. (Hon. Christopher d'Entremont)

Bill No. 64 - Entitled an Act to Reduce Food Waste and Hunger. (Mr. Andrew Younger)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

GODFREY, RILEY: TATTOO BAND - SELECTION CONGRATS.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Riley Godfrey of Springhill on being selected as one of 20 cadets from across the province to make up the Cadets Canada Band that performed at the 2016 International Tattoo in Halifax. With performers coming from as far away as New Zealand, Switzerland, and Germany, to participate, being selected is a credit to Riley's talent as a bagpiper. Amazingly, he has only been piping for three and a half years.

It's a true pleasure to congratulate Riley on being selected for the Tattoo Band and I wish him all success in his future endeavours. Thank you.

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

**ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS (SOUTHWESTERN N.S.)
- OFFSHORE PROTECTION**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud some amazing environmental activists who are active in my constituency and throughout southwestern Nova Scotia. The campaign to protect offshore Nova Scotia was born out of the Council of Canadians, and has been working to make sure that the value of our environment is fully considered in our decisions regarding our oceans and natural resources.

Recently they have been in contact with my office to discuss the importance of the environmental assessment process as it is related to offshore drilling. Its members are doing everything they can to ensure that the decision-making boards and bodies are diverse and made up of individuals with environmental expertise outside of the offshore petroleum industry.

It is inspiring to see them champion fair processes that add legitimacy to project proposals and public consultation. Their time and efforts should be celebrated. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction first.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. DIAB: Mr. Speaker, with us in the Speaker's Gallery today is Mr. Charlie Fowler, about whom I will be reading a Member's Statement shortly.

Accompanying Mr. Fowler is his daughter, Bev Charlton, and his son-in-law, Patrick Charlton, and five representatives from the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron: Kevin Hurd, General Manager; David Stanfield, Commodore-elect; Mikela Sani, Communications; Ron Meagher, Past Rear Commodore, and his son Connell Meagher; and the Honourable George Archibald, Past Commodore, who also served as a member of this great House of Assembly from 1984 to 1999 and a former Cabinet Minister.

I'd ask them to wave so they can all receive the warm welcome of the House of Assembly. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

FOWLER, CHARLES: ACCOMPLISHMENTS - CONGRATS.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the accomplishments of Mr. Charles Fowler, whom I had the pleasure of meeting recently on

the occasion of his 70th year of membership in the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron. Mr. Fowler, an avid sailor, was a founding member of the Saraguay Club and was integral to the yacht squadron's founding.

He is a proud Haligonian, Dalhousie graduate, father and grandfather, and his expertise in architecture and engineering have made a monumental impact on our city's development. From the Macdonald Bridge to the Rebecca Cohn his firm, like his father's before it, has left a lasting mark on Atlantic Canada. Indeed, the Nova Scotia Association of Architects bestowed its inaugural Keystone Award on Mr. Fowler for the countless feats of his distinguished career.

I would like to thank Vice-Commodore Suzanne Shaw for inviting me to attend Mr. Fowler's ceremony, and ask all members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating him on his numerous achievements, and wish him a very happy and healthy upcoming 96th birthday.

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

ATL. CDN. DACHSHUND RESCUE: ORGANIZATION - EFFORTS

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, founded in 2012, the Atlantic Canadian Dachshund Rescue grabbed headlines this past September when they rescued 19 miniature dachshunds from a New Brunswick location.

A lot of time, effort, coordination, collaboration, and of course a little bit of hugs, went into rehoming, fostering, and rehabilitating these pups. This is just one of the stories that Middle Stewiacke resident and president of ACDR and her colleagues Shanna MacDonald, Paula Romanow, Leah MacNeill, Heather Corran, and Lanzner, could share in their mission to help homeless dachshunds in all of the Atlantic Provinces find new homes.

I wish to acknowledge the efforts of this all-volunteer rescue organization as they continue their work to educate the public on this breed and responsible pet ownership, while rehabilitating and rehoming their rescues.

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

NATL. TRUTH & RECONCILIATION COMMN.: CALL TO ACTION - CONSIDER

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: The national Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 23rd Call to Action reads as follows:

“We call upon all levels of government to:

- i. Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health-care field.
- ii. Ensure the retention of Aboriginal health-care providers in Aboriginal communities.
- iii. Provide cultural competency training for all health-care professionals.”

As we continue to debate how we can improve health care in Nova Scotia, let us all consider the Call to Action. Only then can we redress the legacy of residential schools and advance reconciliation.

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

**MARSMAN-MURPHY, VERONICA:
COMMUN. COMMITMENT - RECOGNIZE**

MR. IAIN RANKIN: I would like to recognize Veronica Marsman-Murphy of Timberlea. Veronica works tirelessly as the executive director for the Akoma Family Centre. The Akoma Family Centre provides short-term residential care for children of all races and cultures. It also provides specialized Afrocentric services to meet the needs of children, youth, and families in Nova Scotia.

Veronica has been the president of the Association of Black Social Workers since 2011. As president, Veronica was instrumental in securing funding for the first full-time staff as well as securing office space for the ABSW at the Akoma Family Centre. Veronica leads by example, giving generously of her time and talents to so many causes.

I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in recognizing Veronica’s commitment to community and thank her for all that she does.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**HOUSTON, MS. PAGET:
ALL AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE CONGRESS - TOP-10 FINISH**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I am pleased to rise today to congratulate Ms. Paget Houston on finishing in the top 10 at the All American Quarter Horse Congress in Ohio. In its 50th year, the All American Quarter Horse Congress is held annually during the month of October. This year, the event had over 21,000 entries.

Paget competed in the Youth 15 to 18 Hunter Under Saddle division. This division is an English style of riding, and featured 150 competitors. Paget competed on a horse

known as The Dude Is Asleep, whose barn name is Ralph, and who had never been shown in competition before. Many hours of training and dedication by Paget were necessary to get her horse to this prestigious event.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Paget Houston on her top-10 finish at the All American Quarter Horse Congress and wish her well in future equestrian events.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

N.S. PARENTS FOR TEACHERS - STATEMENT

MS. LISA ROBERTS: I had the pleasure of hosting a media conference here at the House this morning for the non-partisan group Nova Scotia Parents for Teachers. I would like to read their statement into the record:

“By the end of November 2016, Nova Scotia may experience the first-ever work stoppage of public school teachers in our history. Ask yourself: Why would a group of 9000 teachers, never known for militancy, vote not once, but twice (the second time by 70%) to reject a bargaining settlement with the province? And why would they do that in spite of their union’s own recommendation? Note that they voted 96% for strike action. Because they’re frustrated and angry, that’s why.

Reason one: The conditions of teaching have become more difficult. Class size, class composition, and non-teaching duties have all changed, making greater demands on teachers.”

To be continued.

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

WILLIAMSON, HAROLD: SCOTCHTOWN VOL. FD - RETIREMENT CONGRATS.

MR. DAVID WILTON: Today I would like to recognize and congratulate Harold Williamson on his retirement as fire chief for the Scotchtown Volunteer Fire Department. This is a position Harold gladly accepted 20 years ago when the then-chief, his dad, retired. He was a member of the department for 46 years, even longer if you include hanging around and going on grass fire calls before he was old enough to join. He held various positions, including lieutenant, captain, and deputy chief. He was also even known to dress up as the mascot, Sparky, for the children in the area.

Please help me congratulate retired fire chief Harold Williamson and wish him the best for the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

NICHOLSON, GARETH: DETERMINATION/AMBITION - CONGRATS.

MR. JOHN LOHR: The Maritime Hockey League prides itself on providing the proper environment for its players to maintain a high standard of performance, both on the ice and off. A young man from Kentville, Gareth Nicholson, fulfilled these qualities and was awarded the MHL's Scholastic Player of the Year award in 2016.

At the time, he was a student at Saint Mary's, yet played for the South Shore Lumberjacks. He made practice every day, put in off-ice workouts, and then drove back to Halifax to attend classes. He faced two hours of travelling every day, all the while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. This commitment is a true testament to his character and willingness to reach his ambitions.

Mr. Speaker, Gareth Nicholson has since joined the Dalhousie Tigers hockey team. I congratulate Gareth Nicholson on his determination and ambition.

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

PREM.: PHYSICIAN ACCESS - SLOGAN CHANGE

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, the Premier promised a family doctor for every Nova Scotian during the 2013 election campaign. However, a couple of weeks ago, the member for Clare-Digby announced that the goal has been pushed down the road until 2026. This trial balloon - or should I say, a lead balloon - is not going over well with Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, 100,000 residents are without a family doctor. Perhaps the member for Yarmouth may wish to clarify the statement made by the member for Clare-Digby. If not, this must result in the new Liberal slogan because 2026 is too long for 100,000 Nova Scotians to wait for a family doctor.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

**FREDERICKS, ROY, SR.
- MEDAL OF LA LEGION D'HONNEUR - PRESENTATION**

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, most of us in this House have heard of the National Order of the Legion of Honour, the highest order for military and civil merits in France. Several years ago the French Government extended this honour to Canadian

veterans who participated in the liberation of France during World War II. Inductees become chevaliers, the French equivalent of a knight.

On Thanksgiving weekend I attended, as the Speaker of the House of Commons presented Bedford resident Roy Fredericks, Sr. with the Medal of la Légion d'Honneur. Like many of his fellow World War II vets, Mr. Fredericks is now in his 90s, his wife, their three children, and friends and family were able to be there with him, as were members of the Bedford Legion, and our local councillor, Tim Outhit.

Roy is modest about his role in the liberation of France. He no longer wears his medals, they have been framed, but now he has the distinctive five-point star medal to add to them, and I have to say, I'm looking forward to referring to him as Sir Roy, the next time I see him.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MACKAY, ROGER: WESTVILLE MAYOR - RE-ELECTION CONGRATS.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate my friend Roger MacKay on his re-election as the Mayor for the Town of Westville, and also to congratulate the town on receiving a gold Workplace Wellness Award from the Association of Municipal Administrators.

Under Roger's guidance, Westville has put in place a flexible work schedule to allow employees to incorporate physical activity into their day, by adding an extra half hour of break time. They've also participated in different fitness and wellness challenges, and provided mental health first aid to managers, along with other wellness initiatives. A proactive initiative promoting wellness in the workplace benefits the employer and the employees.

I am privileged to have my office in the Westville Civic Building, and to work alongside forward-thinking individuals like Mayor Roger MacKay.

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

AL ALI, IBRAHIM - BIRTHDAY WISHES

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to your attention a very special birthday. Less than a year ago Ibrahim Al Ali, originally from Syria, was living with his mother Fatima, and his father Abdulaziz, as refugees in Turkey. Then a group of dedicated volunteers joined together on the South Shore of Nova Scotia to form the Starfish Refugee Project. Through this group's incredible volunteer efforts, Ibrahim and his family are now safely living in our Province of Nova Scotia.

Ibrahim, also called Brian, hopes to become a pharmacist, and will most certainly be a proud, new citizen of Canada. On this coming Monday, November 7, 2016, Ibrahim will celebrate his 20th Birthday in his new home community here in Nova Scotia, with more than 50 volunteers who are having a potluck birthday party to celebrate.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all of us here at Province House, I add my best wishes for a Happy Birthday and a safe, long and productive life in Canada. Thank you.

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

MACKEIGAN, BOB: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, the Strait region suffered a great loss on August 19th with the passing of Bob MacKeigan at the age of 79. Mr. MacKeigan and his young family moved to Port Hawkesbury in 1971, and started his first of many businesses, a Texaco franchise. Known as a straight-shooter and a true gentleman, Mr. MacKeigan had bigger ambitions. He contributed much to the Port Hawkesbury business community as a successful business owner, early developer of what is now known as the Port Hawkesbury Business Park, and as a proponent of the Shop Local movement. Bob was very dedicated to the concepts of customer service and of surrounding himself with the best people and employees he could find. His dedication can still be felt at his car dealerships in Port Hawkesbury, Canso Ford, Gateway Hyundai, and Tri Mac Toyota. Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating the life of a businessman who made a true difference in his community, and who will be sorely missed.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

BOUDREAU, JOE/BIONOVATIONS INC. TEAM: WORK - THANK

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, BioNovations Inc. is a small Antigonish business with a big idea. They want to revolutionize the way we transport lobster to overseas markets. You see, 90 per cent of lobster exports leaving our region for overseas markets are not shipped live, but frozen. Many of us as Nova Scotians know there's just no comparison between a fresh and frozen lobster, and the growing demand for live lobster overseas is evidenced by importers of our lobsters who are beginning to think the same thing. BioNovations Inc. CEO Joe Boudreau has been in the fishing industry for 40 years and began the business after noticing a gap in live lobster transportation options himself. The company's stackable, temperature-controlled, filtered transport tanks not only provide an efficient option to transport live lobster overseas but also reduce the number of times each lobster has to be handled, therefore reducing stress and mortality rates for the lobster.

So, I ask my colleagues in the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Joe Boudreau and the entire BioNovations Inc. team on all of their hard work and success today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**LANDRY, JENNA/WORRELL, SOPHIA:
HOCKEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place to recognize two outstanding female hockey players from New Glasgow, Jenna Landry and Sophia Worrell. They recently played for the Nova Scotia Under-18 female team that won gold at the 21st Atlantic Challenge Cup. Landry is a rookie net minder in the Northern Subway Selects Midget AAA team, and she was between the pipes when Nova Scotia defeated Prince Edward Island 7 to 1, and New Brunswick 7 to 4, in the tournament's semi-final game. Sophia, playing defence for Nova Scotia, scored an important goal with a hard shot from the point. The tournament brought together 320 young hockey players for the 21st Atlantic Challenge Cup. Over the years, this tournament has featured current NHL stars Sidney Crosby and Nathan MacKinnon. I would ask all members of this Legislature to join me in congratulating Jenna and Sophie for wearing the Hockey Nova Scotia jerseys and proudly representing our province in an elite tournament. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

PARENTS FOR TEACHERS: FACEBOOK - VISIT

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, time and the rules of the House won't allow me to enter the entire statement of Nova Scotia Parents for Teachers into the record, but I encourage all members to visit their Facebook site to read it for themselves. What struck me most about their presentation this morning is how they are crystal-clear about the burden that a strike of public school teachers would place on them with the cost of child care, and the great disruption to their lives, however, they said, "a work stoppage will certainly inconvenience us. But 'business as usual' already hurts us and cannot be tolerated. And we are willing to shoulder the aggravation to help our teachers". Thank you very much.

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

**HART, TONY/DODGE, MIKE:
HEART & STROKE FDN. - FUNDRAISING**

MR. BILL HORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge two Fall River volunteer firefighters from Station 45 who raised \$460 for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Tony Hart and Mike Dodge completed the 10-kilometre portion of the Blue Nose Marathon in full turnout gear. They were motivated by wanting to promote living a healthy and active lifestyle, which is a major component in preventing heart disease and stroke. The two felt running was a great way to highlight how important it is to stay fit and healthy. Join me in thanking these two volunteer firefighters for raising \$460 for the Heart

and Stroke Foundation, and all the volunteer firefighters for their important job they do protecting our communities. Thank you.

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

C.B. FARMER'S EX.: ORGANIZERS/PARTICIPANTS - THANK

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate the staff, organizers, and participants of the centennial year of the Cape Breton Farmer's Exhibition held in North Sydney. The crowd-pleasing attractions such as animal barns, horse shows, 4-H Club displays, horticultural displays, entertainment, petting zoo, and a midway, have lived up to all expectations. We even had a special performance by Cape Breton's own Men of the Deeps, who celebrated 50 years in performing this year. A very big hats off to the army of people who made the exhibition a raging success for the past 100 years. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

STEVENS, GORDON: CITY HARVEST CELEBRATION - CONGRATS.

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Gordon Stevens of I Love Local Halifax on yet another successful City Harvest celebration this past Saturday, October 22nd. This year's events marked the fifth annual City Harvest celebration, which is a full counterpart to the very successful Open City event held every May.

This year, nearly 60 local businesses across HRM took part in the City Harvest. From great deals on local furniture, clothing, and goods to art demonstrations and how-to-make-kimchi workshops, to pumpkin pie gelato, vegan tacos, and doughnut ice cream sandwiches, there was something to do for everyone at the City Harvest. The rainy weather did little to dampen the enthusiasm of Haligonians, a testament to amazing local businesses we are so lucky to have here in Halifax.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Gordon Stevens for all his work promoting local small businesses with I Love Local Halifax, and congratulate him once again on another successful City Harvest celebration.

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

DÉCORATION DE L'ORDRE DE LA PLÉIADE - RÉCIPENDAIRES

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Neuf Néo-Écossais ont reçu la décoration de l'Ordre de la Pléiade en 2016. Deux des récipiendaires de ce prestigieux prix

sont Bernice d'Entremont de Pubnico-Ouest, et Cyrille LeBlanc de Wedgeport, tous deux dans ma circonscription.

Bernice d'Entremont a consacré sa vie à la promotion de la langue et de l'histoire des Acadiens de la région. Elle est actuellement directrice du Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos.

Cyrille LeBlanc a travaillé sans relâche pour assurer la survie du seul journal francophone en Nouvelle-Écosse, et a activement fait la promotion de la communauté acadienne de la région et de la province.

Nous sommes ravis d'avoir des personnes d'un tel calibre qui se sont distinguées dans le passé, et qui poursuivent leur important travail dans la communauté acadienne et ailleurs.

Nine Nova Scotians have received the decoration of the l'Ordre de la Pléiade for 2016. Two recipients of this prestigious award were Bernice d'Entremont of West Pubnico, and Cyrille LeBlanc of Wedgeport, in my constituency.

Bernice d'Entremont has devoted her life to the promotion of the language and history of the Acadians of the region. She is currently the director of the Musées des Acadiens des Pubnico.

Cyrille LeBlanc has worked tirelessly to ensure the survival of the only French newspaper in Nova Scotia and has actively promoted the Acadian community of the region and province.

We are delighted to have members of such high quality who have distinguished themselves in the past and have continued their important work for our Acadian communities and elsewhere.

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

**EL-CID, ANTHONY: FASHION NIGHT IN HFX.
- CO-ORGANIZATION RECOGNIZE**

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: I would like to recognize local fashion designer Anthony El-Cid on co-organizing a very successful event last month, Fashion Night in Halifax.

The black-tie gala, in support of the scholarship program run by the Metro Care and Share Society, included a lovely cocktail reception, live auction, and sit-down meal. The grand finale was the runway show featuring the 2016 collection from the talented designer.

I was honoured to be able to introduce Anthony and his breathtaking new collection.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Mr. El-Cid along with the Metro Care and Share Society for organizing this event, which has a direct impact on the educational future of some of our city's at-risk youth. A thank you as well to all of the volunteers who spent countless hours helping with all aspects of the event - I'm already looking forward to next year.

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

**KENNEDY, TOM & LINDA: BEGGAR'S BANQUET
- FAVOURITE TOURIST ATTRACTION**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: I rise today to congratulate Tom and Linda Kennedy of Louisbourg, who own and operate the Beggar's Banquet.

The Beggar's Banquet was recently one of the winners in the category of favourite tourist attraction given out at the Sydney and Area Chamber of Commerce Excellence in Business Awards. Tom and Linda are very proud of this award, and it is indeed well-deserved. The Beggar's Banquet is an 18th Century dining experience that is very well received by all who attend this feast. You dress in period costume, you eat period food, and you enjoy period entertainment.

I rise today to thank Linda and Tom, and all of their staff at the Beggar's Banquet, and wish them every success as they continue to excel in this unique tourist experience.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

EVENTS LUN. CO.: WORK - THANK

HON. MARK FUREY: I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a hard-working group of volunteers in my community.

Events Lunenburg County have been working incredibly hard to showcase Lunenburg County and Nova Scotia as a location worthy of hosting national and international events.

Over the summer, at a press conference held at the Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre, it was announced that Bridgewater was the successful bidder in hosting the 2018 Esso Cup thanks to the work done behind the scenes by Events Lunenburg County.

I think that many of us forget how much it takes to put these proposals together, determine coordination, and gather letters of support to show community backing.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Events Lunenburg County for the work they have done, and continue to do, to promote our community.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

PREM.: TEACHERS BARGAINING - PARENTS' CONCERNS

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, parents are now speaking out about the Premier's impasse with Nova Scotia's teachers. A group of parents was here at the Legislature earlier today, and they have a message for the Premier. As Kate Irving, a Halifax mother of two children, says that parents want to be heard. We are the experts in our own children's well-being.

Parents want the Premier to get back to the table and work out his differences with Nova Scotia's teachers, so I ask the Premier, will he listen to the parents of the province and get back to the bargaining table and work out his differences with teachers before the strike deadline hits?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question, and I want to thank the parents who are here today. We share their concerns. We want to see teachers in front of students, where I believe they want to be. It's why we agreed to go to the conciliation board, but teachers said no.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, if he shared parents' concerns, he would tell them that it was his government that said no. The only ones who wrote to the Labour and Advanced Education Minister asking for conciliation were teachers. That's why parents are worried about a strike. They worry about who will look after their kids if they can't go to school. They worry about how they will get to work when their kids are at home.

As Kate Irving says, I am deeply concerned about what is going on in our classrooms. A work stoppage will certainly inconvenience us, but business as usual hurts us more. They are most worried about what is going on in their classrooms.

Will the Premier listen to the voices of parents and bring forward new, real classroom reforms before the strike deadline hits?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. We, too, share the concerns of those parents. It's why, from the very beginning of coming into government, we continued to invest in classrooms, ensured that we hired

more teachers and reduced class cap sizes, and hired math and literacy mentors and mental health clinicians.

We know there's more work to do in classrooms. That's why we've continued to invest in classrooms every budget. We'll continue to do more. We've reached out; teachers are reaching out to us to explain some of the data issues that they're being asked to collect and other issues that are being put on classroom teachers. The minister is engaging our partners.

We'll respond to those, but those are not collective bargaining issues. As the honourable member would know, teachers brought to the bargaining table a deal that we virtually accepted, and then their membership rejected it.

MR. BAILLIE: Parents are now demanding to be heard, not lectured to, by their Premier. That is the problem.

Tina Roberts-Jeffers was also here today. She is a mom with three kids in the school system. She doesn't want to see a strike. But she makes it very clear. She said, I trust teachers more than the government.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Premier, why do parents like Tina trust teachers more than his government?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I have said many time across this province that there's no greater profession that can have a long-lasting impact on our province than teachers do every day in our classrooms. (Applause)

Every member in this House would know and can think back to their own experiences in the classroom and the education system with fond memories of teachers who had a positive impact on them. We've continued to deal with the challenges that were before us when we came into government. There was \$65 million cut out of classrooms by the former government and a 7.5 per cent pay raise. We've taken a different model. We put a 3 per cent pay raise on the table, and I want to say, it was exactly the deal that was brought to us by the Teachers Union themselves, along with their lawyer, who laid that out.

They know that when we went, we had 0 per cent, 0 per cent, 0 per cent, 1 per cent, and 1 per cent. It's important to clarify all of this. The Long Service Award - we froze it at current years and current salary. They came back and said, we want 0 per cent, 0 per cent, 1 per cent, and 2 per cent, and for the Long Service Award frozen at current years and retirement salary. We virtually agreed to what they brought to the table, and at the same time we're going to continue to focus on the classrooms.

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

PREM.: WAGE FREEZES - EFFECTS

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. The Premier is telling Nova Scotians that no one will lose a dime under this deal he is offering teachers. Since last year, the cost of groceries has increased by 1 per cent; the cost of transportation is up 3.6 per cent. A two-year wage freeze is the same as a cut.

Will the Premier acknowledge that freezing wages hurts teachers, nurses, social workers, and their families?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. If he puts it in the context of the 7.5 per cent pay raise that he provided to public servants all across, on top of when you add hours to that seven-year cycle, the cost of living would virtually be covered.

The big difference, Mr. Speaker, is that government took \$65 million away from children in classrooms.

MR. BELLIVEAU: The Premier has said that the Long Service Awards are staying intact. This is not the case for teachers entering the profession. This is not the case for those teachers with less than 10 years in the classroom. He is creating a two-tier benefit system.

Meanwhile, members of this House are eligible for publicly-funded pensions after only two years. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier admit that his statement in this House about the Long Service Awards is not accurate?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Everything that has been accumulated by public servants in the Long Service Awards will be respected and paid out. We brought to the bargaining table that we would do current years and current salary; the union brought in that they wanted current years and retirement salary. We agreed to that.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, this has been a practice in place for multiple decades. I want to speak to the 70 per cent of Nova Scotians who have no pension plan, no benefits - do we think it's right to add a bonus on top to those who are going into the best pension plans in our province? It's a balance, we need to look out for all Nova Scotians.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, the last time we saw this kind of upheaval in the education system was when students walked out of their classrooms during the John Hamm Government. The Premier keeps yelling across the floor that his position is reasonable. He

keeps telling us that he has listened to the teachers and made the necessary investments. However, he seems very reluctant to argue those points before a conciliation board.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier, if he is being reasonable, why is he not willing to make his case before the conciliation board?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the honourable member for the question. We have agreed to go before the conciliation board - it's teachers who said no.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. In the news yesterday, the mother of a resident at Emerald Hall at Mount Hope spoke about the abuse her son had endured while receiving care. She feels that it was so severe that she fears she will receive a call telling her that her son has died. Advocating Parents of Nova Scotia went so far as to call it torture tactics.

The transformation of the Nova Scotia Services for Persons with Disabilities program is said to take up to a decade to implement. That is not appropriate when dealing with issues like this one.

My question to the minister is, how widespread is this issue and how many reports of this type have been made in the last year?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: What I can tell the member, and Nova Scotians, today is that I can certainly find out the number of cases. However, I have not had any serious complaints come to the ministerial desk. We certainly took this case very seriously and immediately started an investigation.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Yesterday the minister said he did not know all the details of the report and he just basically said it again here today, but he would read it with an eye to the need for departmental policy changes. He has also said that he is more willing to work with the Advocating Parents of Nova Scotia group on these policy changes. I'm sure after the news report came out, the department worked really hard to get some information forwarded to the minister.

My question is, now that the minister has time to review the report, does he feel that this kind of abuse warrants policy changes on reporting and action taken or police intervention? Has he reached out to the Advocating Parents of Nova Scotia group yet?

MR. GLAVINE: What I need to remind the member and all looking at this case is there is actually a final report coming on November 16th.

In terms of the process that the department has, this is an area that, in sitting with the department and finding out from department members, the process has not been complained about - if you wish - challenged, so the due process is certainly advanced in all cases, and as I said yesterday and today, more than willing to take a look at policies that can improve Emerald Hall, and as we do in the department, look to improve all of our facilities across the province.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - DOCTOR SHORTAGE:
OPIOID ADDICTION CRISIS - CONTRIBUTORY**

HON. DAVID WILSON: This government was elected on a promise of a doctor for every Nova Scotian, and it is estimated there are nearly 100,000 Nova Scotians without a family doctor in our province.

Earlier last week, we heard from a family practitioner talking about how a lack of family physicians in Nova Scotia is contributing to the growing opioid addiction crisis here in Nova Scotia. Mr. Speaker, will the minister agree that his government's poor handling of the doctor shortage has contributed to the growing addiction crisis in communities across Nova Scotia?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, what the member opposite brings forward and talks about - he was minister for a while. This is not a problem that started yesterday. In fact, a little over 10 years ago, the current deputy minister who was involved with medical human resources in the province advanced a very strong warning to communities across Nova Scotia, that with the demographic of our doctors, there was a need for all involved to start a very strong initiative that there would be improvements for clinicians all across the province.

MR. DAVID WILSON: The minister is correct, that's why the previous government introduced the mental health and addictions strategy, the first for Nova Scotia. This government has been in power for over three years. There has been a doctor shortage since the minister took office, and a plan to address it has been delayed, delayed, delayed.

We're hearing from doctors who say there is a relationship between not having a doctor and the crisis we see with opioid overdoses and addiction here in Nova Scotia.

Will the minister ensure that Nova Scotians have access to a doctor? We hear from the Health Authority that communities won't be given billing numbers. Will the minister

provide what communities across Nova Scotia will not be receiving billing numbers, in order to find a doctor?

MR. GLAVINE: I thank the member for making the point. What I can tell him is that any request, any work that is required around mental health and addictions, won't sit on my desk for 10 months, like the former minister in the NDP. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM.: RICHMOND LIBERAL PARTY SCANDAL - RESPONSE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: When we heard yesterday that the Premier had done a mini-Cabinet shuffle involving the member for Cape Breton-Richmond, we thought maybe he was asking that member to step aside until the Richmond Liberal expense scandal was cleared up. But no, he has actually given that member a promotion. Richmond County taxpayers' money remains in the re-election account of the member for Cape Breton-Richmond, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to ask the Premier, why did he just give his stamp of approval to the Richmond Liberal Party scandal?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. First of all, as he would know, Elections Nova Scotia is looking into the councillors and the municipality. It has nothing to do with the Richmond County Liberal Association.

He mentioned in his preamble about a change with the responsibility of the member for Cape Breton-Richmond in terms of his responsibility for trade agreements. He has always had that responsibility, Mr. Speaker, but the signing authority rested in my Department of Intergovernmental Affairs. We have transferred that, because as he would know, our government has been aggressive on tearing down boundaries inside of Canada, that the minister goes on behalf of our government to those national meetings, he needed the ability to sign.

As you would also know, we just heard recently that CETA is being formulated and will come back into Canada where trade ministers will be meeting. It is nothing more than that. If he goes back to October 2013, the minister had the responsibility for trade.

MR. BAILLIE: The Premier can try and pretend that there's nothing to see here as long as he wants, but a forensic audit found that taxpayers' money from Richmond County now sits in the re-election account of the member for Cape Breton-Richmond. The Premier has just given that member a promotion, and the money is still there.

Will the Premier at least now ensure that that money is returned to the taxpayers of Richmond County?

THE PREMIER: At times, the honourable member should do a bit of research before he starts asking these questions. If he would go out, what happened was there were people across in Richmond County who bought tickets to an event. They were provided that receipt. Unbeknownst to anyone here, they receipted that back through the municipality. We know that's wrong; they know that's wrong. Elections Nova Scotia is investigating. Elections Nova Scotia is dealing with them and the Municipality of Richmond. To continue to make up things in this House does a disservice to himself and indeed this entire Chamber.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition on a new question.

**PREM.: P3 SCHOOLS/SCOTIA LEARNING
- LIBERAL CAMPAIGN DONATIONS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: We also know it's wrong that that money remains in the Richmond Liberal Party bank account - that's what the Premier forgot to mention.

Yesterday, the government made an \$86-million investment in the 20-year-old P3 schools that are owned by Scotia Learning, an Armoyan family company. In the last election, the Armoyan family made the following donations to members of the Liberal Cabinet - he made a \$4,000 donation to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education, and I'll table that; he made a \$3,000 donation to the Minister of Internal Services, and I will table that; he made a \$2,000 donation to the Minister of Agriculture, and I will table that; and he also made a \$2,000 donation to the Minister of Immigration.

Can the Premier confirm that all of those members of Cabinet excused themselves when this important decision was being made?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and her staff, who have been working very hard to ensure that we get good value for money across this province. When we were going across the province, her department was reaching out to the operator. As he knows, those agreements had a buyout in them at the very beginning. It wouldn't have come to Cabinet. The number was there.

What they ended up doing was looking forward and seeing if we could negotiate a lease that would be better value for the taxpayers of Nova Scotia. That lease did not show up, so the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development calculated the total cost of those schools. We sent an indication we're buying those schools. In the meantime, if they come back with a better deal before the closing date on a lease agreement, we would

look at it. But we've looked and exercised the right that was in the agreements that were signed in 1990.

MR. BAILLIE: The Liberal caucus chairman received a \$5,000 donation from Mr. Armoyan, representing more than three quarters of his entire campaign. This is why we need a conflict of interest commissioner who reports to this House who can look into these things, so that we can have assurance that that kind of heavy-duty money being donated to Liberal ministers isn't influencing these decisions.

If the Premier is so sure of the process here, will he agree now to make the conflict of interest commissioner an agent of this House and not of the government?

THE PREMIER: Again, I want to thank the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and her staff, who are working through that process. There were 12 schools where those leases - we had to notify by October 31st whether we were purchasing or entering back into a lease agreement. We exercised the right to buy those for a couple of reasons - to meet that agreement, as well as to send to those 12 communities assurances that those schools would be in place for their children in the future. Is the honourable member suggesting that we should go to those communities and close those schools?

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS:
LONG-TERM CARE FUNDING CUTS - EFFECTS**

HON. DAVID WILSON: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Yesterday at Public Accounts, the Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. Vaughan, called the 1 per cent cut to long-term care funding "an opportunity." An opportunity for who? For the government to balance their books on the backs of some of our most vulnerable Nova Scotians?

I'd like to ask the minister, does he think it's an opportunity for government to balance their books on the backs of vulnerable Nova Scotians, like the Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness indicated yesterday?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, as we know, the 132 nursing homes in the province, except for those that are owned by Shannex MacLeod Group - those have multiple homes - all of the others have operated totally independently. They have operated very differently - very different programs, different staffing arrangements.

The opportunity was about working together, working on group procurement, working on multiple homes with the same insurance agent. There are many opportunities

there, in fact, in which savings and efficiencies have been gained, and in fact, there are some great examples from the homes of a co-operative approach.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the problem is the government cut the funding to long-term care and then asked the long-term care facilities' administrators, what can we do to help you now that we've already cut, after the fiscal year has already started. They put them in a very difficult position.

There are a lot of not-for-profit, long-term care facilities across this province struggling to meet their needs of the seniors in their communities, Mr. Speaker. How can the minister continue to hide behind the cuts he made, when I have repeatedly asked the minister, the deputy, through FOIPOP information, about what the cuts were? Will the minister come clean today, and I ask, yet again, with providing us with the cuts that long-term care facilities have received in all the streams of funding they get from the government?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question and I'd like to table for the House his request that he put forward in Public Accounts Committee yesterday. What I can report to the House is that the vast majority of nursing homes have made no changes in the quality of care, the staffing levels, the quality of food.

There are about 20 of the 132 homes that we're now working with that, in fact, have found the challenge of dealing with the reduction and we'll continue to work with them, assist them, and if they have any emergencies we'll address those.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

HEALTH & WELLNESS - DART. GEN. HOSP.: SINGLE ROOMS - RECOMMENDATIONS

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Yesterday the Minister of Health and Wellness said that the use of single rooms for new construction at the Dartmouth General Hospital is something he would look at. A 2013 report to the minister's own department said that the Canadian Standards Association was already recommending single rooms. The same report said the 2006 guidelines for hospital construction stated that only single rooms should be used in new construction and the minister's department was told the Association of Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology said there is a substantial body of evidence supporting single rooms. I'll table that report, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, why is it that with all this evidence, the minister needs to look at this, and that the decision just simply isn't obvious?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, across the province, our 36 hospitals, we will find a high standard of infection control. There are units that have the ability to handle two

patients, there are some four-patient units. We've done a marvellous job in correcting the problems at Dartmouth General. I know when construction starts on the fifth floor in the Spring, it will have the highest standard of infection control.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, I don't dispute the fact that improvements were made on the third and fourth floors, which were renovations, and you had to use the existing space. We're talking about the new construction, and the minister's report - he had that well before his own staff were pushing for revenue opportunities in that hospital over what was recommended by consultants, and repeated studies for infection control.

In fact, as early as 2008, the Department of Health and Wellness was told that single rooms would improve patient flow, occupancy rates, safety, and reduce infection rates. Even the analysis of outbreaks at Capital Health said that single rooms would have solved the problem.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister commit today that the Dartmouth General Hospital expansion will be done using primarily single rooms, as recommended by consultants, and an increasingly enormous body of research?

MR. GLAVINE: I know the design of the fifth floor, and the entire construction, is now getting to its final stage. After the issue they had on the third and fourth floors, what I can tell the member opposite, and all associated with the Dartmouth General Hospital, is that the highest standard of infection control will be in place in both the fifth floor surgical towers and the ambulatory care centre. I can tell the member and all here that they are extremely excited about the future of the Dartmouth General Hospital.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MUN. AFFS.: RICHMOND EXPENSE AUDIT - CLARIFICATION

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Recently in this House the minister has made conflicting statements regarding the expense audit in Richmond County. On one occasion he stated that he had ordered the audit: "I want to make it clear that that forensic audit happened because of actions taken by this government . . ." and that his department had been very involved. On another occasion he stated that he was not taking credit for the audit.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask, through you, the Minister of Municipal Affairs to clarify his position.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. The forensic audit that the municipality chose to move forward with was consistent with a recommendation that staff made to councillors involved. That was not the first recommendation that was made. The first effort we put forward was to offer to pay Ken

Meech to go in, who is an expert in financial management, to help that county deal with the financial management issues they were dealing with.

MR. LOHR: I'd like to thank the minister for that answer, Mr. Speaker. In fact the minister could have requested the audit because the Municipal Government Act of 1999 states that the minister may at any time direct an audit or a review of a municipality by a person appointed by the minister. So it's the privilege of the minister to, at any time, direct an audit.

I wish to call the minister's attention to a September 20, 2016, article, "Critics question 'extravagant' spending by Guysborough councillors and staff." This is a CBC news article, probably the most respected news organization in our country. I would like to draw the minister's attention to this article, which I will table, which includes copies of slips and receipts for purchases of alcohol. I ask the minister, will he order a forensic audit for Guysborough County?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I think it's prudent at this point to allow the Ombudsman's Office, which is an independent office that is conducting an investigation, to allow that process to proceed. In the case of Richmond the Ombudsman's Office did do a thorough investigation. There were recommendations made to the department, and we are taking those into consideration and we will do the same in the situation in Guysborough.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**MUN. AFFS.: RICHMOND SPENDING SCANDAL
- PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSE**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Last night on the news, one of the men at the centre of the Richmond spending scandal said that he felt abandoned. How about feeling some remorse?

Some of the government members, I believe, are disappointed with the member for Cape Breton-Richmond's part in all of this. Should there be an apology to Ms. Delorey for a letter threatening to have her fired? Should there be an apology to the people of Richmond for putting political friends ahead of the public that we are here to serve? Should the member apologize for dragging his Cabinet colleagues into this mess by pressuring them to ignore this problem? What does the minister think?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure how that commentary or the question relates to my department. Thank you.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, it's a hard question to answer because it pits the minister's loyalties to his colleagues and that's not an easy situation. I think it's really the same situation that is going on in Richmond - it is loyalty to the people who support you.

Mr. Speaker, if a member of this Legislature sees that something is wrong and is in a position of authority to fix it, I believe the right thing to do is to fix it. What happened in Richmond occurred because for years people were allowed to abuse their power and to control others.

Mr. Speaker, I'm tired of asking these questions, but if I stop asking them then I am no better than the people who turned away when they saw these examples of inappropriate spending and treatment of people like Ms. Delorey.

I just want to ask a simple question: Does the minister understand that?

MR. CHURCHILL: Of course I understand the concerns that have been presented by that caucus. I share many of the concerns they have. That is why our department has taken it upon ourselves to work with our municipal partners, to develop the most transparent form of municipal expenses that we've ever had in this province. We want all of our municipalities to put their expenses online. We want a standardized approach to expense regulation and finance reporting. Working with our partners, we're going to achieve just that, so situations like this won't happen again.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**COM. SERV. - BLOOMFIELD PROJ.:
AFFORDABLE HOUSING ALTERNATIVE - DETAILS**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: My question is for the Minister of Community Services. Last week I asked the honourable member about the government's decision to walk away from the Bloomfield project. In her response, the minister denied ever calling this the government's flagship housing program. I realize that I am new to the House, but Hansard is online, and so, too, was a blog post on the minister's personal website from October 2014, in which she did call Bloomfield a flagship project that would define what housing affordability would look like for decades going forth in Nova Scotia. I'll table that.

I ask the minister once again, if Bloomfield is no longer the flagship for affordable housing in Nova Scotia, what is the alternative?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: I appreciate the opportunity to talk about the way forward for affordable housing. The way forward for affordable housing is not sinking \$100 million into a private-market development. The way forward for affordable housing in this province is working with private developers like we're doing in Dartmouth, where we're spending \$1.2 million to partner with a private developer to provide over 45 affordable housing units in a building of 80. That's the way forward. The way forward in Nova Scotia is to provide rent supplements so that we have a reduction in the wait-list. That's the way forward. Investing hundreds of millions of dollars into a project that provides just a sliver of affordable housing is not the way forward.

MS. ROBERTS: There is a need for affordable housing in Halifax: 40 per cent of renters spend more than 30 per cent of their income on rent in Halifax's urban core. There are 2,000 people on a waiting list for public housing. Through Housing Nova Scotia, the government participates in the Housing & Homelessness Partnership, and its Affordable Housing Working Group has set a five-year target in June of 3,000 new affordable homes, including 1,000 new social and non-market units and 250 affordable homeownership units. That's apart from rent supplements and other private-sector initiatives. I ask the minister, what is this government doing to ensure that these targets are met?

MS. BERNARD: What we're doing to make sure that targets that are met by the HPS, which is not Housing Nova Scotia, is to work with the private sector to make mixed-income, mixed-use, affordable housing units. Since we have become government, there has been development of close to 300 units throughout the province. I do realize that there is still a need. Our work is not done here. We will be making exciting advancements in the near future with the new stimulus package that has come down for affordable housing.

I'm excited about the way - I'm excited that 10 per cent of a reduction in a wait-list that has been stagnant, or increasing, in the last decade is actually going in the right direction, now.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

EECD: BRIDGEWATER SCH. REVIEW - PROCESS STOP

HON. PAT DUNN: My question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. The government's school review process is flawed. In nearly every instance, communities are unhappy with the result of the process that they believe is too complex, and not responsive to local input. The Town of Bridgewater is so unhappy with the school review process of the South Shore Regional School Board, that they are asking the Nova Scotia Supreme Court for a judicial review of the decision to move students from Bridgewater Junior Senior High to Parkview Education Centre. My question to the minister is, will the minister save Bridgewater thousands in legal fees and stop the process that has so many upset on the South Shore?

HON. KAREN CASEY: I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the school review process. As the member may remember, there was province-wide consultation, which Bob Fowler conducted, to find out how we could best improve the school review process. Out of that came a number of recommendations that formed the policy and practice that we currently use.

The key thing in all of that was that communities were saying to Mr. Fowler, and that was part of his report. One of his recommendations was that the decision about the future of their schools, whether it's closure or consolidation or whatever, needs to be made

by the people closest to the school community - that being the school board, and that is where the decision is made.

MR. DUNN: Bridgewater Council feels their views were ignored. A member of the school options committee stated that the committee was not equipped to deal with the job of deciding the future of schools. This is another example of the school review process failing.

My question to the minister is, will the minister finally admit that her school review process is broken and stop all reviews until she has the opportunity to examine why the process is not working?

MS. CASEY: I would suggest to the member that in most boards, the process is working because the school options committee does involve parents and community members who are close to the school and close to the community, and have an opportunity to bring forward to the elected board their ideas, their suggestions, and their recommendations.

Specific to the South Shore, when the concern was brought to my attention that some people may have believed that there was not procedural fairness, we put an independent person in there to do the review, and the results of that review were that there was procedural fairness and there was no fault of the board.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

EECD: SCH. REVIEW PROCESS - REVERSAL DETAILS

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Currently there is a school review process taking place in Pictou West. There are four schools being reviewed, Pictou Academy being one. Following a school review process, the school board will make a decision regarding the future of these schools. Indicated in this letter from the Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has no role in a school review process.

I respect that. However, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, does the minister have the authority through the Education Act to overturn a decision the school board makes in a school review process?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Thank you for the question. It gives me an opportunity to remind folks in the Legislature, and all people who are asking the same question over and over and getting the same answer, that the decision of the board is final.

MS. MACFARLANE: I appreciate that. We just didn't know if the minister actually has the authority, and that's what I was asking. I knew she had the authority to essentially overturn and fire an entire school board. I just thought perhaps she would.

Mr. Speaker, the Pictou Academy Act of 1969 states that there will always be an institution in the Town of Pictou named "Pictou Academy" for Grades 9-12. In this letter from the deputy minister, which I will table, one would believe that through the Pictou West school review process there would be implications of the Pictou Academy Act of 1969. Does the minister plan to make any amendments to the 1969 Pictou Academy Act?

MS. CASEY: As the member has said, there is a review in the Chignecto board specific to the family of schools that are involved in the Pictou area. Four schools are under that review. That review will continue. It was proceed. There will be a recommendation to the elected board.

We have elected board members. They are there, and they have a responsibility and a role to play, and they will be the decision makers. They will receive the report and they will be the decision makers.

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

**INTERNAL SERV.: ACCESS FOR INFO. REQUEST
- FEE INCREASES EXPLAIN**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Internal Services. The member for Dartmouth South asked about the dramatic increase in fees, estimates for access for information requests. Since 2013, the number of requests has increased by only 5 per cent; however, the fee estimate issues increased by 67 per cent. So in 2013, fees collected were about \$11,000; in 2015, it's about \$33,000.

I'm wondering if the minister - and I know there wasn't enough time last Question Period. Can the minister explain why there's such a dramatic increase in the fees for access for information?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the honourable member for the question. Since 2013, in two years, the number of FOIPOP requests in the Province of Nova Scotia has actually increased by 43 per cent. As we all know, anyone doing a personal search does not have to pay any type of fee. The 43 per cent increase actually represents over a 100 per cent increase in the type of requests that actually have a fee associated with it. I will also add that the requests coming in are a lot more complex in nature.

I would like to give credit to the department because as we've amalgamated that department, those requests are being turned around in a faster manner today than they were two years ago, and we are also having a higher percentage of uptake on them.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the fees can be a barrier for some people trying to find and access information that the government should provide Nova Scotians. We know through our own caucus that often we receive notice of delays - high fees, of course, they charge our caucus for that information, and we have heavily redacted documents often.

I'd like to ask, does the minister believe the Premier and his government have kept their promise of making Nova Scotia the most open, transparent province in Canada?

MR. KOUSOULIS: I definitely agree with the statement that we have kept our promise, Mr. Speaker. I would like to point out that Nova Scotia, under this government, has its first open data portal. Every single department in government has added data sets to that portal. Come this January, FOIPOP requests that come to the government will be shared with all the public.

I would like to explain for yourself, Mr. Speaker, and for the House, what we are looking at here - FOIPOP in the Province of Nova Scotia has 20 officers; it has a budget of \$1.9 million. The total requests of fees that we collect to offset the \$2 million is \$32,000. I think that's a great return for taxpayers.

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

TIR: G&W RAIL - FEES

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of TIR. Over the last number of years residents in Cape Breton have been engaged in an ongoing struggle with the company that owns the rail line running through their properties. The rail line, which is owned by Genesee & Wyoming, has ceased operations and is trying to charge residents huge fees for permission to access the land and their utility line.

The minister has met with the railroad victims of Cape Breton, as has the Premier, the Premier's former Chief of Staff, and the member for Victoria-The Lakes. My question to the minister is, will the minister direct the railroad company to stop charging outrageous fees and act within the regulations by URB?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I do thank the member for the question. It's an important one.

Myself, along with my colleague, the MLA for Victoria-The Lakes, the Premier, we've had many discussions with the group over the last number of years and there's a bit

of a distinction that we are looking for clarification on between the developmental fees, which are the utilities, the things that cross over the line which the member alluded to, and then there's also the actual crossing fee which is set through the railway at \$300 per year.

The group wants a distinction on that. It probably will have to be a legal opinion. But outside of that, I would agree with the member's premise that the fees are huge, they are in the \$20,000 range in some instances. People aren't developing, there's a number of households that aren't developing with landowners because of that, so we've endeavoured to formally request to the G&W that they explain why these fees are what they are and if there's any way to bundle them. We are working that through the department and we'll certainly get back to the House and the victims' association.

MR. MACLEOD: I thank the minister for that answer. I have a letter that I'm going to table. It says the definition section of the regulation defines a crossing as either a road crossing or a utility crossing. This comes from Paul Allen, who is the executive director. Mr. Speaker, I will table that and other documentation.

Not only has this group been ignored for many years but the URB has written them a letter confirming they are correct about the issue. Some residents are looking at bills for thousands and thousands of dollars while the URB told them that the highest bill should only be the \$300.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister commit to enforcing the regulations and requiring Genesee & Wyoming to charge only the \$300, as approved by the URB, and will they do it as quickly as possible?

MR. MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I do thank the member for the question. First of all, just to clarify, certainly we do appreciate and respect the frustrations from the group, but we certainly haven't ignored them. We've been there to communicate with meetings recently and of course through e-mail, phone calls, et cetera, and just a clarification on the member's comments: I spoke to Paul Allen a couple of weeks ago from the URB. He was very clear that they simply don't have the jurisdiction to make that assumption, make that call, that they're in violation of the fees.

So, that's why we need that legal opinion, that's why we're going to go back to Genesee & Wyoming and get a clarification on these fees, why they charge them, what the nature of them is, how we can really streamline that, and at least bundle them to bring the costs down. They're tremendous properties, landowners are looking forward to developing those properties, but we're going to do our very best to help them, and we'll do that as soon as possible without question. Thanks.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: SHOREHAM VILLAGE - REPLACEMENT

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. In 2013, the Liberals were full of promises. However, over the last three years, Nova Scotians have come to find out what a Liberal promise is worth - absolutely nothing. In 2013, the Liberals made a commitment on the campaign trail in Chester-St. Margaret's to rebuild Shoreham Village seniors' home. However, three years later, constituents are now feeling let down by this Liberal Government's lack of action. So, I would like to ask the minister, why has the government failed to keep its promise to rebuild Shoreham Village seniors' home in Chester?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I was looking for the kind, sensitive member for Chester-St. Margaret's - but not so this afternoon. But she asked a very important question. We know that there has been some work carried out by the department to take a look at how we can look at the future of building nursing homes in terms of their replacements. We have a number across the province now that are challenged to provide the kind of service that we need to be giving our seniors in nursing homes today, and I can assure the member opposite that it continues to be a work in progress.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, people in my neck of the woods are worried about the lack of progress this government has made to improve health care services in the region. In 2012, the New Democratic Government announced a new Collaborative Emergency Centre at Fishermen's Memorial Hospital in Lunenburg. However, this current Liberal Government has failed to follow through on this plan also - that would have enhanced access to primary care. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the government has not opened a single Collaborative Emergency Centre in the last three years. So, I ask the minister, why has this government failed to open a Collaborative Emergency Centre at Fishermen's Memorial Hospital in Lunenburg?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that we had nine versions of doing health care delivery in the province under one Health Authority. We want to make sure that health services planning is done with a provincial lens, and that we have the right services in the right place, and, in fact, the medical community at the Lunenburg hospital agreed that it was time to take a look at what services, in fact, should be provided at the Lunenburg hospital, since they are very close to a regional hospital in Bridgewater, and we will make sure that they have the services that are required for the future of that community.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS - HEPATITIS C: N.S. CASES - DETAILS

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'll take my two questions and put them together in one, because I know the minister would like to answer this.

The other day, in debate on the New Democratic Party's Fair Drug Pricing Act, the minister spoke about the successes of the hepatitis C program. Now, patients who would eventually die of liver disease now have hope in the form of a new biologic, Sovaldi or Harvoni. So, I would like to ask the question - and I'll try to put them together. Could the minister give us an idea how many people have hepatitis C in the province, how many are you treating, and whether or not you're going to be adopting a true eradication plan, so that people that aren't receiving the treatment right now can hope to have it?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thought he was going to ask a question about Oncotype DX, but we've solved that one. Certainly, in terms of Harvoni, we will be looking at . . .

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will now recess while it resolves into a Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

[2:50 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Mr. Keith Irving in the Chair.]

[3:00 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Kevin Murphy, resumed the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and considered the following bills:

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

Bill No. 36 - Gaming Control Act.

Bill No. 41 - Residential Tenancies Act.

Bill No. 44 - Maintenance Enforcement Act.

Bill No. 47 - Halifax Rifles Armoury Association.

and the chairman has been instructed to recommend these bills to the favourable consideration of the House, each without amendment.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 61.

Bill No. 61 - Construction Projects Labour Relations Act.

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

HON. KELLY REGAN: I move that Bill No. 61, an Act to Provide for the Stabilization of Labour Relations Affecting Certain Construction Projects, be now read a second time.

I'm so pleased to be here today to tell you about proposed amendments to the Construction Projects Labour-management Relations Act. Our government is committed to improving Nova Scotia's competitiveness and positioning our province for growth. The amendments I introduced earlier will help us do just that. The current Act is more than 40 years old. It needs to be updated to reflect the realities of today's economic environment.

The Department of Labour and Advanced Education was asked by industry - and that's the organizations that represent employers and unions alike - to look at the Act and make some revisions. They told us companies looking to invest significant amounts of money in our province should have the confidence a project will continue uninterrupted by potential labour disputes. The proposed legislation helps us create this stable labour climate, a climate we believe will encourage significant investment that will bring economic benefits for our province and for our people.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of amendments needed to modernize the Act. We want to give developers the option to enter into a project-specific agreement, an agreement that ensures no work stoppages during the life of the project. We also want to ensure that the process for doing this is clearly defined.

To start, we will repeal the current Act and rename the new legislation the Construction Projects Labour Relations Act. The new legislation will amend the definition of “construction project” to include projects over \$2 billion. This focuses the legislation on mega-projects, those that are economically significant to the province. It also narrows the definition of “construction projects” to liquefied natural gas projects, specifically those in Guysborough and Richmond Counties. Having said this, Mr. Speaker, the legislation allows for other mega-industrial construction projects to be designated under the Act. They can be designated through regulation following public consultation.

This legislation outlines the process for those developers who want to negotiate a project-specific agreement. They will be required to provide notice to employers’ organizations, unionized trades, and the Labour Board of their intent to seek a project agreement. Once relevant parties have been notified, the legislation provides a framework for concluding a project agreement for all trades. A project agreement must be ratified by at least 85 per cent of the trades involved in the construction project. When a developer wants a project agreement, construction cannot start until there’s a project agreement in place that covers the life of the project. The legislation also outlines a process for any dissenting trade to apply to the Labour Board for review. It’s important to note that the Act does not prevent a developer from working with a non-unionized contractor even when there is a project agreement in place.

When we were drafting the amendments, Labour and Advanced Education worked closely with both construction sector employers and unionized labour organizations, and the proposed amendments were also discussed with the non-unionized construction sector.

Mr. Speaker, stakeholders have been supportive. They agreed these amendments can help attract more mega-projects to Nova Scotia. Projects like this will help grow our province’s economy, and this is good for everyone. Thank you.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, it’s my honour to rise and speak a bit to Bill No. 61 today, the Construction Projects Labour Relations Act. The bill includes a number of updates that have not been made in over 40 years, and I congratulate the minister for bringing these updates forward.

I know the intent of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education is to modernize the legislation. I’ve already had some red flags addressed to me concerning the new bill. In a nutshell, Mr. Speaker, the scope of the Act is a little bit ambiguous. I received information regarding the bill and I will submit some recommendations to the Law Amendments Committee, and I strongly suggest that they be taken into consideration.

Although we’re happy the government dealt with the unions and open shops, the intent of the bill looks good, I need to be more realistic and address other concerns. The

government has a history of good intentions, but it comes down to poor execution when it comes to some legislation. Right off the bat, where is this workforce going to come from? An independent think-tank reported that rural Atlantic Canada lost 31,000 jobs between 2008 and 2015.

Mr. Speaker, where I come from, a lot of our tradespeople have had to move on, and we have a shortage of some trades in certain areas. It's tough when that happens because if they move home for one project and the project is shortened, for whatever reason, then they are without a job. I know the idea of the bill is to provide stability.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to some of my construction people at home, the department said they had consulted with all parties that this bill would affect - unions, non-unions, employees, employers, and developers. I spoke with some people who told me they weren't officially consulted on the bill - some labour leaders in Cape Breton, some trade union people in Cape Breton, who weren't consulted on the bill - although they were talked about, they weren't officially consulted on it. That concerns me when one of the job sites in this bill is on Cape Breton Island.

Mr. Speaker, the trade union people, the Cape Breton Island Building and Construction Trades Council has had a couple of formal agreements with groups already, looking to develop non-strike legislation to secure a job site for the duration of the project. I know it's not in the legislation and that that will be put in legislation is a good thing, but I'd like to make sure that my people, the people in Cape Breton, are fully consulted with this before it happens. They do have some concerns.

The government says they had the right parties at the table when drafting this bill - that's great, but not all parties, Mr. Speaker. There is a difference between some of the labour groups in the mainland, and some of the labour groups in Cape Breton Island. A brief conversation with a lawyer in passing is not consultation. Although the lawyer represents both groups, I question why the proper consultation wouldn't have been done with our group of labour people in Cape Breton.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the value of our construction projects, and we recognize the need for labour relations. The feedback from stakeholders will be incredibly valuable and we look forward to hearing more about the bill when it comes to Law Amendments Committee, but one part of the bill says this is going to be strictly with LNG projects, and then it says or projects that may be deemed mega-projects. So what's to stop any company from coming in and getting that deemed a mega-project? You need to consult with those people. I hope this consultation will take place. I hope these people will come to Law Amendments Committee and present their findings, their concerns, and I look forward to hearing what they have to say. Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I want to speak for a few moments on this piece of legislation. Whenever the Liberal Government introduces any legislation dealing with labour, I know our antennae go up here in the NDP caucus, but those who work within Nova Scotia want to ensure that the interests of as many Nova Scotians as possible are taken into account when you make changes to any type of legislation or regulations or bills that are in effect now.

We want to ensure, I think, through this process that opportunities are there for organizations, groups, individuals, to come forward and give their opinions on this piece of legislation. From our understanding this legislation was driven by one group of workers, but not all groups in the province were consulted or were asked what their thoughts were on this piece of legislation.

I know my colleague who just spoke talked about the Cape Breton Island Building and Construction Trades Council, Mr. Speaker, who, from our understanding, was not consulted about this legislation even though in the legislation it specifically talks about a project in Cape Breton. So you can't blame us, I think, for wondering why that would happen - why would we have a bill here today without the proper consultation?

I don't know if the minister in her closing remarks, as we move this forward - because as my colleague just said we want to see this move forward through the process so we can hear from Nova Scotians, hear from those who might have an issue with this piece of legislation moving forward. That has been the crux of a lot of the issues we've seen over the last three years with this government, and that's a lack of consultation. We see a trend now with legislation, with how they deal with budgets of programs and services and groups in our province, Mr. Speaker, where they make changes or they cut the budget and then go and consult or engage with those organizations.

I could go on at length about those different groups and those different services that have been affected by this type of approach to changing legislation, changing regulations, introducing budgets, Mr. Speaker. So we are concerned that that proper consultation did not take place. We do, though, want to see this move through the process to the Law Amendments Committee, and I would hope that if it's the government's intention to have this piece of legislation at Law Amendments Committee, I believe the next time for that - it hasn't been set - most likely it would be Monday, is that organizations like the Cape Breton Island Building and Construction Trades Council are notified today, as soon as possible, so they could make the trip to Halifax to hopefully make a presentation either in support of this or not in support of this.

It's not just the Cape Breton Island Building and Construction Trades Council, Mr. Speaker. It's others who might have an interest in a change like this and what the impact will be to the workforce and to the economy here in Nova Scotia.

As I said, we are taking a cautionary approach here, but we don't want to stall this bill here in second reading. We do want it to move to the Law Amendments Committee and I would hope that the minister and the government will indicate to those groups that will be affected when this will appear at Law Amendments Committee and give them ample time to get here, if they do have any issues with it, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable members for their comments on the bill. As always, I will take their comments to heart. I would note that the lawyer for the Cape Breton Island Building and Construction Trades Council was, in fact, consulted. It was not, as someone characterized it, a brief conversation. It was not a brief conversation is my understanding and, of course, we want to hear from all interested parties. I would note that 85 per cent of trades would have to agree before this agreement could go through.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 61. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 55.

Bill No. 55 - Municipal and Other Authorities Pension Plan Transfer Act.

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

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 55, an Act to Facilitate the Transfer of Pension Plans of Municipal and Other Authorities to the Public Service Superannuation Plan be now read a second time.

I am pleased to be here today and to have the opportunity to tell you a little bit about the bill I introduced on Tuesday, the Municipal and Other Authorities Pension Plan Transfer Act.

In 2015, we enacted the University Pension Plan Transfer Act, which allowed universities to transfer into the Public Service Superannuation Pension Plan. Since then,

three universities have taken the opportunity to join this plan: Acadia, Université Sainte-Anne, and Kings.

The legislation I've introduced and we're here for second reading provides the same option to municipalities and other public authorities that service the broader public sector. Once this legislation is approved and implemented, municipalities and these other authorities that provide broader public service will have the option to join a larger pension plan, which provides increased security to their plan membership. This will especially benefit municipalities and other authorities that have defined benefit pension plans.

With this legislation, employees will be able to participate in a stronger and more stable pension plan, but it may also result in savings for the municipalities or other public sector employers. When we add additional members to the superannuation plan, it broadens the user base, and with a broader base that helps enhance the financial sustainability and the fiscal health of that plan as well.

It's important to note that any proposed plan or transfer must be approved by the membership as well as the Public Service Superannuation Plan's independent trustee. The trustee ensures that the plan and its current membership would not be negatively affected by any proposed transfers or additions to their plan. So we anticipate that the transfers or any transfers into the Public Service Superannuation Plan, which is enabled by this legislation, will be a win-win for all parties involved.

I look forward to seeing this piece of legislation continue to work its way through the process, and I'm happy to hear what my colleagues have to say. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Win-win - interesting concept when you're speaking about government. We don't know as we sit here today if this will be a win-win, but we do know the intent.

In the briefing I asked some questions about what is the process that the trustees go through to decide if they should accept another pension plan in. I was told that there's some very detailed analysis that goes into that that the trustees do.

I take that at face value. I'm sure there is some analysis, but I wonder if over the next couple of days as this bill moves through if the minister might be able to table some stuff for the House that shows what the trustees might look at when they're doing this analysis to determine whether they should accept another pension fund. Maybe that's something the minister can provide to the House to provide some assurance and understanding as to what the process is.

We do know that the trustee has expressed an interest in growing the pension plan - and sometimes bigger is better, but it is not always that bigger is better. I know in business there are a lot of examples where companies have grown through acquisitions under the “bigger is better” motto. It hasn’t always worked out the way it was planned.

That points back to the analysis that was done in the beginning. In the case of business, it would be the analysis done before an acquisition. In the case of pension plans under this legislation, it would be the analysis that’s done before they agree to accept a pension plan.

I looked back at the news releases in July 2015, when the Acadia pension plan transferred into the Public Service Superannuation Plan. At the time, the news release that came out from the Public Service Superannuation Plan said, “The PSSPTI’s guiding principles throughout this process” - so throughout the process of deciding whether or not the Acadia plan could be accepted - “have been that the transfer must be beneficial to the long-term sustainability of the PSSP and cost neutral.” Those are obviously good guiding principles. And the “analysis of the Acadia University Pension Plan” at the time “has met these conditions.”

Now, we don’t really know how they satisfied themselves of those conditions. That’s a type of understanding that it would be good for the minister to have before proposing this type of legislation, so I’m assuming that he’s satisfied himself that that type of analysis is good. Otherwise you have a massive plan that everyone would join - is it a win-win, I guess? Let’s go back to that.

We’re going back to July 2015, and at the time that the Acadia plan was brought in, let’s say, they said “Focusing on these guiding principles” - which you’ll recall were long-term sustainability and cost neutrality - “the Trustee has begun discussions with several public sector employers to join and grow the PSSP’s membership.”

So back in July, the trustee had begun discussion with several public sector employers. I’m not really sure who those entities might have been. I’m not really sure if those entities could have gone forward without this enabling legislation. I don’t know. There are a lot of questions around that. But what I do know is that it is wise to exercise “buyer beware” when dealing with this particular government. We know that there could be some mistakes or some oversights buried in this legislation. That would just be history repeating itself with this government, Mr. Speaker. What I would say is, is it a win-win? We don’t know. Should it be “buyer beware”? Absolutely.

I was wondering who was asking for this legislation. What problem is being solved, and for whom? We don’t know that, as we sit here today. In fact, I think at one point one of the government staffers said, “Well, actually, nobody was asking for this. It was just a good idea.” Maybe so. But I do know, looking at this news release from July 2015, it was

pretty clear that the trustee had already begun discussions with several employers to join and grow the plan.

What I would say is, we're from Missouri on this one. We'll wait and see what the public has to say at Law Amendments, and we'll continue our analysis of the bill and go from there.

With those few words, I take my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: I'd like to request that the honourable member table the document from which he was quoting during his presentation.

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

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to close debate on Bill No. 55. There are only a few comments from members opposite; I appreciate those comments as part of our second reading debate. Of course, we all know that in the next phase, once we conclude second reading and if we receive the support of the Legislature, this will move on to Law Amendments, where the public and stakeholders will have their opportunity to voice their position with respect to this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to perhaps alleviate some of the concerns of the member opposite for Pictou East. His question seemed to be, if nobody's asking for it, why would you be doing it? What problem are we trying to solve? Mr. Speaker, I apologize to you and the members of the Legislature for not starting my remarks there for the benefit of the member and others.

I've stood in my spot here, and as a government we've taken other steps and moved other pieces of legislation. The PRPP creates a new opportunity for people to save and for small businesses to create an environment for a retirement pension plan that can be accessible in many cases for people who do not currently have the option.

One of the problems that we're trying to address, and it's not just in Nova Scotia but across the country, is that individuals have been shown not to be saving as much as they may have been in the past for their retirement savings. Given the opportunities for growth in savings with historically low interest rates, even those who are saving are not getting the rate of growth of those savings to prepare themselves to maintain the same level of living and income in their retirement that previous generations may have had in another different set of broader economic circumstances.

In light of the challenges for individuals - and it's not just individuals. Existing pension plans - particularly those of the defined benefit nature - have also been found at

times to be struggling to maintain their solvency, to be in a financially healthy state. In many cases, Mr. Speaker, these happen to be smaller employers, smaller organizations, for a variety of reasons. Perhaps they just haven't had the base, or there's a change in demographics in a particular industry or area where there ends up being more retirees than active members, putting additional pressures and strains on the long-term sustainability of that pension plan. That's the problem we're trying to deal with here, those pension plans.

In this case, in particular, in the public sector, we've addressed those challenges, for example, in situations like the three universities in the university sector, where we've already implemented it. We've seen positive results from those transfers. It's been beneficial to the institutions, to the members of it, and to the superannuation plan itself. Indeed, I shouldn't have said just a win-win, but a win-win-win situation when we bring this operation together - recognizing of course, that the individual situation of each pension plan may be different.

That's why there are two critical things in this legislation. Number one, this legislation is simply enabling legislation. It creates an environment and a framework that allows these types of transfers to take place. Through that enabling, it also creates a framework for that transfer to take place. It puts constraints or requirements on the participants who may wish to pursue it.

For example, if a pension group is looking to transfer into the superannuation plan, that group of trustees must engage the members - that would be active and retired members - of that plan and obtain support for that transfer in. That means any decision to move into this plan would require, at the end of the day, not just research by the trustees, which is part of their fiduciary responsibility to the plan and the members, but also that the members be notified that they have the opportunity to cast the ballot to support or not support the transfer in.

Ultimately the decision here, Mr. Speaker, will rest with the members themselves. If they are satisfied with the benefits of the transfer in, then there will be that opportunity. But again, all the details and research need to be done, Mr. Speaker, and that again is meeting the fiduciary responsibility of the trustees, which are defined in other pieces of legislation pertaining to the broader space of public sector pension plans - the Benefits Act.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, that is a responsibility, whether those trustees move into this plan or not. As far as the trustee, it's an independent trustee for the superannuation plan. Again, it does rest and is incumbent upon, that trustee to represent the interests of their members and to make the decisions that are in the best interests of the health of that plan on behalf of all those members, both active and retired.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that helps to alleviate some of the concerns of the member opposite, to understand the current environment, when it comes to - broadly - savings and the challenges and trying to ensure there is a stable, and this is taking a step to help facilitate

- particularly those with defined benefit pension plans in the public sector - the opportunity to bring more health and stability to those plans, if and when appropriate. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 55. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 52.

Bill No. 52 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to move second reading of amendments to the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. This is something that I know businesses in Halifax have been looking for for a while. HRM is supportive of this. What this bill does is give flexibility to HRM to have some decision-making authority over what they charge for commercial taxes.

This legislation is enabling in nature, it allows our capital city to develop a system of taxation that they believe is fair, sustainable, and competitive. It is a result of extensive consultation we've done with Halifax, and with numerous business associations across the city, Mr. Speaker. We had over 20 representatives from local business associations here when we tabled the first reading of this bill, who were here in support of it. I know this brings them great hope for the future in this lovely city.

I will mention that this could be a tool that is applied in other regional municipalities as well. We are investigating an expansion of these tools to other municipalities, and that is happening through the course of our Municipal Government Act review, Mr. Speaker.

I hope to be here again in my seat with more good news for municipalities, and making sure we have the fairest, most competitive tax system we can have in this province. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise and speak to Bill No. 52. I really like this bill, this is a very good bill. I'm just really happy that this piece of legislation helps to provide small businesses with taxation relief. I understand from the

minister that the intent of this legislation is really to enable Halifax Regional Municipality to do exactly this: to provide tax relief to small businesses, and revitalize main streets in Halifax. This will give HRM control over where to establish zones that would provide relief to small business owners on issues of taxation.

Over the past several years we have seen many headlines of small business owners being forced to flee the downtown core due to skyrocketing commercial taxes. This leaves behind empty buildings, and an economic centre that is not thriving. This is not necessarily beneficial to property owners or small business owners or residents, and at the end of the day even government, and we're witnessing this throughout the whole Province of Nova Scotia. Even in my hometown of Pictou, when I was growing up, we had a theatre, we had a bowling alley, we did all our school shopping there; we had three shoe stores and a couple of clothing stores. We have none of that now, and a lot of it is due to the bigger box stores coming in as well as just commercial taxes skyrocketing.

I know that the previous Halifax council was certainly eager to move forward with these changes, and I think we spoke about this last session with regard to another bill so I'm extremely happy to see this. I expect and hope that the newly-elected council will all agree, as well, and see the benefits in this piece of legislation. I know that Mayor Mike Savage has certainly called for greater density in the downtown core of Halifax. Supporting small businesses that provide services to residents is an important part of just doing this.

Of course, this is one way to support small businesses in Halifax, and we know there are many other reforms the government can commit to that would help small businesses in the HRM area and, of course, across the province, so it's good to hear the minister indicate that this could be a tool that we can start using across the province. I do know that Pictou County has been talking about implementing something similar as well, though we're not as advanced in our plans to go forward yet but I hope that we will be in the near future.

The lowering of small business taxes is certainly one way of doing exactly what we want to do to help small businesses thrive, and I recognize that many of those changes are called under the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board rather than the Minister of Municipal Affairs, but I hope that dialogue and conversations happen between both ministers to discuss ways of helping small businesses thrive in the province, and I'm sure those discussions are taking place.

There are a few things I would like to suggest to the minister for possible consideration in this legislation. First, when requesting the authority to set different taxation rates, Halifax council requested the ability to do so for different categories and sizes of businesses, as well as different classes of buildings, and it is unclear to me why this does not seem to be included in this bill - I believe it's in the bill under Clause 1(b). It has been suggested to me that perhaps after talking to stakeholders that it would also be worthwhile to consider applying rates to commercial properties based on square footage. I

hope the minister could clarify why this was not included in the legislation and perhaps, maybe, he is in discussions. I think by allowing it to be based on square footage would be beneficial for so many obvious reasons.

Once again, I want to applaud the minister for this bill, the intent of this legislation - well, I do, the intent of this bill is very good. (Interruptions) And it's important - no, there is one thing like I said, but as I said, I'm in favour of this bill. But I do hope that we will consider charging per square footage, that's all, and I believe stakeholders are speaking to the minister about this.

It's important for Halifax to have vibrant main streets, and in some cases right now, we have big-box stores in areas like Bayers Lake that are paying more than six times less per square footage, than a business on Gottingen Street. So we have to fix that, and this is where that square-footage suggestion comes into play. But despite the fact that this costs more to provide municipal services to those areas than it does in the downtown core - I recognize that this is something that both the member for Halifax Chebucto, I believe, and the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island would understand as they operate businesses on Quinpool Road.

I realized earlier this year the government provided the ability to phase in commercial tax rate increases over several years. I'm not really sure why that legislation came forward when there were discussions that this one would come forward. It kind of out-ruled the other one, but this is good.

I know that stakeholders are certainly anxious to have this legislation passed so that the HRM Council can consider it as they move forward with creating their budget for next year. I certainly will be listening intently, along with my colleagues, to all the presentations that will come before the Law Amendments Committee, and would suggest to the minister to consider those presentations as I know there are a few stakeholders planning to attend.

With those words, once again, I like this bill. I congratulate the minister on it. (Applause) Thank you for allowing me to stand in my place and speak to it.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak to this bill and, indeed, I knew that this was coming down the pipe into this legislative session. I thank the minister for having a conversation with me before this session began. Certainly I know that small businesses in the district that I represent, Halifax Needham, have been looking for some relief in terms of property taxes, as property taxes have increased dramatically.

I would just like to take a few minutes to first speak about the role that I see small businesses as playing in our community and also raise just a couple of questions that I hope will be addressed at the Law Amendments Committee about this bill.

My interest as an NDP member looking at this kind of legislation is, does this support job creation, not wealth creation? One of the most important things about local businesses is that they can be great sources of local employment. We know that money spent at local businesses tends to circulate - those dollars circulate more in our community and have more economic spinoffs than certainly dollars spent at big box stores in industrial parks. So I think it's important that we try to work to ensure that we're holding on to small businesses in our communities, and especially small and locally owned businesses.

Of course, increases in property taxes in Halifax Regional Municipality over the last number of years haven't necessarily at all been matched by increases in revenue, especially if you think about the sorts of small businesses that really make our communities complete. If you can picture an upholstery shop like one that exists on Gottingen Street or a shoe repair shop like one that existed on Almon Street, or a bakery on Young Street, or a fish and chips shop on Isleville Street just to name - not quite by name - local businesses that I have patronized. Their revenues have not been increasing at the rate that property taxes for those commercial properties have been increasing. So I do think it's important that this government respond to that sector.

It's an awkward thing, the relationship between the province and Halifax Regional Municipality. Halifax Regional Municipality is a large - it's a city. In other parts of Canada, those cities automatically have more space to legislate for themselves.

One of the things as I look at this bill is - I'm comparing the final legislation to the requests that came forward from the municipality. In the request that I have from February 2016 - and I hope that the information I have here is complete - the municipality actually states that in part of its reasoning for this request to the Minister of Municipal Affairs - it says "this work is to be done in the context of maintaining the same overall level of commercial to residential tax ratio." That's stated in the council request.

I just note that reasoning - that frame on this legislation - is not present in the legislation. So, I do worry about a possibility of a municipal tax burden being shifted to residential property owners. Of course, the residential property taxes are, themselves, already encumbered, or made complicated, shall we say, by the cap on property taxes.

The municipality did explicitly say this work is to be done in the context of maintaining the same overall level of commercial to residential tax ratio. I just want to note that, and also note that that is not present in any fashion in the legislation.

There are a number of provisions in the bill related to the minister's ability to make regulations and also to review the commercial tax rates pursuant to this legislation. A question I'd like to see answered at Law Amendments Committee is, what will be the basis of the review? Will the review be to assess if this accomplishes the goal of supporting small and independent businesses? Will it assess the impact of this work on the ratio between

commercial and residential taxes? When a review is to take place, what will that review be considering?

I agree with the comments from my colleague that the assessing based on street frontage, versus square footage, doesn't seem to make sense. An example that was put to me that many members of this House might be familiar with is a case on Spring Garden Road where that could result in, for example, Jennifer's of Nova Scotia being assessed at the same amount as Park Lane Mall, because they have the same amount of street frontage. I can't imagine that that is the intent of the bill and again, maybe that's an issue that can be addressed in Law Amendments Committee.

I look forward to more conversation about this and I thank you for the opportunity.

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

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank my colleagues for their thoughtful commentary and for their support of this piece of legislation. Of course that is appreciated when we find moments like this when the House is in agreement.

Just to touch on a couple of comments in response to what my colleagues have said, the member for Pictou mentioned that this would make Bill No. 177, which we brought in during the last session, moot. That's not the case, this is a very distinct and separate bill from that, Mr. Speaker. Bill No. 177 was designed to allow all municipal units that are providing an urban level of service - that means downtown or in a village area - to help prevent any negative financial impact to businesses in those areas by sudden and drastic increases to assessment, so that bill allows those municipalities that are eligible, to phase in increases related to assessments. That helps those municipalities encourage downtown developments without impacting everybody's assessment in a negative way. That bill is also available for municipalities outside of HRM. I thought that was important to make that clarification.

Of course, I do look forward to this bill going to Law Amendments Committee. Of course, we will give due consideration to any recommendations that come forward. The member for Halifax Needham mentioned that there is not reference to residential taxes in this. That's correct, as HRM has indicated, which she noted in her comments, that is not the intention of their actions, to adjust those. This is simply enabling legislation which allows them to do what they have indicated they want to do, Mr. Speaker.

With that said, I move to close second reading of this bill and, again, do look forward to hearing the recommendations that come forward and the commentary from Law Amendments Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 52. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 59.

Bill No. 59 - Accessibility Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 59, an Act Respecting Accessibility in Nova Scotia, be now read a second time.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak about the bill, an Act Respecting Accessibility in Nova Scotia. This bill, quite frankly, is a culmination of years of work to reduce barriers for Nova Scotians. The legislation positions Nova Scotia as a leader among Canadian jurisdictions. We are the third province, after Ontario and Manitoba, to take this approach, and we are making these changes at the same time as the federal government is moving in the same direction.

It goes without saying that every Nova Scotian has the right to live, work, learn, and play, in an accessible environment that is welcoming and inclusive. There can be no doubt that a more accessible province benefits everyone.

Nova Scotia has the highest rate of disabilities per capita in the country at 18.9 per cent. That's about one in five Nova Scotians. When you factor in their families, the disability community makes up an even larger percentage of Nova Scotians.

Consider Nova Scotia's demographic makeup. We know, for instance, that increased accessibility would help many of the province's seniors. These are the people who built the foundation of everything that we have today. On the other end of the age spectrum we know that there are many families with small children. Just imagine what increased accessibility would mean to a parent carrying a baby, and perhaps one or two toddlers, in a grocery store.

We must not forget that accessibility encompasses much more than gaining access to a building and what the environment inside is like. The true definition refers to the extent that places, goods, services, and information, are accessible to everyone.

It is my pleasure to say that while I'm reading this speech it is now being interpreted for Legislative Television so that everyone who has hearing disabilities throughout Nova Scotia can have access to this information. (Applause)

It includes how people access culture through literature, film, and music. It includes how people access their employment, and it also includes how people communicate and do business.

We saw a good example during the bill briefing yesterday in the Red Chamber. There were large screens so that some of our guests could access the words being spoken by myself, but also questions from the media. This is just one example of making information accessible to everyone.

Accessibility is important for so many Nova Scotians, and this legislation will solidify it as a priority for many years to come. The disability community is our greatest asset when it comes to developing accessibility standards. It's important to engage with the community and I continue to be amazed at Nova Scotians' willingness to come forward and share their stories. The disability community has a saying: Nothing about us, without us. This community has the knowledge and experience needed to bring about change and the Accessibility Act will ensure that their input and advice will reach government, municipalities, and business.

This legislation mirrors what we heard in the community. We recognize how important it is that the community have an active role in making this precedent-setting legislation work for them.

In 2013, I established the Minister's Advisory Panel on Accessibility Legislation. The advisory panel conducted province-wide consultations and produced two reports. Government appreciates all of the feedback we received, and we are acting on the recommendations.

The Act is meant to provide a framework and we will continue listening to Nova Scotians while more detailed standards are developed in the months and the years ahead. The legislation involves the establishment of the Accessibility Advisory Board. It will have 12 voting members and at least half will be persons with disabilities, solidifying their voice in the process.

Mr. Speaker, this is overarching enabling legislation. What we're saying is that Nova Scotia is open for business. It's not about creating barriers for businesses or communities. In fact, it's quite the opposite. The success of this legislation will depend upon communities, governments, non-profits, and the diverse business sector working together. At the same time, we want to set standards to reduce barriers, and we also do not want to create unnecessary red tape. Government understands the need to harness the potential of all Nova Scotians so we can renew our labour force, expand our markets and

secure a strong economic future. We are working with businesses through partners such as the Canadian Federation of Independent Business to ensure that the framework fits with their perspective.

We're also working very closely with municipalities. Municipalities deliver many of the services that Nova Scotians with differing abilities depend on. We know that municipalities value an inclusive and welcoming environment. Municipalities will have an important role in this process. In fact, they will be on the advisory panel because they know best what it means to build strong communities.

This has been an extraordinary path. We learned so much through this process, and I would like to thank everyone in the community for being patient. We know it will take time and support for these changes to take place.

Working with people with differing abilities opened my eyes to how far we've come and how much farther we need to go. I would like to also acknowledge the work of the Speaker for further educating the members of the House of Assembly. I'm proud that Nova Scotia has its first accessible Speaker's Chair, just as I am proud of the accomplishments and milestones of the Nova Scotia disability community.

There is much work to be done, but working together with our partners from the disability community, municipalities, businesses and all of our stakeholders, we will do everything we can to reduce barriers and build a stronger Nova Scotia.

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

MR. LARRY HARRISON: It is a pleasure for me to rise and speak to Bill No. 59, the Accessibility Act. The minister gave us stats from 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability, that one in five people age 15 and over have some kind of disability, the highest proportion in the country. We must ensure that one-fifth of our citizens find the support that they need to fully participate in work life as well as in leisure life, as you have, Mr. Speaker. You certainly are an inspiration for a lot of people out there. There's no question that they should absolutely have access to public buildings and businesses. That's why it's important that this legislation come through. It's the reason that I really support the intent of this legislation.

I have talked over this legislation with a few groups, and there are a few concerns. One is the time element. Some felt that the last three years were enough time to do the consultation, and now we need to put the standards in place. I do hope that in the very near future, the minister will be able to tell us when she expects to introduce legislation in this House that creates accessibility standards. Again, the minister noted that Manitoba and Ontario have already entered into this experience, and it really is time that we do, no question about it.

I was talking to the Nova Scotia League for Equal Opportunities, and they had a few concerns. One was the time element, concern about good legislation that might be delayed for a lot of people who really need it now. They were also concerned about what may happen to the Disabled Persons Commission, whether that would still have life or whether something else might take its place.

I am pleased that the Accessibility Advisory Board will be comprised of six people with disabilities, because they would have to be on it to give us good direction. They also understand that a representative from the business community will also be a member. That's very sensible, too.

Mr. Speaker, we will watch closely to ensure government conducts good consultations and strikes the right balance of reducing barriers for Nova Scotians with disabilities, while not creating unnecessary costs for the business community.

I do look forward to hearing from stakeholders on this bill at the Law Amendments Committee, so thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I will now take my place.

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

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, certainly Bill No. 59 is a significant and important bill for the people of Nova Scotia and for those with disabilities. I have to agree with my colleague who just spoke about the concerns with respect to time. I know the minister mentioned in her speech that it has been years in the province, and through many different governments, that there has been discussion with respect to accessibility in the province.

I know when I was minister that we talked with the Disabled Persons Commission with respect to this. I'm sure the minister is facing the same issues that were brought to our attention with regard to the cost factor. It shouldn't matter to us in terms of the costs to enable somebody with a disability to have accessibility. Unfortunately, over the years in our province, we haven't been looking that way, so we have a lot of infrastructure and so forth that is not accessible for those with disabilities. It is very important that we have a piece of legislation that lays out a framework, but it is also vitally important to have some time elements there in order to have those goals met and have that accountability.

As we know, those who are from the disabled community are extremely patient. I actually don't know how they do it, Mr. Speaker, because over the years there have been many promises that we are moving forward and it must seem awfully slow for those with a disability that - here we go again, more talk about creating accessibility, but we have to see it in action.

I do know, and for the minister, that it's a lot of work because of the fact that we're talking about accessibility throughout the entire province, whether it's in a public building,

or if it is in a school, or whether it is even in our public housing, it's something - we have to have a disability lens put on everything, in terms of the decision-making process in government. So this also needs to have an educational component, in terms of those who are decision-makers who sit around the Cabinet Table, and maybe making a decision for the Department of Health and Wellness, or the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, or even the Department of Agriculture. Without having that disability lens put on top of the policy-making process, we're just going to be spinning our tires.

I would encourage the minister that what is looked at is also those who take leadership in the province, that when the decisions are made, and regulations and policies are made, that that disability lens is put over on top of every discussion, in terms of - what do we need to do in our department to make sure that the accessibility is available?

I would also encourage the minister, and as my colleague mentioned some concerns from groups, it's because of the fact that we get very close to having something available for those with disabilities and then it's taken away. I would have to say the 10-year plan for those with disabilities, the transformation to community living options, is already there, and put on paper, and those from the disability community worked with us, and worked with myself, as minister, to get it to the point that it was on paper but ready to roll. That's what I would encourage the minister - and I know it takes investment, so it has to be a priority.

That would be a wonderful gesture for those with a disability, if the government would actually implement that plan so we could start seeing some changes in the infrastructure in our province to enable individuals with disabilities to have that option to live in their community. As anyone who is abled has that ability and can make that choice to live in their community, that should be a choice for everyone, whether disabled or not.

I do know, being a former minister, that part of the issue is the priorities and for the minister to be able to get that financial support in her department to be able to go forward with those plans. So I encourage all government members, especially those sitting around the Cabinet Table, to make sure that Bill No. 59 is not just a piece of paper and that it's not just going to be discussions and reporting on the number of meetings that we've had about it - that it will actually give the minister the opportunity to come back to this House and report on actual actions. One that's already ready to go is that disability plan, the transformation for the 10 years to move toward community options.

In closing, I would like to thank the minister for bringing this forward. I would encourage the minister's colleagues around the Cabinet Table to support the minister in her efforts to make this a reality. That will cost dollars, but it's dollars that are worthwhile. Those with disabilities deserve to have those dollars spent. It will help our province, and it will encourage those with disabilities to seek more employment and to enjoy the life that they deserve to enjoy.

I would like to once again encourage those who are sitting around the Treasury Board or the Cabinet Table that, when the minister comes and needs those extra dollars to implement a plan that supports those with disabilities, the answer is “yes” so that the minister can go forward and make sure that these things become reality.

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

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, I would really like to thank, and am quite grateful for the remarks from, my colleagues across the aisle, particularly the former Minister of Community Services, who knows the importance of this legislation and the road map and moving people into community. I do so much appreciate your comments.

Just to reiterate, this legislation is the overarching, enabling piece. Regulations and standards will start once this law is proclaimed. There will be no delay with that. We have done our consultations. We have accepted two reports from the community. The disability community, as mentioned before, is very patient. I'm getting impatient. So we're moving forward with this, and I just want to assure members of that.

I look forward to Law Amendments Committee and the comments that will be made there. Thank you. I want to move second reading of Bill No. 59.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 59. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me the great honour to reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Before I start, I would like to recognize that we are on unceded Mi'kmaq land. Every time I step in this Legislature I'm reminded of the history of this place and how the decisions of those that came before us have helped define and shape who we are as a province.

Mr. Speaker, this is a great privilege to represent the constituents of Halifax Chebucto. Halifax Chebucto is so important to me because I was born and raised in this constituency. I'm a first-generation Canadian. My family emigrated from the Netherlands and chose Halifax Chebucto to set down my roots. Not only is this the only home I have known, it represents so much more. It is part of Canada my family chose and the part of Canada that welcomed us with open arms.

My father was a professor at Dalhousie University in the Department of Physics. Teaching was his true passion in life. Because of my father and his passion for education, he led the charge to start the Discovery Centre. For me, that meant spending some summers touring the science centres across Canada. That wasn't exactly my cup of tea. In hindsight, I see the success of the Discovery Centre and the role that it has played in shaping young minds, and I am proud of my father's role in making his dream a reality for so many children. At the time, as a young boy with attention deficit disorder, or ADD as it's commonly known, I wasn't as patient, and I want to thank my father for his efforts and commitment. (Applause) I didn't make that project any easier, that's for sure.

Then, there's my amazing mom who has touched so many lives in Nova Scotia. As a Child Life Specialist in the oncology unit at the IWK, she worked with families in helping them go through their treatments or preparing the family for the passing of their child. Still, today, she can be anywhere in Nova Scotia, and someone will walk up to my mom and give her a big hug and break down in tears, and when I see this, I know how my mom has touched many families in Nova Scotia, and she continues to make a difference in the lives of children throughout her volunteer work with the Speedy Kids Oval Program Society and Brigadoon Village.

I'm talking about my parents to emphasize their value in the community that welcomed them to Canada, and they gave back and continue to do so. They taught me the importance of community, and I would like to think I do as much as I can to live up to that example, not only as an MLA, but also as a small-business owner, a volunteer, a founder of Brigadoon Village, and as a member of the team that made the Emera Oval a permanent structure in Halifax.

I often hear people talking about the differences from one electoral district to the next. People say that rural districts are tight-knit communities and that Halifax districts are different, but that's not the Halifax Chebucto I know. I see thriving communities and

people working together to make their community a better place to live for their families and their neighbours. When my parents settled on Halifax as our new home, I was two years old. We moved to Vernon Street, and I have lived in Halifax Chebucto ever since. This is where I biked around and played with my friends. This is where I got my first job at O'Brien's Pharmacy delivering prescriptions to seniors on my skateboard. We moved from Vernon Street but still remained in Chebucto. I attended LeMarchant-St.Thomas Elementary, the same school my kids attend today. I moved on to what is known as Halifax Central Junior High and then Queen Elizabeth High School. I remained in Halifax Chebucto while studying at Saint Mary's University, and after graduation, I got married, started a family, and my business here.

Far too many Nova Scotians feel the need to move on, to take their experience and passions and abilities to destinations west, or around the world. I am fortunate to have been able to stay and make my life here. I work very hard every day to ensure that more young people can live, work, and grow our communities, and I am proud of where I live, and I see the potential to do more, to be truly great.

Thanks to the province's commitment to education, Halifax Chebucto will soon be the home of a new school, and because of our commitment to preparing our children for the future and our Youth Action Plan, these kids will be better equipped to stay here in Nova Scotia, and use their skills and energy to contribute to our communities.

I've spent my entire life in Halifax Chebucto, and I've spent the last three years learning from, and working hard on behalf of, my constituents. I have heard from my constituents from all walks of life. I have grown personally as I have spoken to more and more members of my community. I have witnessed struggles that I was not previously aware of. I have seen the determination and drive of my neighbours, and I am humbled and more committed than ever to make life here better for every single resident.

During my time as MLA, I have seen decisions made by our government that impact my constituents. Many stories are positive and some are tough. One such decision was changes made to the Film Tax Credit. I understand the rationale for the decision, and I see the success we're enjoying today, but it was a difficult process.

I had a connection to the industry through my family's involvement, my personal contacts, and those of many of my constituents, and I was determined to be constructive and help engage people in meaningful dialogue.

Mr. Speaker, when change was announced, I made sure I was available to my constituents. I opened the door of my office and listened. I heard from the industry professionals who feared for their futures. I worked tirelessly with Screen Nova Scotia and served as a strong voice for the industry. This work has been done and acknowledged by the film industry in this province.

When government and industry got together and began a productive dialogue, we saw changes that restored hope for many. Could we have avoided upset and uncertainty? Yes, but in the end we listened, and I am so pleased to see the industry celebrating a great year and I'm happy to see new TV and film productions. I am proud of the role I played in this, I am proud of our film industry's professionals, and I am pleased that the government was able to adapt and listen.

The former Finance Minister and MLA for Halifax Fairview, Graham Steele, once said in a CBC column that MLAs will always say they're working on an issue. He advised constituents to ask their MLAs to prove it. Here's my proof. The former Chair of Screen Nova Scotia and respected member of the film community, Marc Almon, had this to say about my efforts:

I want to thank you for your efforts to reach out to meet with me over the last year. You've been very encouraging of dialogue between government and myself and my colleagues at Screen Nova Scotia, and I appreciate the insights you provided.

The recent announcements regarding the \$1.5 million increase in the fund for 2016-2017, and the \$5.9 million for 2017-18, were important steps forward. To many inside and outside the province, it's a clear signal that government supports the re-growth of the industry and wishes to make the new film production incentive fund work. The industry appears to be getting back on its feet, and with continued support from the fund, that trend will continue.

For me, it didn't end there. I continue to work with Rob Power, Marc Almon, and others in the film industry to ensure that the industry can thrive here in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to now acknowledge the recent municipal elections and congratulate those elected to serve the residents of Halifax Chebucto. Halifax City Council's District 7 will be again represented by Wayne Mason; the residents of District 8 have elected Lindell Smith, the first African Nova Scotian city councillor to serve in 16 years for District 8; and District 9 is now represented by Shawn Cleary.

Lindell Smith and Shawn Cleary have committed to continuing the participatory budgeting process first introduced to Halifax by Wayne Mason upon his election in 2012. This is an amazing effort, and I commend Councillor Wayne Mason for introducing it to our city. I've watched it closely in both Districts 7 and 8, and I look forward to seeing it in action in District 9.

MLAs do not have a discretionary fund to engage constituents this way, but the whole project got me thinking about how I could engage constituents in a similar manner. Together with some volunteers from the community, I developed the Democracy in Action

plan. To my knowledge it has never been done in Canada, at either federal or provincial level. The idea was a community-developed, private member's bill, or as we'll call it, a community member's bill.

I hosted two sessions for residents of Halifax Chebucto where anyone could bring forward ideas for legislation to improve our community or the province as a whole. We explained that not all issues or ideas would fit within the scope of a private member's bill and worked together to develop the ideas that could. Working through this project behind the scenes has proven interesting as well. We hope to proceed with policy changes that represent the ideas that were presented and that I'm proud of. I will continue to engage residents and work towards building a better democracy for Halifax Chebucto.

The ideas that came forward were non-partisan, Mr. Speaker. We had people in attendance who vote for different parties. The ideas brought forward covered everything from electoral reform, to changes to the Motor Vehicle Act. There were ideas that would benefit families, the environment, creative communities, and the poor. I'm currently working with government to advance one of these ideas when the time comes. At that time, I will ask the House to do as the Halifax Chebucto community did: to come together and endorse a good community idea. I look forward to that discussion.

While on the subject of partisanship, Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about women in politics. I would like to thank the former MP for Halifax, Megan Leslie, for her work on behalf of women in politics. Ms. Leslie has appeared on national coverage talking about sexism in politics and how women are treated differently from men. We don't face commentary on our clothing or appearance, but elected women here face it all too often. I have spoken in the House about women's equality. I'm a supporter of the United Nations He for She campaign, which calls on men to join the movement for women's equality.

Right here in Canada we have a long way to go. Women earn less than men while doing the same job. There are jobs that pay less simply because women are most likely to be employed in them.

The Nova Scotia House of Assembly includes 15 women representing constituents. Less than a third of the seats in this House are occupied by women. (Interruption) Thanks, D.P.R. - even while half of Nova Scotians are women. We can do better in our effort to elect more women. It is as much about making sure women want to do and aspire to run as it is about filling the seats with balance.

There are barriers, Mr. Speaker. Those barriers start with a playing field that is not level. Until the women in this House are treated with the same respect and consideration as men, fewer women will step up and take the job. This is not a partisan issue. It's up to all of us from all Parties to ensure the equality of women is promoted through all of our actions.

A good starting point would be for the Third Party to refrain from using unflattering photos of government MLAs attached to disingenuous graphics for distribution on social media. How can the members for Halifax Needham and Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River sit idly while their Party distributes these graphics? How can they support a Leader and a Party that engages in this kind of partisan political attack?

I am proud of the leadership shown by the Premier on this issue. Our Party, under his leadership, has increased the number of women on government benches. The majority of the senior leadership in the government is made up of women. This is real progress.

I would like now to take a moment to address a topic that affects not only me but that is prevalent in the daily lives of many adults and children in our school system. The topic I would like to address is my diagnosis of attention deficit disorder and dyslexia, a term used for categorizing difficulty in learning to read. This meant that word, letter, and symbol recognition and interpreting words became an enormous challenge. At this point in my life, I can now say that this is a gift. This has been a long, difficult road, with a pivotal point being when a professor at Saint Mary's University called me stupid in front of my peers. To this day, I have never forgotten how that made me feel. My effort to understand why or how this could happen led to a year-long struggle which resulted in this person no longer teaching at the university.

This unfortunate incident led me to advocate for those kids with non-visual disabilities like my own. I became the Chairman of the Board for the Learning Disabilities Association of Nova Scotia. As an Executive Member of LDANS I worked towards the goal that every child with non-visual learning disabilities be acknowledged for the person they are and the many outstanding qualities and abilities they possess.

It is important to keep in mind that even 10 years ago a non-visual learning disability might have been associated incorrectly with mental illness. I am pleased to say that our teachers today have the skills and the strategies to identify children with learning disabilities to program for their success.

Mr. Speaker, Halifax Chebucto had previously been represented by a member from the Opposition benches - for 13 years in fact. Even with a member in government, there were calls for a new school to replace the aging LeMarchant-St. Thomas. Between 2009 and 2013, with a government MLA in Halifax Chebucto, we saw \$65 million cut from education and LeMarchant-St. Thomas was left to continue aging.

I am pleased to say that our government is reinvesting the \$65 million into our schools and our classrooms. LeMarchant-St. Thomas will be replaced next year and I couldn't be more proud of the work that we've done to bring this to fruition.

All members of the House are talking about working conditions for our teachers. We understand that teachers' working conditions are our children's learning conditions.

For my community this includes a much-needed school for students and teachers, a school that replaces infrastructure put in place almost a century ago. Mr. Speaker, this is also an opportunity to come back to some of what I've learned while serving my community.

I mentioned the need for consultation and how, when government and members of the film community started a productive dialogue, things began to turn around. I've also mentioned that I've learned so much by maintaining open channels of communication with my constituents. I've learned that my opinions are shaped by my experiences, but that there are many different experiences shared and lived by many different people.

Replacing LeMarchant-St. Thomas is a major project. Changes to the site impact the school's neighbours. Members of the community reached out with concerns based on some initial designs and ideas, and I made sure to keep in touch with Municipal Councillor Wayne Mason.

I reached out to those who contacted me and I hand delivered invitations to each of the neighbours, inviting them to share their concerns at a meeting with representatives from the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. We worked hard; we made sure our constituents were heard. The result, Mr. Speaker, is a new school that will simply be spectacular; a new school that fits into the community; a new school to answer calls that have been ignored for over a decade; a new school to prepare our children for their future - for our future. I'm proud of the role I played in that project and I'm proud of my community, and I'm proud that those living around the new school are my neighbours.

I'm happy that we could work together to make compromises and to ensure that, first and foremost, the children are better off, thanks to this project.

Mr. Speaker, I'd be remiss to exclude some acknowledgements at this point. I want to extend thanks to the school's steering committee at LeMarchant-St. Thomas for their tireless efforts in helping shape a new school. Also thanks to staff from A49 for their hard work and especially for listening to the community and working to ensure those voices were heard.

For the next while the teachers and students will be working and learning in tight quarters. Thank you for your patience as we move this project forward. Thank you for your commitment to education and our children. I want to thank Wayne Mason for his efforts for lobbying and ensuring that there would be a full-size gymnasium in the new school.

Mr. Speaker, I am fortunate to have a wonderful connection to education in Nova Scotia. I have two children in our education system and I have had the great privilege to interact every day with many amazing teachers. I have been able to see some of the new curriculum and how it is working. As a parent, I see the enthusiasm and the excitement from learning from my children's display.

My children and many others in Nova Scotia are learning about coding and the digital world in which we live. I will never forget the day one of my kids came home and showed me how to move a droid, R2D2 from Star Wars, around the computer screen. She was so excited and we had a blast, and she was teaching me how to code.

This kind of programming in our classroom is preparing our kids for the now and for the future. By the year 2020, there will be an expected shortage of one million people in the field of cybersecurity, and again I wish to point out how we are moving forward to prepare our kids for the future.

As I mentioned previously, our government has reinvested the \$65 million into education. With this investment, we are looking for our future for our kids. We have capped elementary class sizes, and I can tell you, it has made a big difference in the classrooms for my children. We have hired hundreds of new teachers and educators, and this shows the start of our commitment to the classroom.

I know that the classroom can be difficult for teachers and parents, and especially children. I know there are a lot of pressures for teachers to deliver individual programs – IPPs - for children. They do the best with what they have and they change the lives of our kids. I am sure there will be a teacher who has made a lasting impression on all our lives. For me they were Miss Mosher and Miss Brown.

I know there are many things that need to change, but change does not happen overnight. That is why under the leadership of the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, we are working to address the needs of the workplace for teachers. We want our teachers to work in an environment where our kids can excel, and where teachers can excel in their jobs, when we have a real opportunity to shape and change Nova Scotia's schools. As a parent, I am excited for the opportunities of our province to provide our children - and I know our kids will one day excel - on the world stage.

Speaking of the world stage, Mr. Speaker, I now would like to talk about something I have become very passionate about during my time as an elected official, and that is the ocean science sector. This sector came to my attention in my very first Economic Development Committee meeting I attended. As I listened, I was truly surprised by the economic impact this sector has on Nova Scotia. I also was surprised by how this sector touched so many communities across this province. As a maritime province, it only makes sense that the ocean sector will be a pillar of the Nova Scotia economy.

Let's talk about COVE, Mr. Speaker, the Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship. When I learned about COVE, it became very clear that Nova Scotia would be a leader on our world's stage, and it is an important sector. As I spoke to my colleagues about this, they also became excited about the potential of COVE. One conversation I will never forget was with the late Allan Rowe. As we stood in his office, looking at the old Coast Guard station, we shared stories of his time on the Ocean Ranger.

He talked about how that experience shaped him, and his view, and the importance of the ocean. I know he would be smiling from above to know that this government is involved in this very important venture.

The combined funding announced of \$19.7 million for COVE takes this venture from dream to reality. My friends, this is how we work with our federal partners to grow a sector. Not only will this support the 480 PhDs that work in this sector from our world-class post-secondary institutions, but it will also create countless jobs for skilled labourers in this construction and in the state-of-the-art facility.

To add to the icing on the cake, the federal government and John Risley invested \$220 million in paving the way for the Ocean Frontier Institute. Again, this shows how government and the private sector can work together to create new opportunities for Nova Scotia. The success of the ocean science sector will benefit future Nova Scotians for many years to come and place Nova Scotia on the map as a world leader in ocean technology.

Mr. Speaker, we live in a spectacular province. I can tell you over the last three years I have spent a great deal of time exploring this province with my family. We have camped, hiked, kayaked, and enjoyed stand-up paddle boarding among other fun outdoor activities of some of our province's signature vacation spots. I am always proud to share how amazing Nova Scotia is to explore. You can still go on a hike or a kayaking trip and not see anyone for a couple of days. We are lucky, and I encourage my fellow members of this House to go explore all that Nova Scotia has to offer. We can all use our social media networks to celebrate and grow our province. We should be encouraging tourism through all channels: car, train, bus, plane, and yes the ferry. In fact, I believe our government has been doing an excellent job on this front. This year, Nova Scotia has had its most successful year in tourism in over a decade.

With that, I want to share how I personally help get tourists to Nova Scotia as I believe - sorry, I lost my track with all the noise. With that, I want to share how I personally help get tourists to come to Nova Scotia as I believe we all have a responsibility to get more people here to visit our province. I worked hard with an amazing group of people to promote our event called Not Since Moses. This event happens every year in the Education and Early Childhood Development Minister's riding. This is one of the biggest events the Fundy Shore has, and I am proud to say that I have played a big role in building this event over the last eight years.

This year, we had almost 1,000 runners who started in Soley Cove and ran to Five Islands, and as they ran along the ocean floor the runners saw some of the most spectacular views, in my opinion. Nowhere else in the world can you run a race on the ocean floor with friends and people from around the world. This year, we had runners for Australia, New Zealand, Africa, Japan, and every province in Canada was represented, along with most of the Eastern Seaboard states. We also had a film crew from France join us this year who

shot a documentary on the Fundy shoreline to highlight the race for their French audience, and I am sure next year we will have many runners from France to run this amazing race.

I'd like to acknowledge and thank the many fellow organizers of Not Since Moses like Terri, Joy, and Carol, and the communities of Five Islands and Economy - this event could not happen without your dedication. This is just one example of Nova Scotians who are stepping up to make their communities a destination to visit. There are people like this across our province, so take a moment to thank them for making our communities a destination that people are excited to visit.

I would like now to turn my attention to a topic I am also very passionate about, small business in Nova Scotia. First, I need to commend every small business owner in Nova Scotia. Being a business owner is not easy; it is hard work. But you would have it no other way because you love it and, as have I said before, I became involved in politics because I wanted to be a voice for small businesses, and it has been a privilege to be that voice.

One area I'd like to bring attention to is the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness, an initiative undertaken by our Premier and led by Fred Crooks and his team. This office is tasked with identifying and eliminating red tape. Fred's team has done an amazing job of looking at policies that dramatically affect businesses in Nova Scotia and adjusting these policies so that businesses will have a stronger platform from which to succeed.

If my fellow members have not accessed this department, I would encourage you to do so as it can help the business owners in your communities. But red tape reduction does not solely live with the provincial government. It also sits with municipalities, and I'm happy to say that Halifax has hired a full-time staff member to work on municipal red tape issues. It is to my hope that they will deal with encroachment rules, as all business owners have to pay a fee to have their business signage hang off their building over Halifax airspace. A small business already pays some of the highest commercial taxes in Nova Scotia.

Commercial taxes have been a real burden for small businesses in Halifax. I have worked very hard on this issue, and I am happy to report that we've developed a solution that will enable municipalities to create different tax zones. These zones will allow municipalities to give tax relief to small businesses around the municipalities, and I am confident that Halifax Council will work with business districts to ensure that small businesses will continue to thrive in Halifax and all around Nova Scotia.

Another major program that has helped businesses in Nova Scotia is the Graduate to Opportunity program. With this program, businesses are encouraged to hire recent graduates, and government will pay 25 per cent of their first-year salary and 12.5 per cent of their second-year salary. This program is helping young Nova Scotians find jobs here at

home, and to date, 200 graduates have participated in this program, which demonstrates that the program is working.

I spoke to one of those businesses in my riding the other day, a tech company called QRA that has taken advantage of this program. We are happy and excited about this program. It has helped them hire young graduates, who are staying in Nova Scotia.

With that, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge my amazing kids and thank them for letting me play a part in shaping Nova Scotia for the future. (Applause) As we are so good at recognizing people in our constituency, I want to take the opportunity to recognize my kids and some of their accomplishments.

First, I want to recognize my oldest, Anneke, for her incredible passion for dance and her inspiring dedication for putting in 12 hours a week with Halifax Dance. Anneke is a beautiful, amazing dancer. She has worked hard and earned a role in *The Nutcracker* this year. So on opening night, I can assure you I'll be there to watch her dance and be that proud dad in the audience.

If that's not enough dancing in one week, Anneke's dedication extends to sharing her passion for dance with kids who may not have the physical ability. She dedicates two hours a week as a volunteer with the Inclusive Movement program at Halifax Dance - all of this on top of her hard work at school. As you can see, Mr. Speaker, I am proud of my amazing daughter Anneke.

Now I want to speak to you about my other incredible daughter, Zofia. You have to understand, she is payback times two for anything I've ever done to my parents. One of her greatest passions is climbing, and I can tell you, she'll climb anything and everything. She is able to climb between B4 and B6. I'm sure most of you will not understand what that is, but let me assure you, the majority of people in this room would not be able to do that, including me.

What I really want to share is her accomplishment of climbing a 1,000-foot rock face called Whitehorse in North Conway earlier this month. She and I and our guide, Janet from Cathedral Mountain Guides, set out at 9 a.m. and started climbing. It took us a total of five and a half hours to complete, and I have to say, sitting at 600 feet off the deck eating lunch with my daughter - legs hanging over the edge, looking at all the Fall colours - is a memory that I will never forget. I was filled with pride when she found the courage to keep climbing even through moments of fear and tears. This shows that she has the inner strength to accomplish anything, and I could not be more proud. I look forward to the next climbing that we do together.

I also want to thank my wife, April. As you all know, our spouses play a huge role in our success representing our ridings. When your name is on a ballot, their name is on a ballot, just by association. When you take the lumps, they take the lumps. When you win,

they win. They are an integral part of success. They may not have signed up to be a politician's spouse, but they stand next to us through the rough times and the happy times. So to my wife, thank you, from the bottom of my heart for standing next to me as we embark on the next chapter of this adventure together.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that it was clear how proud I am of representing this government and proud of the hard work that this government has done. I am also very honoured to serve alongside the Premier.

With that, I want to bring my remarks to an end by saying thank you to all my constituents for giving me the great honour of representing Halifax Chebucto. Halifax Chebucto is my home. It's a community of communities that I am proud to serve. It is more than just a place where I can put my name on the ballot. When election time is called, I will ask my voters once again for their support. I will do so with pride. I will be asking my friends and my neighbours for their support. I will do this as a lifelong member of this community.

I did not choose to run where I thought I could win. I ran in Halifax Chebucto because I love this community. I have always lived here. I am raising my family here. I run my business here. When I chose to run, I chose my community. I will face an opponent who chose to run in Halifax Chebucto not because he's from here, not because he has roots here, not because he cares about this community - an opponent who has chosen Halifax Chebucto because it looked great on a spreadsheet.

With that, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the privilege of addressing my constituents and sharing with them all the hard work I have been doing on their behalf in Halifax Chebucto.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Just quickly, before we move on to the next speaker, I would like to ask the previous speaker if he could table the letter he had referred to from Marc Almon.

Just a couple of housekeeping items: please, I would ask all speakers to speak directly through the Speaker and not to people outside. I also ask them if they would please not pass between myself and the person who is making the address.

The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HON. PAT DUNN: I am not going to run in Halifax Chebucto, that's a promise. I will run in Pictou Centre. I've heard a number of times in the House, Mr. Speaker, and you notice I'm speaking to the Speaker here, directly to you, Mr. Speaker; I'm obeying the law.

I hear members referring to our constituencies as "ridings," and my fellow colleague from Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg cringes when he hears that. We represent

constituencies of course, and the ridings are for federal Members of Parliament. Anyway, I represent Pictou Centre, which is three towns in the centre of Pictou County: Trenton, New Glasgow, and Stellarton. Of course, there's a couple of constituencies to my left and right, Pictou East and Pictou West.

The Town of Trenton was first settled by Scottish immigrants around 1773 (Interruptions) Mr. Speaker, I may have to get you to remove someone from the House. (Laughter)

Anyway, there are approximately 2,700 residents living in this community for several decades, Mr. Speaker. The town was known for its manufacturing, glasswork companies. In fact, around the turn of the century, there were three glassworks in Trenton, the Humphreys Glass Company was probably one of the most popular at the time.

It was also known for shipbuilding. One of the well-known ships built during World War II was called the *Wasp*, built along the East River in Trenton. Of course, the TrentonWorks, which was known for building a lot of steel structures, rail cars through various companies like Dosco, Hawker-Siddeley, the most recent one was Greenbrier that came in 1995 and stayed there until May 2007; a company from Oregon, a great company, great to the workers, great to the community. We certainly didn't like to see them leave at the time. Of course, the windmill operation came in after that.

Growing up in Trenton, it was very common - the same as in coalmining districts like Cumberland or Cape Breton or Pictou County, like Stellarton and Westville - it was very common for youngsters to go to the car plant and work in the car plant. Often you'd be in junior high school in Grade 7 and Grade 8, and one of your friends would turn 16 years of age and Monday morning their desks would be empty. You would find out later in the day that they were packing a lunch can, and they were down over the hill into the car works.

Mr. Speaker, the Trenton plant is the birthplace of the first pouring of steel in British North America. I am particularly interested in that because my great, great grandfather, James Dunn, was a member of that small crew that poured the first steel ingot at that particular time. He worked an amazing 64 years in the plant and retired at the age of 83. Again, I guess the pensions back then were not as good as they are today.

Mr. Speaker, my father, who is a machinist, worked in the plant for 46 years, and in the 46 years of his career in the plant, he did not miss a day of work. At the end of his career he was presented with a plaque.

Mr. Speaker, we also have an airport in Trenton. It offers landing accommodations for standard jets. This particular airport, of course, is owned by Sobeys company. We also have a beautiful 565-acre park in the middle of the town, with a walking trail, fishing ponds, outdoor swimming pools, all kinds of trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in

the wintertime. The town also has a couple of schools, an elementary school, Primary to Grade 4 and a middle school, Grades 5 to 8.

We also have a new mayor, Shannon MacInnis. In fact all three towns in my constituency now have three new faces at the helm of their town councils. In Trenton, of course, Shannon MacInnis returns after eight years away from that particular position. He was mayor for three years prior to Mayor Glen MacKinnon taking over.

Mr. Speaker, New Glasgow was also settled by Scottish immigrants and I'm not going to say in what year in case the member for Northside-Westmount is still here. In New Glasgow we have approximately 9,500 residents, and it has been bouncing back and forth, 9,500 to 9,700 over the years.

Sir Robert Kenney originally founded New Glasgow and of course, most people know that the town was named after Glasgow, Scotland. New Glasgow, over the years, became the service and shopping centre for the County of Pictou, Mr. Speaker. The town is divided by a river. The East River runs through it, so you live on either the east side or the west side of the town.

We have the Aberdeen Hospital in the Town of New Glasgow which is a regional facility, providing a broad range of primary and secondary services. In the Town of New Glasgow, we have three schools: a P-6 on the west side; a new P-8, New Glasgow Academy, on the east side; and of course, the North Nova Education Centre, which is a Grade 9-12 complex. That was opened in the year 2003. In fact, they had a good hockey coach those first three or four years at North Nova.

Of course, as I mentioned earlier, they have a new mayor. The mayor of New Glasgow is Nancy Dicks, a retired elementary school teacher and former town councillor. The former mayor, Barrie MacMillan, did not reoffer after eight years serving the community.

The third town in the constituency, Mr. Speaker, is Stellarton. Stellarton is a community of approximately 4,500 residents. It has a rich history in the operation of coal mining. It's the hometown of the grocery empire Sobeys; the headquarters are there. It also has a very successful business park, which you can see as you're driving by on Highway No. 104. You may see Central Supply, a Toyota dealership, and many other businesses in that particular business park.

Back in the 1790s, coal became the major focus in the economy in the Town of Stellarton. The main street in Stellarton is called Forge Street. It came from a coal seam which was called the Forge seam. It's said to be the thickest in the world. This particular coal seam was estimated to be about 48 feet thick. Presently, Pioneer Coal Limited is still working in the town, open-pit mining. They were in Westville prior to that.

Stellarton is also home to the Museum of Industry. I would encourage anyone floating through the area to drop off the highway at Exit 24, and go to the Museum of Industry. I'm sure that there's a lot of interesting artifacts and a lot of great history in that particular museum.

Again, Stellarton has a new mayor. Danny MacGillivray is the new mayor, defeated incumbent Joe Gennoe in the most recent election. So we have three new faces in the three towns in Pictou Centre.

As far as road work, Mr. Speaker - because I'm responsible for three towns in my constituency, and they're not provincial roads, I don't have to chase the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and talk to him about getting some asphalt. But I have talked with him, and I hope that through the conversations he would share some asphalt that I would normally get and give it to the member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg for the New Boston Road, if possible.

Just a few comments about the economy in Pictou County: certainly from a manufacturing point of view, it has changed over the last number of years. We have facilities like Maritime Steel and the TrentonWorks, which were originally built along the water, along the East River, back many, many years ago - and the South Korean windmill facility. Of course, time is changing, and it's difficult to keep these types of facilities going.

The rail car industry was always an up and down type of industry. When it was rolling along nice and high, there were all kinds of workers in there. I can remember, Mr. Speaker, when I was in Grade 12, they received a big order. At that time, there were 2,300 people working in that plant for that particular order of tank cars. Being in Grade 12 at that time, a few of my friends knew that if we waited until the end of June to graduate that it would be too late to get in on the order. So we went down in early April, applied for a job. We all got on at the plant and we ended up the last three months working the 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. shift and going to school at the same time. Because of that, we were able to work through the summer - July and August - Mr. Speaker. But again, that was just one of those things that was expected that one would do in those particular times.

When those plants were down, Mr. Speaker, they also affected a lot of other facilities around them. For example, Bobby Hawboldt's Machine Shop, which is in Hillside, right across the water from the Nova Scotia Power plant and the former windmill plant, he employs 40 people, 40 machinists in that particular facility so there's a lot of spinoffs, the same as MacGregor's machine shop in Thorburn. Again, when big facilities shut down, the smaller businesses end up hurting.

In Pictou County, Mr. Speaker, there's definitely a lack of suitable transportation for residents, especially seniors, living in the outlying areas, outside the towns. We do have a CHAD transit bus system that will pick up seniors and the disabled. Again, that does cost,

but it certainly would be nice to have a better type of transit system to help the elderly and the seniors.

Again, due to a lack of reasonably good-paying jobs, Mr. Speaker, there has been an out-migration, of course, of our youth, the same as in many other areas of the province.

Mr. Speaker, Pictou Centre has been well-known in the sports field throughout the years, in all kinds of different sports. We have the Junior A Crushers that are currently playing out of the Wellness Centre in Pictou County, and the Pictou County Junior B Scotians that play out of the Trenton Community Rink. Of course we have the Pictou County Sports Hall of Fame, which is located in New Glasgow. It has a tremendous number of historical sporting facts, artifacts and pictures, not to mention that we did have the luxury of having a few hockey players who played in the National Hockey League, Colin White played with the New Jersey Devils, of course, there's a few more. One is still playing right now, Derrick Walser, who is the Playing Coach of the Belfast Giants over in Ireland.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we have a very active community-based sports system for soccer, hockey, basketball, and many other sports in the county, including rugby, which seems to have been revived over the last 10 or 12 years.

Mr. Speaker, it has been an honour to serve the area as a provincial representative for Pictou Centre. I've been very fortunate to have this opportunity. It was always a pleasure coming to the Legislature and meeting members and finding out a little history of their background. For example, how many in this Legislature would know that the Minister of Health and Wellness lived in the same community as Alex Faulkner. People are sitting here saying well who is Alex Faulkner? Well, Alex Faulkner played on a line with Gordie Howe with the Detroit Red Wings. Our minister lived in the same community, so chatting with him, the name happened to come up, and we had a good dialogue about the days of Ted Lindsay and Gordie Howe. I read about those days, Mr. Speaker.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say a few comments about my constituency assistant. Many members here in the House speak about their constituency assistants, what a great job they do for us and that's certainly very true for all of them. I can say the same for my own constituency assistant, Brenda Wilson. She just does an outstanding job. The people she had helped over the last three years is just totally incredible, and of course she treats everyone regardless of who's coming in through the doors, she treats them with respect and doesn't leave any stone unturned trying to help them with their issues.

Again, Mr. Speaker, our office continues to deal with many, many issues. Some of them are major, but we often deal with workers' compensation claims, and I must say that is one of the most frustrating issues to work with today. Why do I say that? I say that because it seems to me that every attempt you do to help someone they try to close the door in front of you - and we find that consistently happens. I feel that someone should in the future look at this particular system and organization and maybe change some of the ways

that these workers that are injured are not getting their assistance and help because we have run into several issues with residents that I think are deserving of being rewarded with benefits that are not - and I'm talking with case workers looking at evidence given by medical doctors, by specialists, that they're actually ignoring and looking for something that they can hang their hat on to deny. But, anyway, that's been a total frustration over the years.

We do get a lot of Community Service clients coming to our office like I'm sure many other offices across the province do, and of course residents without doctors. That's a fairly common thing when you have someone coming in and they need a particular drug, but they're told you have to have a doctor to get the referral to get the prescription, and so on. But they don't have a doctor, so they can't get to see maybe a psychiatrist or whomever else that they have to see. So, that certainly is an ongoing problem.

I still have people coming in to my office looking for the opportunity to have their dialysis treatment taken care of in Pictou County. The minister and I have chatted about this a number of times, and Sutherland Harris Memorial Hospital has four chairs, but there's a waiting list so they have to be sent to Truro or to perhaps Antigonish to have that treatment. The problem is if the patient is going to Truro they need someone to travel with them. So, there's the travel time going to Truro and back, plus the four to five hours treatment during the time they're there. So it's quite a commitment by a friend, a neighbour, a family member, or whatever.

We do have, like many other areas, people suffering from drug addiction, and it's a type of situation when they come into your office you make the proper phone calls, you try to get the help that they need. We have a detox centre in Pictou, but that's for alcohol and that's short term. But if they're taking drugs and so on and they need help, I think a long-term stay is part of the answer for them.

Mr. Speaker, one other thing I would like to mention is the fact that some senior residents certainly need more maintenance in their facilities. I visit a lot of facilities, and I'm going to continue doing that, but a lot of them have been ignored. There are windows that are rotting. There are water troughs and eaves that have fallen down to the ground. There are shingles rotting. There are sidewalks that are heaving and so on, that are not safe to walk on. Again, that's the type of situation that I would like to see improved in the Centre.

My Pictou Centre association executive: Ryan Sharpe is my president, Kathy Campbell is my secretary, Alan Murray is my treasurer, and Wayne Otter is my vice-president. I must admit that I have a lot of support from my family, from my wife Patsy and my six kids - three boys and three girls, all adults. Four of them are on their way working. Two are still at university, and in a few short years, I'm sure they will be away on their careers also, but they have all always been very supportive. Again, there are times as a parent - and I'm sure it's the same for all of us - when you would like to be somewhere

with one of them, but because of responsibilities, being a member, you sometimes can't be there; you're going to miss a few things and so on.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take the next few words and talk about some of the concerns about the potential for a teachers strike. Allow me to mention a few of the concerns that exist in classrooms today. These concerns have come from teachers in the classrooms. I haven't created these here. I've listened to many, many teachers, and these are some of the things that they are saying. One is cap sizes. Again, I think what they're probably upset about more than anything is the eroding classroom supports in the classrooms across the province coupled with the ever-increasing demands on teachers.

If there's one thing I've heard over and over again, it is that the mental health issues in our schools have increased dramatically. Again, I'm not sure why that's happening, but that is one thing that hits the surface regardless of what school I go to. Even elementary schools, P-5 schools, P-4, and P-6 - administrators and teachers will mention that. We know students are coming to school hungry, a lot of them, but there's also a lot of students coming to school suffering from anxiety, suffering from depression, and so on. It would certainly be nice to have additional supports for these children attending our schools.

Talking about class caps again, I recall being in one school. The cap is supposed to be 20, but they had three classes with 28 in each one of them. Some schools will have capped classes, and many other schools will not. Hopefully over time, this will be rectified. Also, elementary cap sizes have resulted in losses in staff and support in the higher grades in our schools. Many schools end up having to have split classes, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes when you have a split class, the cap size is not used.

When you look at the class average across the board, a school can have some very small classes. For example, a skilled trade class may have a cap of 15 or 16. You may have another specialized class that may have three in it. When you take the overall average, it certainly comes down, but it also creates classes of 40.

There are other schools that have positions unfilled. I can recall talking to some teachers in one school in the province, and they had three positions unfilled: a SchoolsPlus teacher, an RCMP officer, and a school nurse. Those three positions still open, still unfilled.

Again, I can't say enough for the SchoolsPlus program, I wish we had a SchoolsPlus program in every school in Nova Scotia, because the benefits from that particular program are overwhelming. Again, there's a school that I was in where the person responsible for the SchoolsPlus program coming in and looking after students with some mental issues, I believe, could only handle about 18 students. Unfortunately, there's more, and they are left to go to the nearest hospital, or to a facility, hoping they can get some help.

Mr. Speaker, things like TIENET, PowerSchool, data collection, PLCs, school improvement plans, attendance, policies that often don't work, according to some teachers, or provincial assessments that require one-on-one time with students, often when no subs are provided - these are problems occurring in our classrooms.

My colleague who spoke before me mentioned about coding, and again, I'll agree that coding is a great tool, it's a wonderful thing in our schools. But a lot of schools - the technology - when you have wireless that is inadequate, when you have older technology, and you have computers that might take 10 minutes to boot up, to be able to teach your students, or use the technology that's in the school - again, we know that technology changes overnight - but a lot of schools do not have up-to-date, good technology in their schools because it's very expensive. They have old, slow equipment in many schools.

Mr. Speaker, over the last number of years, there has been a continuous increase of new curriculum and the teachers feel that this new curriculum coming down - they haven't received proper training. One comment many teachers will make is that it always seems that the initiatives showing up in a classroom are coming from the top down, not from the bottom up. Maybe going into the future that's what we should do, look at it coming from the bottom up - the people who are in the classrooms, at the grassroots.

Reports card comments - that has been looked at. I think it can still be improved. It's very time-consuming, and at the same time parents receiving them are not understanding what they mean.

Mr. Speaker, other problems that I've heard from teachers in elementary schools where resource teachers begin their year looking after mandated provincial assessments, so they spend the whole month of September working with Grade 1 teachers, Grade 1 students, to administer the observation survey, which is a one-on-one. It takes 45 to 60 minutes per student, which is a lot of time. So if you have a school with 60, 65, or 70 Grade 1 students, every student you have to work with, one-on-one, for 45 to 60 minutes. So that resource teacher, that support person in the school who could be helping other students who are struggling, are not, because they are doing all this testing, and that testing has to be done again before the year is over.

Grade 3 and Grade 4 provincial math and literacy assessments, Mr. Speaker, working with each student individually - so again, talking to a resource teacher, they said: I will not be working with my students until the middle of October, because I'm doing all this testing for all these students who have to - these assessments that have to be done - so I finish in the middle of October, I start working with the children I should be working with, and the report cards are coming out in the middle of November. So they certainly were having trouble with that.

Inserting data that is required, student referrals for services like speech, sight, IPPs, adaptations, team meetings, et cetera, are things that take a lot of time from the classroom

teachers. The classroom composition is critical for student success. That is, classes that may have significant behaviour challenges, students with special needs, students suffering from anxiety and depression, others struggling well below grade level, students on IPPs - and we could go on, Mr. Speaker.

So can you imagine a teacher in a classroom of 20 to 30 students and having a mixture of students with those types of needs - it is very, very difficult to meet the needs of all those students. We have too many classes that have high-risk, special-needs students without educational program assistants for some of the day. Some schools will have an educational assistant that's really not doing any educational work with students, but they're assigned to maybe a student who has a major behavioural problem, and they have to be with that student during the day. So I think it's time for both groups to return to the table and start working some of these things out.

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union requested conciliation - and I did not agree with the department's preconditions before they would return to the table. There is a great need to open dialogue, serious discussion about classroom supports with students and teachers.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to end with some suggestions of things we could possibly look at and do with the educational system. I think it's time to back off and put a freeze on any new initiatives. I think we should hold on with any more new initiatives coming down from the top to the classrooms, because year after year more new initiatives come on top of what they're already responsible for, and they just don't have the time - they want to teach.

Allow teachers the time to receive proper professional development on the numerous initiatives introduced during the past two years. What often happens, a teacher from the school will go to a quick in-service, on a one-day in-service, or maybe two or three hours. They're expected to come back to the school and teach everyone else. Well, often this teacher will come back, have a pretty good grasp on what's going on, and they're expected to train the other teachers.

In theory, maybe it's okay; in reality, I'm not so sure - and, again, when are they going to do that? Well, they can't do it during class time, so I guess they're going to do it after school. But after school you're leaving with your soccer team; another teacher is leaving with the lacrosse team, hockey team, taking care of a music program, going home because their family member has a dentist appointment. So it becomes very, very difficult at times to get this particular training in for all of the teachers responsible for following these various initiatives.

The teachers are too busy doing required things when they should be preparing for the students and teaching. It's incredible the amount of data input that they're responsible for. They're continuously putting data into machines, making school improvement plans, managing websites; in fact, you might even see the odd teacher doing some fundraising.

So we need more support in our resource centres and in our complex classrooms. The complexity in our classrooms has changed so much that teachers are crying out for some help.

The issues of mental health need to be addressed immediately. Give more assistance and funding to create more positions for guidance counsellors and psychologists - and I know we do have some in our schools, but we need more.

Review policies that are ineffective, and I'll mention a couple of them. These are two big ones: one is attendance and one is discipline. Now, attendance - I'm teaching Grade 12 biology and I have a couple of students not coming to my class. They text their friend; they find out they have a test on Thursday morning, so they show up; they write their test; they ask me for any handouts that were passed out or any notes or whatever else. I'm required to give that to them. They're gone again. As a Grade 12 biology teacher, what can they do? Well, they can't do anything. There's no teeth in the policy; there's no teeth in the attendance policy - you cannot make that student attend class even if he's roaming around the building. It's very difficult to make that person attend class because there's no teeth in the attendance policy.

Discipline - I could talk for an hour on discipline. I'm not going to take the opportunity to do that now, but we need a better discipline policy in our schools. The people running our schools - the administrators, the guidance counsellors, the teachers - need to have some teeth in their discipline policy so they can deal with things that happen within the confines of the school each and every day. It's not there, and it causes too much frustration.

I hate to use the word "violence," but some people want to call it violence. There is a form of violence and abuse experienced by many teachers. I talked to a teacher recently in this city who was kicked by an elementary student - kicked in the stomach. They had to go to the hospital to be checked by a doctor. They returned the next day, facing the same person - trying to do the same thing - no repercussions.

This doesn't make much sense to me, why these types of things have to go on. So again, I'll say we have to create a discipline policy with some teeth. We have to create an attendance policy that is meaningful and realistic. In other words, to prepare the student for the realities of the world, when they get out of school and have to work for an employer and so on. I think things will change then. Sometimes it's too late.

It's disappointing to talk with teachers who feel that they are quickly burning out. I'll admit, I haven't talked to too many who've said that, but I've talked to a few, and that is disappointing. They're burning out because of the complexities of the classroom and what they're facing each and every day. These are good teachers.

While it's on my mind, I want to mention one thing about math mentors. I talked to an elementary teacher recently - about five days ago - who has been teaching 28 years. An absolutely excellent teacher, I would say, and this person said, "I don't need math mentors. I don't need math mentors coming to teach me how to teach math. I know how to teach math. Just help me with the complexities of my classroom so I can meet the needs of all the students and I'll be fine."

It's time we listened to the teachers who are engaging students in the classroom and resource rooms each day. Not administrators, not family supervisors, not school board members, not curriculum supervisors, not people who have been removed from the classroom years ago, but listening to the teachers who are there each and every single day, facing the complexities of the classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to end there. I want to thank you for the opportunity to say a few words.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I just thought it would be appropriate to bring the House's attention to the fact that it is the birthday of the member for Fairview-Clayton Park today. I think once we're out of this Chamber and allowed to sing "Happy Birthday," we should all do that.

I do want to wish my honourable colleague a happy birthday and congratulate her on all the successes she's achieved in her life to date. I know her family and her parents would be very proud of her. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: Just before I recognize the honourable Government House Leader, I want to bring to the House's attention my decision on the petition tabled earlier by the honourable member for Pictou East.

It is my decision to reject that petition, based on the prayer. It does not meet the requirements set out by this House of Assembly for such things.

I'll take this opportunity to remind members, as you're talking to your constituents and groups, to consult with the rules and regulations surrounding petitions that have been in place for decades. They are available online, and in the Speaker's Office and this House, I know all members are quite open and welcome to help anybody who wants to communicate with this Assembly via petition. I encourage everybody to do that little bit of homework in advance of putting effort forth for a petition.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. We'll meet again tomorrow on Friday, November 4th, from the hours of 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Following the daily routine, we will go to second reading of Bill No. 62, as well as third reading of Bill Nos. 33, 36, 41, 44, and 47, and if time permits, Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

With that I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow, Friday, November 4th, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to rise to meet again tomorrow, November 4th, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

The House now stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.

[The House rose at 5:31 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**(Tabled November 2, 2016)****RESOLUTION NO. 321**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas Radio Middle East launched their programming in 1996 in Montreal and on April 11, 2016, in Halifax and have been expanding since then to meet the expectations of their primary target market, the Arabic communities of Canada; and

Whereas Mr. Tony Karam and his team offer a wide musical repertoire, gathering all flavours of Arabic music from coast to coast and proudly showcase political, social, and cultural programs; and

Whereas on the morning of April 11th, I had the opportunity to be one of the first guests to congratulate Radio Middle East live on-air during an interview with Mrs. Zeina Karam;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Tony Karam, general manager, and Zeina Karam, programming director, and wish them continued success.

RESOLUTION NO. 322

By: Ms. Marian Mancini (Dartmouth South)

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

Whereas the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre provides a whole array of services and programs for seniors and their families in the community, from Meals on Wheels to medical transportation, physical fitness, painting, bingo, and much more; and

Whereas volunteers are the life and the very heart of the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre, providing their many talents to make the centre a vibrant part of the downtown Dartmouth neighbourhood; and

Whereas Margret Chisholm has given her time at the centre assisting with the canteen;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere congratulations and a big thank you to Margret Chisholm for all the hours she has given to helping Dartmouth seniors and the comfort she has brought to so many.

RESOLUTION NO. 323

By: Ms. Marian Mancini (Dartmouth South)

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

Whereas the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre provides a whole array of services and programs for seniors and their families in the community, from Meals on Wheels to medical transportation, physical fitness, painting, bingo, and much more; and

Whereas volunteers are the life and the very heart of the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre, providing their many talents to make the centre a vibrant part of the downtown Dartmouth neighbourhood; and

Whereas Lorraine Cole has given her time at the centre assisting as receptionist - answering the phone, greeting people, answering any questions, and directing people;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in offering sincere congratulations and a big thank you to Lorraine Cole for all the hours she has given to helping Dartmouth seniors and the comfort she has brought to so many.

RESOLUTION NO. 324

By: Ms. Marian Mancini (Dartmouth South)

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

Whereas the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre provides a whole array of services and programs for seniors and their families in the community, from Meals on Wheels to medical transportation, physical fitness, painting, bingo, and much more; and

Whereas volunteers are the life and the very heart of the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre, providing their many talents to make the centre a vibrant part of the downtown Dartmouth neighbourhood; and

Whereas Lucia Dayeh has given her time at the centre assisting with administration duties such as updating the website, creating posters and tickets for special events, and working in the cash office;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere congratulations and a big thank you to Lucia Dayeh for all the hours she has given to helping Dartmouth seniors and the comfort she has brought to so many.

RESOLUTION NO. 325

By: Ms. Marian Mancini (Dartmouth South)

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

Whereas the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre provides a whole array of services and programs for seniors and their families in the community, from Meals on Wheels to medical transportation, physical fitness, painting, bingo, and much more; and

Whereas volunteers are the life and the very heart of the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre, providing their many talents to make the centre a vibrant part of the downtown Dartmouth neighbourhood; and

Whereas Lorraine Flemming has given her time at the centre assisting in the dining room with setting the tables and serving the noontime meals;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere congratulations and a big thank you to Lorraine Flemming for all the hours she has given to helping Dartmouth seniors and the comfort she has brought to so many.

RESOLUTION NO. 326

By: Ms. Marian Mancini (Dartmouth South)

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

Whereas the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre provides a whole array of services and programs for seniors and their families in the community, from Meals on Wheels to medical transportation, physical fitness, painting, bingo, and much more; and

Whereas volunteers are the life and the very heart of the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre, providing their many talents to make the centre a vibrant part of the downtown Dartmouth neighbourhood; and

Whereas Martha Gariepy has given her time at the centre assisting with Tuesday Bingo;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere congratulations and a big thank you to Martha Gariepy for all the hours she has given to helping Dartmouth seniors and the comfort she has brought to so many.

RESOLUTION NO. 327

By: Ms. Marian Mancini (Dartmouth South)

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

Whereas the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre provides a whole array of services and programs for seniors and their families in the community, from Meals on Wheels to medical transportation, physical fitness, painting, bingo, and much more; and

Whereas volunteers are the life and the very heart of the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre, providing their many talents to make the centre a vibrant part of the downtown Dartmouth neighbourhood; and

Whereas Mary Gouthro has given her time at the centre assisting with the reception desk;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere congratulations and a big thank you to Mary Gouthro for all the hours she has given to helping Dartmouth seniors and the comfort she has brought to so many.

RESOLUTION NO. 328

By: Ms. Marian Mancini (Dartmouth South)

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

Whereas the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre provides a whole array of services and programs for seniors and their families in the community, from Meals on Wheels to medical transportation, physical fitness, painting, bingo, and much more; and

Whereas volunteers are the life and the very heart of the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre, providing their many talents to make the centre a vibrant part of the downtown Dartmouth neighbourhood; and

Whereas Lois Hetherington has given her time at the centre assisting with bingo, and the monthly supper and card party, and was secretary on the board of directors;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere congratulations and a big thank you to Lois Hetherington for all the hours she has given to helping Dartmouth seniors and the comfort she has brought to so many.

RESOLUTION NO. 329

By: Ms. Marian Mancini (Dartmouth South)

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

Whereas the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre provides a whole array of services and programs for seniors and their families in the community, from Meals on Wheels to medical transportation, physical fitness, painting, bingo, and much more; and

Whereas volunteers are the life and the very heart of the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre, providing their many talents to make the centre a vibrant part of the downtown Dartmouth neighbourhood; and

Whereas Kevin Morris has given his time at the centre assisting with Meals on Wheels;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere congratulations and a big thank you to Kevin Morris for all the hours he has given to helping Dartmouth seniors and the comfort he has brought to so many.

RESOLUTION NO. 330

By: Ms. Marian Mancini (Dartmouth South)

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

Whereas the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre provides a whole array of services and programs for seniors and their families in the community, from Meals on Wheels to medical transportation, physical fitness, painting, bingo, and much more; and

Whereas volunteers are the life and the very heart of the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre, providing their many talents to make the centre a vibrant part of the downtown Dartmouth neighbourhood; and

Whereas Kathleen Richardson-Prager has given her time at the centre assisting with the canteen, where she dates and labels baked goods and keeps the canteen tidy;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere congratulations and a big thank you to Kathleen Richardson-Prager for all the hours she has given to helping Dartmouth seniors and the comfort she has brought to so many.

RESOLUTION NO. 331

By: Ms. Marian Mancini (Dartmouth South)

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

Whereas the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre provides a whole array of services and programs for seniors and their families in the community, from Meals on Wheels to medical transportation, physical fitness, painting, bingo, and much more; and

Whereas volunteers are the life and the very heart of the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre, providing their many talents to make the centre a vibrant part of the downtown Dartmouth neighbourhood; and

Whereas Lucille Saunders has given her time at the centre assisting in the kitchen with baking, cleaning, making sandwiches, and assisting with the Meals on Wheels program;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere congratulations and a big thank you to Lucille Saunders for all the hours she has given to helping Dartmouth seniors and the comfort she has brought to so many.

RESOLUTION NO. 332

By: Ms. Marian Mancini (Dartmouth South)

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

Whereas the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre provides a whole array of services and programs for seniors and their families in the community, from Meals on Wheels to medical transportation, physical fitness, painting, bingo, and much more; and

Whereas volunteers are the life and the very heart of the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre, providing their many talents to make the centre a vibrant part of the downtown Dartmouth neighbourhood; and

Whereas Karen Wenaus has given her time at the centre assisting with serving and setup for special events and as chair of the board of directors;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere congratulations and a big thank you to Karen Wenaus for all the hours she has given to helping Dartmouth seniors and the comfort she has brought to so many.

RESOLUTION NO. 333

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 East Hants Sports Hall of Fame has released their 2016 list of inductees; and

Whereas sports are a vital part of healthy, active living; and

Whereas the Noel Shore Shots, a winning team of young people who grew up together, has been inducted into the East Hants Sports Hall of Fame for its participation and excellence in a variety of sports;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly acknowledge the Noel Shore Shots for their team spirit, winning several provincial and Maritime titles and congratulate the team for its contribution to sports.

RESOLUTION NO. 334

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 East Hants Sports Hall of Fame has released their 2016 list of inductees; and

Whereas sports are a vital part of healthy, active living; and

Whereas Merlin White, an excellent softball coach, has been inducted into the East Hants Sports Hall of Fame for his contribution to softball;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly acknowledge Merlin White for his dedication to the sport of softball through coaching; envisioning a

softball field for the people of the Hants North area; bringing that dream to reality with the best ballfield in East Hants, equipped with lights and fully electronic scoreboard; a clubhouse equipped with canteen, team area, scorekeeper, announcer booth, equipment room; providing grounds-keeping service for many years, and congratulate him for his contribution to the sport of softball.

RESOLUTION NO. 335

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 East Hants Sports Hall of Fame has released their 2016 list of inductees; and

Whereas sports are a vital part of healthy, active living; and

Whereas the late Melvin Nelson was a very dedicated, active community volunteer, including both playing and coaching sports;

Therefore be it resolved that Members of the House of Assembly acknowledge Melvin's extensive volunteer work, which included many years of service to the Milford Recreation Association as President and then as Director; coaching and playing for various ball teams; serving as League President, coach, referee-in-chief of EHMH; refereeing with the NSHA; and congratulate Melvin Nelson posthumously for his contribution to his community and sports.

RESOLUTION NO. 336

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 East Hants Sports Hall of Fame has released their 2016 list of inductees; and

Whereas sports are a vital part of healthy, active living; and

Whereas the late Jeff Smith was a gifted young athlete and well-liked team leader with a competitive spirit;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly acknowledge his participation in hockey from winning the Provincial Championships, Atlantic Championships, playing for Team Atlantic at the World Under-17 Hockey Challenge, being drafted by the Victoriaville Tigres and winning Presidents Trophies; and congratulate Jeff Smith posthumously for his contribution to hockey.

RESOLUTION NO. 337

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 East Hants Sports Hall of Fame has released their 2016 list of inductees; and

Whereas sports are a vital part of healthy, active living; and

Whereas Frank Fraser, a fierce competitor, has been inducted into the East Hants Sports Hall of Fame for his participation in, and contribution to, racing;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly acknowledge Frank Fraser as a racer; race car builder; team owner; promoter; race director; mentor; Vice President of the Maritime Motorsport Hall of Fame; inductee into the Maritime Motorsport Hall of Fame and the Truro Sports Hall of Fame; his excellent racing skills, with over 100 winning races during his career, and congratulate him for his contribution to the sport of racing.

RESOLUTION NO. 338

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 East Hants Sports Hall of Fame has released their 2016 list of inductees; and

Whereas sports are a vital part of healthy, active living; and

Whereas Bill Parker, a natural athlete, has been inducted into the East Hants Sports Hall of Fame for his participation and excellence in a variety of sports;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly acknowledge Bill's progressing from Little League Baseball to football to hockey, where he demonstrated dominance as a player, commanding respect from opposing players for his skill; an All-Star right winger; member of the Nova Scotia Canada Games team; Assistant Captain; Captain; earning a tryout with the Edmonton Oilers, and congratulate Bill for his contribution to sports, in particular hockey.

RESOLUTION NO. 339

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 East Hants Sports Hall of Fame has released their 2016 list of inductees; and

Whereas sports are a vital part of healthy, active living; and

Whereas Annie Woodworth has been inducted into the East Hants Sports Hall of Fame for her contribution to Women's Fast Ball both as a player and a coach;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly acknowledge Annie's competitive career which started as a pitcher and outfielder in Women's Fast Pitch; moving forward to playing with various teams winning Provincial Intermediate A titles; Maritime Ladies, Nova Scotia and Regionals, representing Nova Scotia at the Nationals on All-Star teams; coaching; switching to golf, winning Senior Club Championships, NSGA, and congratulate Annie for her contribution to sports.

RESOLUTION NO. 340

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas when the Southwest Hants Fire Society recognized the need for a Helipad in there are, they quickly set to work to find the funds to pay for this potentially lifesaving addition to their fire station; and

Whereas although there are many people who worked extremely hard to ensure the Helipad became a reality at the substation in Vaughan, you can be assured that Pat Porter and Dave Peters were the driving forces behind the numerous fundraisers held to secure

the necessary funding and special mention to Victor Chandler for the many hours he donated running the heavy equipment to prepare the pad; and

Whereas when the Life Flight helicopter landed at the new Helipad location for the grand opening, it was met with emotion and cheers as community members, organizers and first responders who had worked so diligently to make this happen.

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Pat, Dave and the rest of the Southwest Hants Fire Society members on their perseverance and determination in making the Helipad in Vaughan a reality.

RESOLUTION NO. 341

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Shannon Pierangeli, owner of Meraki Event Planning, and Kathy Johnston, owner of fitness Junkies, organized the first annual Falmouth Trale Run 5k in Falmouth; and

Whereas on October 1, 2016, 114 people participated in a fundraiser which combined a 55k run with a few samples of beer along the way, and the Schoolhouse Brewery located in Falmouth, owned and operated by Cameron Hartley, was the main brewery supplying samples of their different brews at various locations throughout the 5k course; and

Whereas the West Hants Ground Search and Rescue were the recipients of \$1,440 which was raised through participant fees and sponsors of the event and will go towards training and equipment for the organization.

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kathy, Shannon and all those who helped make this such a huge success in its premier year and wish them all the best on the second annual Falmouth Trale Run on September 30, 2017.

RESOLUTION NO. 342

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas seven-year Chloe Dunbar has become quite an ambassador for the War Amps Child Amputee Program (CHAMP) after being born missing a portion of her right arm; and

Whereas Chloe, the daughter of Mark and Brenda Dunbar of Newport, has been spreading the War Amps' play safe message and encouraging children to "spot the danger" before they play; and

Whereas Chloe was just five years old when she gave a presentation, with the help of her parents, to 200 schoolchildren to educate them on life as an amputee and helps lay a wreath every Remembrance Day on behalf of the War Amps' Operation Legacy.

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank Chloe Dunbar for her contribution to society by spreading the message of safety wish her all the best in her future.

RESOLUTION NO. 343

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Dean Woodman started playing golf when he was 10 years old and has been playing ever since for the last 47 years, putting 35 local championship wins under his belt; and

Whereas throughout his golfing career, Dean has won junior, amateur and provincial championships and is now on the senior team hoping for another championship win to add of his collection; and

Whereas Since 1979, Dean has been working at the Avon Valley Golf and Country Club in Falmouth working his way up the ranks to becoming Grounds Superintendent and is well-respected by manager Brad Corkum for the exceptional effort he puts into making the course one of the best in the area.

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dean Woodman on his many championships and wish him all the best in future tee-offs.

RESOLUTION NO. 344

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas for 30 of her 90 years, Cora Bruce from Pembroke, Hants County, has been raising money for the Terry Fox Foundation; and

Whereas 40 years ago in 1976, Cora had a mastectomy which inspired her to donate her time to helping others who are going through the same procedures and keeps her going every year to fundraise with friends and family; and

Whereas Cora, along with 13 other walkers, raised a grand total of \$2,429 this year during the Terry Fox Run in Pembroke.

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly thank Cora Bruce for her perseverance and determination and thank her continued support of the Terry Fox Foundation.

RESOLUTION NO. 345

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas on June 4th, the Avon View Avalanche senior girls' rugby team won their fifth provincial banner since the high school opened in 2003 and their victory was made that much sweeter as it came down to the final game between their cross-town rival, King's-Edgehill School; and

Whereas Sydney Cossar, Rebecca McDonnell, Jessie Bryan, Rebecca O'Reilly, Hannah Allen, Kristian Thornton, Alessia Costazza, Amanda Krigslund, Leslie Greeno, Spencer Kehoe, Meagan Whitehead, Allison Fudge, Kait Shreenan, Ella Byers, Haley Verge, Kia Sawler, Sophie Parker, Natalie Rippey, Julie Morash, Erin Armstrong, Paige Parker, Ella Lentz, Shay Vouligny, Mckayla States, and Briana Hennigar, along with coach Jim Bryan, were thrilled to succeed in winning the provincial banner for the second consecutive year; and

Whereas determination, perseverance and commitment to their teammates made his group of athletes a force to be reckoned with on the field this year.

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Avon View Avalanches Senior Girls' Rugby Team on their championship win and wish them all the best in future games.

RESOLUTION NO. 346

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas municipal government is a type of local authority that provides local services, facilities, safety and infrastructure for communities; and

Whereas Anna Allen has served her community as a volunteer on many committees including the Windsor Regional High School Band Parents Association, Windsor Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary, the Windsor Bluefins Parent Association, and was a member of the Hants West School Board; and

Whereas from her first taste of municipal politics as a town councillor in 1991 to serving as the Mayor of Windsor from 2000-2008, Anna is no stranger to the position on council and was once again elected to serve as mayor during the recent municipal election in October.

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Anna Allen on her election to the mayoral position on the Town of Windsor Council and wish her all the best.

RESOLUTION NO. 347

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas municipal government is a type of local authority that provides local services, facilities, safety and infrastructure for communities; and

Whereas Laurie Murley is an experienced councillor who has held leadership positions on many municipal, provincial and non-profit board and committees and has sat as Windsor's deputy mayor for six years as well as her appointment as Vice President of UNSM; and

Whereas Laurie was elected to serve her fourth term on the Windsor Town Council during the recent municipal election in October.

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Laurie Murley on her re-election to a seat on the Town of Windsor Council and wish her continued success.

RESOLUTION NO. 348

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas municipal government is a type of local authority that provides local services, facilities, safety and infrastructure for communities; and

Whereas Jim Ivey is a marketing and business technology consultant, is actively engaged as a local volunteer and board member and has clear vision of working together while embracing change in Windsor and Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Jim was elected to serve on the Windsor Town Council during the recent municipal election in October.

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jim Ivey on his election to a seat on the Town of Windsor Council and wish him all the best.

RESOLUTION NO. 349

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas municipal government is a type of local authority that provides local services, facilities, safety and infrastructure for communities; and

Whereas Shelley Bibby has been an active volunteer in the community serving on not-for-profit daycare and library boards as well as hockey heritage and baseball associations, and it was a passion for local politics which led her to run a municipal seat; and

Whereas Shelley was elected to serve on the Windsor Town Council during the recent municipal election in October.

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Shelley Bibby on her election to a seat on the Town of Windsor Council and wish her all the best.

RESOLUTION NO. 350

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Royal Canadian Legion has established a time-honoured system for showing appreciation to members who dedicate their time in service for the branch and for outstanding service beyond the call of duty; and

Whereas since receiving his Meritorious Service Medal in 2006, Comrade Marvin Lantz has continued volunteering his time, knowledge and expertise at the Windsor Royal Canadian Legion Branch 009; and

Whereas whether he's supervising the distribution of wreaths and crosses prior to Remembrance Day, chairing the poppy committee or organizing bingos and other fundraisers, Marvin's dedication is evident from the countless volunteer hours spent at the Windsor Legion.

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly thank Marvin for his dedication and commitment to being a lifelong volunteer and congratulate him on receiving the Palm Leaf on May 15, 2016.

RESOLUTION NO. 351

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Royal Canadian Legion has established a time-honoured system for showing appreciation to members who dedicate their time in service for the branch and for outstanding service beyond the call of duty; and

Whereas Sandra Houston has been a dedicated Legion member of the Windsor Royal Canadian Legion Branch 009 for twenty six years where she has been an active volunteer assisting with various functions; and

Whereas often behind the scenes, Sandra can be found helping out at banquets and funeral receptions, as well as the Seniors Safety Luncheon, Relay For Life, Red Hatters, and many other fabulous organizations;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly thank Sandra for her dedication and commitment to being a lifelong volunteer and congratulate her on receiving the Volunteer of the Year Award on May 15, 2016.

RESOLUTION NO. 352

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Royal Canadian Legion has established a time-honoured system for showing appreciation to members who dedicate their time in service for the branch and for outstanding service beyond the call of duty; and

Whereas Roscoe Schofield has been a dedicated Legion member of the Windsor Royal Canadian Legion Branch 009 since 1997 and started serving on the executive in 2002; and

Whereas a carpenter by trade, Roscoe has volunteered his expertise with many renovations and enhancements over the years, and assists with the monthly breakfasts, bingos and the weekly Chase The Ace Fundraiser;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly thank Roscoe for his dedication and commitment to being a lifelong volunteer and congratulate him on receiving the Life Membership Award on May 15, 2016.

RESOLUTION NO. 353

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the Royal Canadian Legion has established a time-honoured system for showing appreciation to members who dedicate their time in service for the branch and for outstanding service beyond the call of duty; and

Whereas Carol Clayton-Smithson has been a dedicated Legion member of the Windsor Royal Canadian Legion Branch 009 since 1990 and spent several of those years on various committees and the executive; and

Whereas along with her dedication to the Windsor Legion, Carol is also involved with the Friends of Dykeland, the Juniper Grove Church Sunday School, the local Sea Cadet Corps and has assisted the Falmouth and Avonport Brownie Pack with the camps, as a cook, first aider and canoe instructor;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly thank Carol for her dedication and commitment to being a lifelong volunteer and congratulate her on receiving the Life Membership Award on May 15, 2016.

RESOLUTION NO. 354

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 Maureen Russell is a long-time resident of Clam Harbour, Nova Scotia and a long-time volunteer in her community in various roles; and

Whereas Maureen has gone door to door canvassing for such organizations as the Heart & Stroke Foundation, the Kidney Foundation, the Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance; and

Whereas Maureen has volunteered twelve years for the Oyster Pond Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary and is a founding member of the Lake Charlotte and Area Heritage Society helping with many activities at Memory Lane including making fudge, and mentoring the youth and seniors who prepare the delicious offerings from the locally famous "cookhouse".

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Maureen Russell for giving her time and talents for the benefit of locals and visitors to the beautiful Eastern Shore.

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**(Tabled November 3, 2016)****RESOLUTION NO. 365**

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Public Service Commission)

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

Whereas Mark Poirier has been a devoted chairperson and advocate for the Halifax Urban Greenway Association; and

Whereas the Halifax Urban Greenway Association aims to preserve a natural area in the south end of Halifax by providing a multi-use trail that will protect trees in the area, while providing a recreational footpath as well;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly commend Mark Poirier and the Halifax Urban Greenway Association for their ongoing, tireless work in this much-needed trail initiative for our community.

RESOLUTION NO. 366

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Matthew Smith, a senior student at Colchester North High School in Tatamagouche, is articulate, well organized and strives for excellence in his academic work and all aspects of student life; and

Whereas Matthew is a dedicated, skilled athlete who shows leadership whether he is playing hockey, soccer, softball, or basketball; and

Whereas this young man is kind and respectful, polite and cordial, a great reader and writer, and a critical thinker;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Matthew Smith for his many contributions to North Colchester High School, for serving as an excellent role model for his peers, and for being named student of the month for September 2016.

RESOLUTION NO. 367

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Kevin Doyle, a senior at North Colchester High School in Tatamagouche, is an excellent academic student who has a natural curiosity to learn, is self-disciplined, and produces top-quality work; and

Whereas his determination and dedication are also shown in his team effort at soccer and basketball; and

Whereas he is also a private in the Canadian Armed Forces Reserve, having completed his Basic Military Qualification last winter, his infantry training this summer, and his participation in the Exercise Strident Tracer, a week-long training event for over 1,500 soldiers from Canada and the United States;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Kevin Doyle for his hard work to achieve success in all aspects of his life, for being named student of the month for September 2016 at North Colchester High School, and for serving as an excellent role model for his peers.

RESOLUTION NO. 368

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas the devastating loss of his son Charlie at age 14 from bone cancer and the memories of watching Charlie suffer from the effects of the chemical treatments, and the enduring impact it had on Chris McDougall and his family, prompted Chris to conduct Charlie's Ride in 2016 as a fundraiser and awareness-generator for the Beatrice Hunter Research Institute; and

Whereas in 1999, the late Beatrice Hunter bequeathed \$12.5 million to the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation for a more productive and capacity-building cancer research here in Atlantic Canada; and

Whereas cycling from Vancouver to the Terry Fox Monument in Newfoundland and Labrador, Chris raised \$225,000 for cancer research, and expects to generate more

through a trust he is creating called the Charlie and Dan McDougall Endowment Fund for Cancer Research;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chris McDougall for undertaking and succeeding in the completion of that difficult bike ride, for allowing members of this Legislature to join him in celebrating Charlie's life, and honouring his memory, for the monetary donation his personal fundraiser has made to cancer research, for reminding us of the need for continued support for such research, and for the ongoing legacy in Charlie's honour.

RESOLUTION NO. 369

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas international students bring new ideas and energy to our province, enriching our communities and strengthening our post-secondary schools; and

Whereas we're fortunate to have thousands of bright, talented young people from around the world coming to Nova Scotia each year to advance their educations, and learn new skills; and

Whereas Halifax Mayor Mike Savage and his staff recently held another successful Welcome Event for International Students at Halifax Central Library, with endless selfies, great entertainment and food;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature thank Mayor Mike Savage, Tracey Jones-Grant and Roberto Montiel of Halifax Municipality for being excellent hosts.

RESOLUTION NO. 370

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas Beverley and William "Sandy" Shearer own and operate the Osborne Street Tim Hortons in Armdale, a very popular local meeting spot for the surrounding communities; and

Whereas Bev and Sandy are active in many worthy fundraising endeavours, including the annual Tim Hortons Camp Day campaign, as well as the sale of Smile Cookies, to raise money for the IWK and Feed Nova Scotia; and

Whereas they have also extended a great deal of support to me in my role as the MLA, providing Timbits, coffee, and other treats to community events I've organized, and hosted me in their café for my popup constituency office, which I've taken to calling Tim's Talks;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly thank Bev and Sandy for their community-mindedness, and wish them continued health and success.

RESOLUTION NO. 371

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas each September the parents involved with the Springvale Community Fund host an outdoor movie night called Springvale Under The Stars where hundreds of families bring chairs and blankets to the neighbourhood field and enjoy a barbecue and family movie on a huge inflatable screen; and

Whereas this fun event gives neighbours and kids in the Springvale community a wonderful opportunity to mingle while raising money for improvements to the field including outdoor rink maintenance, benches, and picnic tables; and

Whereas this September's event was the biggest yet and more than \$30,000 has been raised for the fund over the last four years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly thank organizers Allison Brown, Allison and Scott Flemming, Bruce Lusby, Bob MacKinnon, Cari and Colin MacNeil, Derek Martin, Ken McOnie, Carolyn Townsend, and Casey Walsh for making the community of Springvale a better place for children and families alike.

RESOLUTION NO. 372

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 the evening of October 5th, I had the pleasure of attending the 4th Annual Archbishop's Fundraising Dinner and Silent Auction at the Cunard Centre put on by the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth; and

Whereas this year the funds raised at the dinner will go towards the new Archdiocesan Ministry of Care and Companionship which aims to increase awareness of the needs of people suffering from illness, frailty due to their age, and those who are dying and their bereaved loved ones; and

Whereas the ministry will be using these funds to train parishioners to act as ministers of care and companionship for the dying and their families helping to provide them with emotional and spiritual support during some of the hardest times in one's life;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank the Most Reverend Archbishop Anthony Mancini; His Eminence Cardinal Gérald Lacroix, Archbishop of Quebec and Primate of the Catholic Church in Canada, the dinner's organizing committee, sponsors, and attendees and wish them all continued good health.

RESOLUTION NO. 373

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 Inhae Park has worked with the YMCA for 15 years beginning her career as a school settlement worker and later becoming an active living coordinator; and

Whereas Inhae now serves as the provincial coordinator of the YMCA's YREACH program which provides indispensable information, orientation, and settlement support to immigrants, refugees, and their families as they adjust to their new lives in communities across Nova Scotia; and

Whereas my office works very closely with Inhae and the YREACH team and I'm deeply appreciative of how committed they are to providing the counselling, visitations, and education our province needs to successfully settle and integrate our newest Nova Scotians;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly thank Inhae Park for the important role she plays in our province's welcoming efforts and wish her continued success.

RESOLUTION NO. 374

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 September 17th, the 1st Armdale Scouts and their leaders participated in the Great Canadian Shoreline Clean Up initiative at Sir Sandford Fleming Park; and

Whereas the 1st Armdale Scouts have a decades-long history in the Armdale area and have made a habit of participating in fall cleanups in our community to protect wildlife and beautify our parks; and

Whereas I had the pleasure of attending their closing ceremonies this year personally congratulating all the local Beavers, Cubs, and Scouts groups on their community spirit and thanking the dedicated leaders and involved families who support them;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly thank the 1st Armdale Scouts and their sponsor, St. James Anglican Church, for their commitment to making our community a better place to live and play.

RESOLUTION NO. 375

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas for the last 16 years Linda Mosher, outgoing regional councillor for Halifax West Armdale, has proudly represented our community at city hall and has never stopped working to make our city more liveable, beautiful, and connected; and

Whereas Linda's accomplishments are too numerous to summarize but include her successful application for National Historic Site status for Melville Island, Deadman's Island, and the Dingle Memorial Tower; and

Whereas Linda has remained strong and committed to service through some of her most difficult days;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly thank Linda Mosher for her contributions to the city of Halifax and wish her family health and happiness.

RESOLUTION NO. 376

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas health promotion plays a vital role in helping to prevent the development of chronic disease, improve our quality of life, and reduce the strain on our public health care system; and

Whereas I was pleased to join a number of my constituents for a wellness evening at the Waterton in Armdale this June where local dietician, Heather Barnes, share some of her expertise with all attendees specifically outlining the nutritional role that fruits, vegetables, and pulses play in our overall health; and

Whereas Heather demonstrated how to make a variety of healthy and delicious recipes including spiralized Greek salad, watermelon cupcakes, and black bean brownies and reminded everyone who participated that good health starts at home;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly thank Heather Barnes for her health promotion efforts in our communities and wish her continued success.

RESOLUTION NO. 377

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas from May to October of this year a pilot project dubbed the Mobile Food Market brought healthy, high-quality fruits and vegetables to a number of underserved communities using a converted Halifax Transit bus; and

Whereas this produce was sold at very affordable rates and the bust itself was stationed at accessible and well-known community hubs including the Spryfield Recreational Centre, a short distance from Armdale; and

Whereas food security is a serious issue for our cities and with not a single grocery store located within the boundaries of Halifax Armdale, I was immensely pleased to see the Mobile Market stopping so close by every second Saturday;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking Mobile Market Coordinator, Julia Kemp; YWCA Food Security Coordinator,

Twyla Nichols; the city of Halifax; and the many community organizations and generous volunteers who made this initiative so successful.

RESOLUTION NO. 378

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 Vincent McDonald is a long-time resident of Grand Desert and has been active in his community in various volunteer roles; and

Whereas Vincent is a parishioner of St. Anselm's Roman Catholic Parish in West Chezzetcook, assisting in various parish activities; and

Whereas Vincent is a charter member of the Knights of Columbus Council 9093 and active in various activities of the council, including Past Grand Knight;

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

RESOLUTION NO. 379

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 Victor Manning is a long-time resident of Grand Desert and has been active in his community in various volunteer roles; and

Whereas Victor is a parishioner of St. Anselm's Roman Catholic Parish in West Chezzetcook, assisting in various parish activities; and

Whereas Victor is a charter member of the Knights of Columbus Council 9093 and active in various activities of the council;

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

RESOLUTION NO. 380

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 Reginald Mannette is a life-long resident of West Chezzetcook and has been active in his community in various volunteer roles; and

Whereas Reginald is a parishioner of St. Anselm's Roman Catholic Parish in West Chezzetcook, assisting in various parish activities; and

Whereas Reginald is a charter member of the Knights of Columbus Council 9093 and active in various activities of the council, including Past Grand Knight;

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

RESOLUTION NO. 381

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 Gregory Baker is a current resident of Lake Echo and a former resident of West Chezzetcook and has been active in his community in various volunteer roles; and

Whereas Gregory is a parishioner of St. Anselm's Roman Catholic Parish in West Chezzetcook, assisting in various parish activities; and

Whereas Gregory is a charter member of the Knights of Columbus Council 9093 and active in various activities of the council, including Past Grand Knight;

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

RESOLUTION NO. 382

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 Austin Mannette is a life-long resident of West Chezzetcook and has been active in his community in various volunteer roles; and

Whereas Austin is a parishioner of St. Anselm's Roman Catholic Parish in West Chezzetcook, assisting in various parish activities; and

Whereas Austin is a charter member of the Knights of Columbus Council 9093 and active in various activities of the council, including Past Grand Knight;

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

RESOLUTION NO. 383

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 Arnold Bonang is a life-long resident of Head of Chezzetcook and has been active in his community in various volunteer roles; and

Whereas Arnold was a past leader in the local Boy Scout movement and is a parishioner of St. Anselm's Roman Catholic Parish in West Chezzetcook, assisting in various parish activities; and

Whereas Arnold is a charter member of the Knights of Columbus Council 9093 and active in various activities of the council;

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

RESOLUTION NO. 384

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 Anthony Boudreau is a life-long resident of West Porters Lake and has been active in his community in various volunteer roles; and

Whereas Anthony is a parishioner of St. Anselm's Roman Catholic Parish in West Chezzetcook, assisting in various parish activities; and

Whereas Arnold is a charter member of the Knights of Columbus Council 9093 and active in various activities of the council, where he currently serves as Grand Knight;

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