



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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

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

Third Session

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:	
No. 65, Democratic Renewal Act, Hon. S. Belliveau	1127
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS:	
Silent Witness (N.S.) - Commend, Ms. K. MacFarlane	1128
<i>Emily and Jeff's Adventure</i> : Release - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	1128
Brymer, Jill: Death of - Tribute, Hon. L. Hines	1129
Coldwell, Greg: Philanthropy - Applaud, Mr. J. Lohr	1129
Sm. Bus. - Support, Ms. L. Zann.....	1130

Murray, Mary/N.S. Athletes: Canada 55+ Games - Participation, Hon. T. Ince	1130
McDougall, Amanda: CBRM Coun. - Election Congrats., Hon. A. MacLeod	1131
Bridgewater Barracudas - Prov. Swim Meet, Hon. M. Furey	1131
Faulkner, Emma et al: Soccer Init. - Applaud, Mr. J. Lohr	1131
Burke, Laura Caitlin: Mental Illness - Destigmatization, Ms. L. Roberts	1132
RCL Br 10 (Amherst): Poppy Campaign - Commend, Mr. T. Farrell	1132
Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos: <i>Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse</i> (1937 à 2002) - En ligne, Hon. C. d'Entremont	1132
Team Broken Earth: N.S. Members - Recognize, Hon. David Wilson	1133
Cooley, Kenny: Courage - Recognize, Ms. P. Arab	1133
Mem. Composite HS - DEWALT Donation, Mr. E. Orrell	1134
Prem.: Physician Access - Slogan Change, Hon. S. Belliveau	1134
Marriott, Mikayla - Natl. Cdn. Girl, Teen & Miss Cdn. Ambassador, Mr. B. Jessome	1134
W. Pictou Cons. Sch. Garden Club - Recognize, Ms. K. MacFarlane	1135
S. Shore REMO Staff et al: Drought Assistance - Thank, Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft	1135
Bay Grandmothers: Work - Applaud, Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse	1136
Mayhew, Jeff/Sportwheels Sackville Staff - Skates & Hockey Gear Giveaway, Mr. B. Maguire	1136
Northside Harbourview Hosp. Fdn.: Wig Bank - Opening, Mr. E. Orrell	1136
Promises: Unkept - Results, Hon. S. Belliveau	1137
Victoria Co. Mun. Election: Councillors - Election Congrats., Ms. P. Eyking	1137
Lewis, Steve - Irving Schwartz Award, Hon. A. MacLeod	1137
Teachers - Approach: Prem. - Reconsider, Ms. L. Roberts	1138
Steele, Burnell - Biggs Award (2016), Mr. K. Irving	1138

Fraser, Denver & Gabrielle - Track & Field Accomplishments, Hon. J. Baillie	1139
Natl. Truth & Reconciliation Commn.: 18 th Call to Action - Highlight, Ms. L. Zann	1139
Empringham, Aiyanna & Emma et al: Bluenose Classic Tournament - Participation, Mr. S. Gough	1140
Fisherman's Cove Gallery - Anniv. (20 th), Ms. J. Treen.....	1140
McNutt, Elliott: Oxford Skateboard Park - Fundraising, Hon. J. Baillie	1140
BayRides/Commun. Wheels: Work - Congrats., Hon. D. Peterson-Rafuse.....	1141
CBRM Council Swearing-in: Sydney-Whitney Pier Councillors - Congrats., Mr. D. Mombourquette	1141
Weymouth Firebirds/Coaches - Peewee AA Atlantics Championship, Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	1141
Adler, David/E. Coast Outfitters - Bus. Thank, Mr. I. Rankin.....	1142
MacKenzie, Gus: Death of - Tribute, Hon. K. Regan.....	1143
Antigonish Town Coun.: New Additions - Congrats., Hon. R. Delorey	1143
Jones, Brian: Toronto Argonauts - Draft Congrats., Mr. B. Horne	1144
Baylis, Prof. Françoise - Order of Can., Mr. J. Stroink	1144
Knockwood, Freeman Douglas - Commun. Commitment, Hon. M. Miller	1145
Farris, Cathy - Commun. Dedication, Hon. L. Hines	1145
Wilson, D'Arcy: Artwork - Owens Art Gallery, Hon. L. Diab	1146
Garage Guys: Cancer Fundraising - Thank, Mr. T. Farrell.....	1146
Boudreau, Mark: Feed N.S. - Assistance Thank, Ms. P. Arab	1147
Spryfield Dist. Market: Vol. Bd. - Thank, Mr. B. Maguire	1147
Hfx. Co. United U-14 Tier 1 Girls Team - Prov. Title, Mr. B. Jessome.....	1148
Park View Panthers/New Germany Saints: Reg. Titles - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1148
Kedmi, Iris/Pino, Rose/Fest. Baddeck Organizing Comm.: Work - Congrats., Ms. P. Eyking.....	1149

Luckett, Pete: N.S. Bus. Hall of Fame - Induction, Mr. K. Irving	1149
Foran, Nicole Louise: Courage/Bravery - Thank, Ms. J. Treen.....	1149
Membertou Sports Complex - Opening, Mr. D. Mombourquette	1150
Goodwin, Greta & Larry - Woodland Owner of Yr. (W. Region), Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	1150
Smith, Ian/Clearwater Team - Ride for Cancer Fundraising, Hon. K. Regan.....	1151
ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS:	
No. 211, Prem. - Teachers: Mediation - Agree, Hon. J. Baillie	1151
No. 212, Health & Wellness: Long-Term Care Cuts - Info. Refusal, Hon. S. Belliveau	1153
No. 213, Prem.: Portland Ferry Terminal - N.S. Costs, Hon. J. Baillie	1154
No. 214, Prem. - NSTU: Mediation - Agree, Ms. L. Zann.....	1155
No. 215, Prem.: P3 Schools/Scotia Learning - Liberal Campaign Donations, Hon. J. Baillie	1157
No. 216, Health & Wellness - Hepatitis C: N.S. Cases - Harvoni Recipients, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	1158
No. 217, Prem.: P3 Schools - Abandon, Hon. S. Belliveau	1159
No. 218, Nat. Res.: Forestry - Harvesting Policies, Mr. A. Younger.....	1160
No. 219, Health & Wellness: Inverness Hosp. - Surgery Continuation, Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1161
No. 220, Prem. - PR Campaign: Funding - Source, Hon. P. Dunn.....	1162
No. 221, Com. Serv. - Social Assistance Recipients: Living Conditions - Vet, Ms. L. Roberts.....	1163
No. 222, Health & Wellness - Springhill Hosp.: Locum Doctor - Supply, Hon. J. Baillie.....	1164
No. 223, EECD: Schools - Placement Policy, Mr. J. Lohr	1165
No. 224, Fish. & Aquaculture - Marine Protected Areas: Gov't. (N.S.) Lead - Details, Hon. S. Belliveau	1166
No. 225, EMO - Thanksgiving 2016 Floods: Victims - Funding Clarity, Hon. A. MacLeod	1167
No. 226, Health & Wellness - Nurse Practitioners/Fam. Practice Nurses: Locations - Details, Mr. E. Orrell	1168
No. 227, Health & Wellness - Doctor Shortage: Prenatal Care - Effects, Hon. David Wilson.....	1169

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS:

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:

No. 62, Municipal Government Act and Halifax Regional Municipality Charter	
Hon. Z. Churchill	1171
Ms. K. MacFarlane	1172
Hon. S. Belliveau	1174
Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1175
Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	1177
Hon. Z. Churchill	1179
Vote - Affirmative.....	1180

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING:

No. 36, Gaming Control Act	
Hon. M. Furey.....	1180
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1184
Hon. M. Furey.....	1192
Vote - Affirmative.....	1193
No. 41, Residential Tenancies Act	
Hon. M. Furey.....	1193
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1194
Hon. M. Furey.....	1196
Vote - Affirmative.....	1196
No. 33, Fences and Detention of Stray Livestock Act and Fences and Impounding of Animals Act	
Hon. M. Miller	1196
Mr. J. Lohr	1196
Ms. L. Roberts.....	1197
Hon. M. Miller	1198
Vote - Affirmative.....	1199
No. 44, Maintenance Enforcement Act	
Hon. D. Whalen	1199
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	1202
Ms. L. Roberts.....	1203
Hon. K. Regan.....	1204
Hon. D. Whalen	1205
Vote - Affirmative.....	1205

PRIVATE & LOCAL BILLS FOR THIRD READING:

No. 47, Halifax Rifles Armoury Association	
Mr. I. Rankin.....	1206
Vote - Affirmative.....	1206

HOUSE RESOLVED INTO CWH ON BILLS AT 12:57 P.M.	1206
HOUSE RECONVENED AT 1:42 P.M.	1206
CWH REPORTS.....	1206
ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Mon., Nov. 7 th at 4:00 p.m.	1207

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):

Res. 385, Smith, Pte. Nathan Lloyd: Sacrifice - Thank (Posthumously), The Speaker	1208
Res. 386, Drew, Dustin: Lawrencetown Vol. FD - Time/Talents Thank, The Speaker	1208
Res. 387, Downe, Don: Pub. Serv. - Recognize, Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1209
Res. 388, Feeney, Joe: Pub. Serv. (40 Yrs.) - Recognize, Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1209
Res. 389, Croft, Al: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1210
Res. 390, Zinck, Allister: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1210
Res. 391, Zwicker, Andrew: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1211
Res. 392, Zwicker, Barry: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1211
Res. 393, Hiltz, Dave: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1212
Res. 394, Eisenhauer, Earl: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1212
Res. 395, Eisenhauer, Harry: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1213
Res. 396, Kently, Kathy: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1213
Res. 397, Carver, Kevin: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1214
Res. 398, Eisenhauer, Lionel: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1214
Res. 399, Zwicker, Marshall: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1215
Res. 400, Langille, Melanie: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1215
Res. 401, Hiltz, Peggy: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1216
Res. 402, Eisenhauer, Mona: Commun. Volunteering - Congrats., Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	1216
Res. 403, Chedrawe, Daniel - N.S.: Betterment - Thank, Hon. L. Diab	1217
Res. 404, Azzi, Fr. Pierre/Lebanese Cedar Fest. Organizers - Anniv. (10 th), Hon. L. Diab	1217

Res. 405, Spur Halifax 2016: Organizers - Thank, Hon. L. Diab	1218
Res. 406, Alexiadis, Dr. Maria: Prof. Success - Congrats., Hon. L. Diab	1218
Res. 407, Murphy, Jane: Mainland North Vol. Comm. - Honour Congrats., Hon. D. Whalen	1219
Res. 408, Phinney, Evan: Mainland North Vol. Award (2016) - Congrats., Hon. D. Whalen.....	1220
Res. 409, Sullivan, Kate: Mainland North Vol. Comm. - Honour Congrats., Hon. D. Whalen	1220
Res. 410, Duff, Jim: Mainland North Vol. Comm. - Honour Congrats., Hon. D. Whalen	1221
Res. 411, Grady-Lunn, Darlene: Animal Welfare - Concern Thank, The Speaker	1221



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2016

Sixty-second General Assembly

Third Session

9:00 A.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Mr. Gordon Wilson, Mr. Keith Irving

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

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 65 - Entitled an Act Respecting Democratic Renewal. (Hon. Sterling Belliveau)

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that this bill be read a second time on a future day.

NOTICES OF MOTION**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

SILENT WITNESS (N.S.) - COMMEND

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise awareness to the heartbreaking and extremely important fundraising event that took place in Trenton Park, in Pictou County, on October 23rd. The Pictou County Chapter of Silent Witness Nova Scotia held a Remember Me Walk, which featured free-standing, life-sized wooden silhouettes bearing the name of a Pictou County woman whose life ended as the result of domestic violence.

Silent Witness Nova Scotia is a group of individuals working together to become a voice for the 51 females who have lost their lives in Nova Scotia at the hands of their intimate partners since 1990.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend Silent Witness of Nova Scotia for its unique awareness campaign, and for providing friends and families a way to honour the lives lost due to domestic violence. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, could I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. MILLER: I'd like to draw the attention of the House to the east gallery where we have with us Mindy Lee George, an author from the constituency of East Hants. I would ask Mindy to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the House as I share a Member's Statement. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

EMILY AND JEFF'S ADVENTURE: RELEASE - CONGRATS.

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, let me tell you about *Emily and Jeff's Adventure*, a book for young first-time flyers, written and published by Mindy Lee George in memory of Emily McNamara. This book is given by Halifax Stanfield International Airport to young flyers and helps them understand the check-in and security at the airport. It also shows them what happens to their luggage.

The hope is that all children will enjoy this book, a gift from Nova Scotia. The book is the story of a young girl on her first flight and her teddy bear, Jeff, who is in the checked luggage. The illustrations and the name of the main character, Emily, are honouring the memory of Emily McNamara who took her own life at 14 after being bullied online. Emily's mother, Cathy Paget, was overwhelmed when officials at the airport chose to create this legacy in Emily's honour.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate HSIA, Mindy Lee George, and Cathy Paget. Well done.

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

BRYMER, JILL: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour and reflect on the life of Jill Brymer. Her name may not be known to any of you sitting here today, but in Boylston and area, Jill was a bit of a legend. In her short 40 years Jill made an impact on every person who had the pleasure of meeting her. She was lovable, fiercely independent, outspoken, passionate about sports and music, a star Special Olympics athlete, and deeply devoted to her family and her faith.

Jill was born with Down's syndrome, but not once did she allow any limitations to hold her back and she embraced every challenge she faced. Following her graduation from high school in Guysborough, Jill began attending the Guysborough Options for Adaptive Living Society where she remained for 18 years and made many special relationships. Through work placement she became a fixture at the local schools and was notoriously known for her ability to keep the school staff in line when no one else could.

Mr. Speaker, this September we lost a most extraordinary, courageous, and determined young woman. Jill taught us all that you never know what you can accomplish if you don't try, and in her memory we all need to keep trying.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

COLDWELL, GREG: PHILANTHROPY - APPLAUD

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge my friend and fellow Rotarian Greg Coldwell, of Riverbrook Farms Limited in Port Williams. Through his connection with Rotary, Mr. Coldwell became aware of a need for farming equipment in the remote village of Awing, a village in Cameroon, Africa, so he donated a 170-horsepower tractor.

Through further networking the tractor received four new tires and full servicing to make sure it was in tiptop shape before being shipped to Africa. Awing sits at the foothills of Mount Cameroon and is an agricultural area, but they don't have that type of equipment that we have here.

Pete Smith, organizer and fellow Rotarian, has been travelling to Awing every two years to provide much-needed supplies, and conceived the tractor donation idea.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to applaud Mr. Coldwell for his generosity and humanitarianism.

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

SM. BUS. - SUPPORT

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, small businesses are the backbone of our economy - we hear that all the time, but it's true. They are the result of the entrepreneurial spirit. They provide local jobs, and in today's world, they meet not only local needs, but they bring Nova Scotian goods and services to the international marketplace. When in government, the NDP reduced the small business tax rate by 40 per cent, the first time it had been reduced in almost 20 years. Meanwhile, since this current government took office, they've brought in a \$30 million tax grab from small business owners by reducing the small business dividend tax credit. As a province, we need to support and promote small businesses, not attack their bottom line.

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

MURRAY, MARY/N.S. ATHLETES: CANADA 55+ GAMES - PARTICIPATION

HON. TONY INCE: I rise today to acknowledge and congratulate a very enthusiastic and accomplished athlete. Cole Harbour-Portland Valley constituent Mary Murray competed in the 2016 Canada 55+ Games this past summer. She brought home two medals in swimming: a silver in the 50-metre freestyle, and a bronze in the 100-metre individual medley. I wish to extend warm congratulations to Mary for her achievements in sport, and for her passion for life. I would like to ask the members of this House to join me in congratulating all 151 Nova Scotia athletes who participated in the 2016 Canada 55+ Games, and who made us all so proud.

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

MCDOUGALL, AMANDA: CBRM COUN. - ELECTION CONGRATS.

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: I rise today to acknowledge Amanda McDougall of Main-à-Dieu, who recently became the councillor for District 8 for the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. Amanda has worked diligently for years with several non-profit organizations, including the Main-à-Dieu Community Development Association. She is also active and engaged in the community, sitting on several boards including the Fortress of Louisbourg Association and the Immaculate Conception CWL. Amanda's main goal is to help her island grow, and develop strong and sustainable opportunities for the future. I stand here today to congratulate Amanda McDougall, and I am looking forward to working with her to make our constituents thrive.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

BRIDGEWATER BARRACUDAS - PROV. SWIM MEET

HON. MARK FUREY: The Bridgewater Barracudas had the honour this summer to have been selected to host the provincial swim meet at our local pool. As we've all seen many times that when there's a job to be done, the parents mobilize and make it happen. A dedicated team of parents has worked for about a year planning, meeting, and coordinating, gathering community support to make sure the 2016 provincial swim meet was the best it could be. It's always amazing to see the amount of people who arrive, the excitement at the pool, and the sportsmanship of the swimmers, all made possible because of our parent volunteers. I'm proud to say there was a large contingent of Bridgewater swimmers representing the host club, and they finished first overall for the sixth consecutive year, taking home the provincial swim meet banner. Congratulations to all the participants, families, and friends on another successful provincial swim meet and season.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

FAULKNER, EMMA ET AL: SOCCER INIT. - APPLAUD

MR. JOHN LOHR: Today I wish to acknowledge a very special 16-year-old girl who shows true leadership skills. When Horton High School decided to discontinue the junior girls' soccer team for Grade 9 students, which would leave many without a chance to participate in any school soccer program, Grade 11 student Emma Faulkner decided that was unacceptable. She felt very strongly that all girls wanting to play should have the opportunity, so she approached the student council with an offer to coach the team herself. She recruited fellow students Roslyn Morrison and Aliya Lickers as her support staff, and together these girls provided a soccer program for the Grade 9 girls, who would otherwise have been without. Mr. Speaker, this is an initiative that embodies the true meaning of leadership, and I applaud their resolve.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

BURKE, LAURA CAITLIN: MENTAL ILLNESS -DESTIGMATIZATION

MS. LISA ROBERTS: I would like to say a few words in appreciation of a constituent, Laura Caitlin Burke. Laura is an actor, a writer, a peer supporter, an advocate, and a person with first-hand experience of mental illness. Laura has spoken openly - and thoughtfully and generously - about her experience with schizophrenia. Most recently I heard her interviewed on a fabulous Halifax-based podcast called SickBoy, where she described how her life as a university student took a sudden turn, how she tried and tried, and finally got an accurate diagnosis; how she got treatment and recovered; and how she lives now in a mindful way: to promote both her own and others' mental health.

Laura has done much to destigmatize mental illness. Yet stigma still does exist, and she pays a personal cost to speaking openly and honestly about her experience. So I want to express my true gratitude.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

RCL BR 10 (AMHERST): POPPY CAMPAIGN - COMMEND

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Amherst Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 10. Branch 10 sells Remembrance Day poppies to help fund support programs and services for veterans. The Legion also supports scholarship programs at the local Amherst Regional High School, and recently donated \$2,000 to VON Cumberland. I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join in commending Amherst Branch 10 on their successful annual poppy campaign, and for their support for local programs.

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

**MUSÉE DES ACADIENS DES PUBNICOS:
LE COURRIER DE LA NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE (1937 À 2002) - EN LIGNE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Monsieur le Président, le Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos récemment annonçait que les anciens numéros du *Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse* de 1937 à 2002 ont été mis en ligne. Des dignitaires provinciaux et municipaux ont assisté à la cérémonie pour marquer l'occasion. Lois Yorke, l'archiviste provincial et directrice des archives de la Nouvelle-Ecosse a animé l'évènement. Elle a souligné l'importance de cette ajour archive grâce à la technologie moderne. Ceux-ci n'a pas été possible y'a vingt ans. Plus de soixante-sept mille pages du courrier sont maintenant disponible en ligne et peuvent être consulté partout au monde. Il s'agit d'un geste important dans la préservation et la protection de l'histoire des Acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse. Je vous remercie sincèrement et je félicite tous ceux qui ont participé à ce projet.

Mr. Speaker, the Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos recently held a ceremony to announce that the additions of *Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse* from 1937 to 2002 have been placed online. Provincial and municipal dignitaries were in attendance to mark the occasion. Provincial Archivist and Director of the Nova Scotia Archives, Lois Yorke, hosted the event. She stated the importance of this addition to the Archives, due to modern technology; this would not have been possible 20 years ago. More than 67,000 pages of *Le Courrier* are now available online, and it can be viewed by anyone, anywhere in the world. It's a very important part of preserving and protecting the history of Acadians in Nova Scotia. A heartfelt thank you and congratulations to everyone involved in this project.

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

TEAM BROKEN EARTH: N.S. MEMBERS - RECOGNIZE

HON. DAVID WILSON: Team Broken Earth is a volunteer task force composed of physicians, nurses, physiotherapists, and paramedics across Canada, committed to delivering and improving health care in Haiti. The team was initially assembled to support the relief effort in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake that left the people of Haiti in dire need of medical assistance. From this intensive front-line experience, Team Broken Earth determined that the people of Haiti needed a sustained medical relief effort to help rebuild the country's health care system, and create sustainability through education of Haitian people, for health care professionals. The team treated patients, provided acute care to people of Haiti, and also worked with the Haitian medical professionals to train and upskill them in best practices, and educate the Haitian people on matters of public health.

Currently, we have a number of Nova Scotian paramedics who were with the Halifax team October 29th to November 5th. I'd like to recognize Ritchie Gilby, Chad Drover, Peter Rose, and Darrell Bardua, who all participated in Team Broken Earth.

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

COOLEY, KENNY: COURAGE - RECOGNIZE

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: I would like to recognize Kenny Cooley of Halifax West High School. Kenny started at Halifax West last year, wanting a fresh start for his new life as a trans teen. In a situation unfamiliar to him, Kenny found Halifax West to be full of acceptance and diversity allowing students to be who they want to be. Kenny has a passion for sports. He loves being on the football field and on the ice, but was always hesitant to try out for the boys teams because he thought he would be judged or not make it.

This changed on Monday, September 12th, when Kenny stepped on the football field for the first time, playing his first game as wide receiver while friends, his girlfriend, and his dad cheered him on from the sidelines. In spite of nerves, stepping onto the field

showed Kenny how firmly he had become a member of the team, and he realized no one was there to judge him, but to welcome him with open arms.

I would like the members of this Assembly to join me in recognizing Kenny on his courage and willingness to succeed, as well as Halifax West for being a safe space where Kenny and all students can thrive and be their true, authentic selves.

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

MEM. COMPOSITE HS - DEWALT DONATION

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Memorial Composite High School as one of the two schools in Nova Scotia that received 27 power tools donated by DEWALT, valued at approximately \$9,000. DEWALT is the official tool provider of the Nova Scotia Skills Competition, and Memorial High School has won provincial and national medals at these skills competitions.

During the next three years, Nova Scotia high schools can apply to this program for DEWALT tools. It's very rewarding to see industry and educators working together through Skills Canada - Nova Scotia for the advancement of our youth.

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

PREM.: PHYSICIAN ACCESS - SLOGAN CHANGE

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: 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, and this trial balloon - or should I say, this lead balloon - is not going over well with Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, 100,000 residents are without a family doctor. The member for Cape Breton-Richmond might wish to clarify the statement made by the member for Clare-Digby. If not, this must result in a 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 Hammonds Plains-Lucasville.

MARRIOTT, MIKAYLA - NATL. CDN. GIRL, TEEN & MISS CDN. AMBASSADOR

MR. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, the National Canadian Girl, Teen & Miss Scholarship Pageant is a prestige title pageant. It is judged on personality, poise, and the

ability to speak in public. The focuses are self-esteem, self-confidence, good sportspersonship, and the importance of being involved in your community.

This year Nationals were held in Edmonton, and Mikayla Marriott of Kingswood was crowned National Canadian Ambassador. Mikayla was born and raised in Halifax and is a first-year student at NSCC. She is thankful for the experience and honoured to have been crowned National Canadian Ambassador, and is excited for the opportunities that this experience will bring her in the coming year.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of the Legislature please join me in congratulating Mikayla Marriott for being named the 2016-17 National Canadian Ambassador, Girl, Teen & Miss, and wish her all the success in her future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

W. PICTOU CONS. SCH. GARDEN CLUB - RECOGNIZE

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and recognize 19 Grade 5 and 6 students from West Pictou Consolidated School garden club. The group of students recently prepared and cooked produce from a garden they planted and tended to. The students learned the value of growing nutritious food, and immensely enjoyed the experience. The school invited a chef to come and assist with the cooking instruction. The students were encouraged to try new things.

This was the fifth year that West Pictou ran a garden club, and plans are in the works to purchase seeds for next summer's garden. I believe activities like this are fundamental basics that should be taught to children as they learn about the role nutrition plays in living a healthy lifestyle.

Congratulations to the students and the volunteers who made this possible.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

S. SHORE REMO STAFF ET AL: DROUGHT ASSISTANCE - THANK

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: This past summer was a beautiful one on the South Shore. It seemed as if the sun shone every day. In fact, that's not too far from the truth, but with that everlasting sunshine came drought. The lack of rain caused the wells of many people in my constituency to go dry, and I'm sure in many others. It became a crisis.

I stand here today to recognize the Regional Emergency Management Organization for acting quickly to help. I would also like to recognize the provincial parks for opening their services to the public, as well as the towns and municipal units and local businesses who stepped forward to offer water and hospitality.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the REMO staff, the provincial parks staff, and the towns and municipal units who offered to help those in need of water this summer.

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

BAY GRANDMOTHERS: WORK - APPLAUD

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you about an incredible group of grandmothers and grand "others" in St. Margarets Bay called the Bay Grandmothers. They are members of the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmothers to Grandmothers campaign, a Canadian grassroots initiative.

The Bay Grandmothers are committed to three goals: raise awareness of the HIV/AIDS crisis in Africa, build solidarity among those who work to resolve this crisis, and mobilize funds to support African grandmothers and the millions of children in their care.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said by many, and I repeat: these African grandmothers are holding together their continent. I applaud the work done by the Bay Grandmothers to support these brave women, and I would like to wish them well on behalf of all of us here at Province House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MAYHEW, JEFF/SPORTWHEELS SACKVILLE STAFF - SKATES & HOCKEY GEAR GIVEAWAY

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Jeff Mayhew and his staff at Sportwheels Sackville. Jeff and his staff worked with my constituency office to collect gently used hockey gear and skates this year.

September 18th we set up our second annual Skates and Hockey Gear Giveaway at the Captain William Spry Centre in Spryfield. Because of Jeff and Sportwheels' efforts, over 200 kids received free gear for hockey and skating this upcoming winter - a great local business with a social conscience.

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

NORTHSIDE HARBOURVIEW HOSP. FDN.: WIG BANK - OPENING

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the Northside Harbourview Hospital Foundation on the opening of their wig bank. Over \$4,000 worth of wigs are available to women who are suffering hair loss due to medical conditions. A local hairstylist will style the wig to the individual's liking. Having a wig gives a woman, who

is already undergoing extreme challenges, the confidence to go out in public knowing that she looks her best - and looking good leads to feeling better.

A very big thank you is extended to the foundation for this thoughtful addition to their patient care.

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

PROMISES: UNKEPT - RESULTS

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, there was a new Santa Claus for Nova Scotia who promised a gift for every Nova Scotian. After three years on the job, this new Santa changed their promise, and now 100,000 Nova Scotians may have to wait 10 more years to receive their gift. This was announced by Santa's helper from Clare-Digby.

Mr. Speaker, Santa's headquarters kept saying that they are working on their promises and a gift was unavailable for everyone. This has now become an unhealthy situation. Even Santa's elves did not like their broken promises. Then the people asked the new Santa's name to be changed to the Grinch Who Stole Christmas.

Mr. Speaker, the moral of this story is if you don't deliver on your promises, you may possibly be looking for a new job - even if you are Santa.

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

VICTORIA CO. MUN. ELECTION: COUNCILLORS - ELECTION CONGRATS.

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the new councillors who were elected last month in the Victoria County municipal election. Last month voters in District 2 elected Perla MacLeod, and in District 8, Norman MacDonald. Both new councillors will be joining six returning acclaimed councillors: Paul MacNeil, Warden Bruce Morrison, Fraser Patterson, Wayne Budge, Deputy Warden Larry Dauphinee, and Merrill MacInnis.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate the newly elected councillors, and I look forward to working with them in the future. Thank you.

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

LEWIS, STEVE - IRVING SCHWARTZ AWARD

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Steve Lewis of Steve Lewis Auto Body in Sydney who recently took home the Irving Schwartz Business

Person of the Year Award. This award was given out at the Sydney and Area Chamber of Commerce Excellence in Business Awards Night.

This award is presented to an individual who upholds dedication to hard work, customer service, and loyalty to both staff and customers, as seen in the work ethic of the late Irving Schwartz.

I'm proud today to congratulate Steve Lewis on receiving this prestigious award. Thank you, Steve, for all your dedication to your staff and to our community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

TEACHERS - APPROACH: PREM. - RECONSIDER

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I want to urge the Premier to reconsider his approach to teachers.

From the first contract offer, which wasn't arrived at through negotiation but with a take-it-or-leave-it contract delivered to the NSTU negotiating team, to the second offer negotiated under the shadow of Bill No. 148, to the discourse now, including through a publicly funded ad campaign, the Premier is not operating in a way that builds trust.

Yesterday, talking about the public resources needed to pay teachers and their benefits, the Premier asked: Do they want us to take it away from vulnerable Nova Scotians? A teacher I know, a prominent and long-time Liberal I might add, gave this answer last night on social media: Who do you think we support every single day, if not the most vulnerable Nova Scotians? We feed, house, teach, love, protect, and support every single student, every single moment of every single day, do not even pretend we are taking away from them by advocating for them.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

STEELE, BURNELL - BIGGS AWARD (2016)

MR. KEITH IRVING: I rise to recognize Mr. Burnell Steele, the recipient of the 2016 Biggs Award from the Flower Cart Group, New Minas. The Biggs Award is presented annually to an individual who demonstrates the work skills taught and supported by the Flower Cart's community employment services, and who is also an inspiration to co-workers and others.

Mr. Steele has been working for Tim Hortons in Wolfville since 2001. His job involves cleaning, pot scrubbing, busing, and wiping down tables. His supportive co-worker Dawna Havill acts as liaison between Mr. Steele and his employer, Perley Beirsto,

and she has done so for more than 15 years. Beairsto describes Mr. Steele as a very conscientious, loyal, hard worker over many years.

On behalf of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, I congratulate Burnell Steele on this important award and wish him all the best in his future employment.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

**FRASER, DENVER & GABRIELLE
- TRACK & FIELD ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: I rise today to congratulate twin sisters Denver and Gabrielle Fraser of Advocate on their strong performances in the long jump and triple jump at both the Provincial and Atlantic Track & Field Championships. At the Provincials, Denver captured gold in the long jump and silver in the triple jump. Gabby captured gold in the triple jump, setting a new provincial record, and silver in the long jump. I hope you're following this, Mr. Speaker. At the Atlantic Championships, Denver was awarded the gold in the long jump and bronze in the triple jump. Gabby was awarded gold in the triple jump and bronze in the long jump. It is a true honour to have this opportunity to congratulate Denver and Gabrielle on receiving these richly deserved recognitions.

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

**NATL. TRUTH & RECONCILIATION COMMN.:
18th CALL TO ACTION - HIGHLIGHT**

MS. LENORE ZANN: I will once again be using this occasion to highlight another recommendation from last year's Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report. Its 18th Call to Action reads as follows:

"We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to acknowledge that the current state of Aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government policies, including residential schools, and to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Aboriginal people as identified in international law, constitutional law, and under the Treaties."

As we all work to improve our health care system, we must listen to the concerns of our indigenous communities, right across the province. Our work will never be finished on this issue, but that should never prevent more from being done.

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

**EMPRINGHAM, AIYANNA & EMMA ET AL:
BLUENOSE CLASSIC TOURNAMENT - PARTICIPATION**

MR. STEPHEN GOUGH: I would like to take this time to recognize Aiyanna and Emma Empringham, Jana Peachey, Lauren Ford, Jody Upshaw, Grace Gillis, and Hailey Griffin. This is a group of Sackville basketball players who had the opportunity to represent the province at Basketball Nova Scotia's Bluenose Classic tournament in early July. I would like to congratulate these ladies for the hard work that has enabled them to achieve their goals. As they move on to the new season, may they find success in all that they do, on and off the court, and continue to reach new goals. Mr. Speaker, I would like the members of this Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating these players, and all young athletes who represent their schools and communities, much success in their future.

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

FISHERMAN'S COVE GALLERY - ANNIV. (20th)

MS. JOYCE TREEN: I rise today to tell you about the Fisherman's Cove Gallery in Eastern Passage. Local artists have been featured at the Fisherman's Cove Gallery since the Cove opened in 1996. This year, they celebrate their 20th Anniversary. The gallery was started by several painters who decided to combine their talents. This painting co-op features the work of 10 to 12 artists during the summer months, and throughout the Fall, until Christmas. Each artist takes a turn working at the gallery and is usually found painting during their work time while also greeting the visitors and taking time for a quick chat. The pride in the gallery is evident with every artist in the group. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the gallery on their 20 years of success and dedication.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

MCNUTT, ELLIOTT: OXFORD SKATEBOARD PARK - FUNDRAISING

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the achievement of a 12-year-old, Elliott McNutt, whose vision and resolve resulted in the construction of a skateboard park in the Town of Oxford. Elliott's determination, hard work and planning enabled him to acquire funding from the town, the province, and different organizations around the town to make this skateboard park a reality. As a result, the Town of Oxford now has a skateboard park for its residents and visitors to enjoy, so congratulations Elliott on a job well done.

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

BAYRIDES/COMMUN. WHEELS: WORK - CONGRATS.

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, public transportation is a critical need for persons who are unable to afford personal vehicles to conduct the business of daily life. In our urban areas, with a significant population density, municipal governments are able to develop public transportation policies with an expectation that user volume will substantially defray and perhaps even cover costs. This is not the case in more rural areas where public transportation cannot be a cost recovery project. Then non-profit organizations must often step up to the plate.

I'm proud to tell you today about two such organizations in the constituency of Chester-St. Margaret's: BayRides and Community Wheels. They provide much-needed transportation to pick up weekly groceries, to attend medical appointments, and to go to other personal appointments which our senior citizens and many others need to access.

I want to congratulate the good work done by BayRides and Community Wheels on behalf of all of us here in Province House.

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

**CBRM COUNCIL SWEARING-IN
SYDNEY-WHITNEY PIER COUNCILLORS - CONGRATS.**

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Later today the CBRM Council are going to have their swearing-in ceremony. It's a very special day for councillors who were elected in the last municipal election and their families.

I want to recognize in particular the councillors who are in the riding of Sydney-Whitney Pier: Jim MacLeod, Eldon MacDonald, and Ray Paruch. I have the opportunity to work with those councillors on a daily basis and have in the past. I want to congratulate them and their families on a very special day today and all the councillors who were elected, and mayor, during the recent municipal elections.

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

**WEYMOUTH FIREBIRDS/COACHES
- PEEWEE AA ATLANTICS CHAMPIONSHIP**

MR. GORDON WILSON: I rise today to congratulate the Weymouth Firebirds for ending their baseball season this September by winning the Pee Wee AA Atlantics Championship. The Firebirds were Nova Scotia representatives at this tournament, this year held in Summerside, P.E.I. The Atlantics championship is a five-team round robin tournament with one team from each Atlantic province and one from the host town.

Our team did have a rocky start, losing their first game to the team from New Brunswick. They were able to regroup and win their next three games therefore moving to the championship game. In the final the Firebirds resoundingly beat the Paradise Phantoms of Newfoundland and Labrador and won the tournament. In addition, Lathan Robinson of the Firebirds was named the MVP of the tournament.

In addition to recognizing and congratulating the players of the Weymouth team, I would also like to recognize and thank the adults who made all this possible and the young baseball players. They include the team's coaches Jason Ford and Nick Mullen, and the players' parents who all go to the games and cheer them on.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, if I could, I'd like to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. ORRELL: In the Speaker's Gallery today there is my MP for Sydney-Victoria, Mr. Mark Eyking. (Interruptions) One of the good Liberals can do it, I'm sorry.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes on an introduction.

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make an introduction. I'd like to draw everyone's attention to the Speaker's Gallery and introduce my MP for Sydney-Victoria, as well as the member for Northside-Westmount's MP - my husband Mark Eyking, who has joined us here today to see how it's really done. Thank you. (Applause)

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

ADLER, DAVID/E. COAST OUTFITTERS - BUS. THANK

MR. IAIN RANKIN: I would like to recognize David Adler and the East Coast Outfitters of Lower Prospect.

East Coast Outfitters is a community-based outdoor resource centre featuring premier-quality guided sea kayak tours, lessons, and equipment rentals in the beautiful waters off Lower Prospect in Terence Bay. Visitors get a chance to learn about the natural and cultural history of the area while experiencing some of the best sea-kayaking anywhere. Guides are certified by Paddle Canada and have been trained and certified in wilderness first aid and Leave No Trace ethics.

Over the years dozens of guides have been trained and certified. ECO has quickly emerged as a leader in paddling instruction in the East, and an economic and social cornerstone in Lower Prospect.

I would like the members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating David Adler and his family for their success with this unique and exhilarating business. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

MACKENZIE, GUS: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, my community recently lost a significant member. Howard Angus - or Gus - MacKenzie, was the Town of Bedford's first police chief when it was incorporated in 1980. Chief MacKenzie already had enjoyed a 30-year career with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, including a stint in the RCMP Musical Ride. The chief was also a past president of the Royal Canadian Legion, Bedford Branch, for many years.

He was married to his wife Rae for 59 years and together they raised three children, Scott, Heather, and Andrea. Gus and Rae had six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren and his family loved to sit around while Gus shared stories about his escapades as a young man - there may have been some hunting yarns in there.

Mr. MacKenzie passed away in late September at the age of 84. He will be missed.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

ANTIGONISH TOWN COUN.: NEW ADDITIONS - CONGRATS.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, on October 15th Nova Scotians went to the polls to select their new municipal leaders. I would like to take a moment today to introduce some of the new faces of municipal politics in my constituency of Antigonish.

In the Town of Antigonish we welcomed long-time small-business owner, Mary Farrell. Mary not only brings her entrepreneurial skill sets to council but also decades of ideas, comments, and concerns she has heard from customers in her business.

Andrew Murray is another new addition to the Antigonish Town Council. He has already been involved in municipal issues for close to 12 years, having sat on Antigonish's Planning Advisory and Beautification Committees.

Finally, Laurie Boucher will be leading Antigonish Town Council as mayor. Mayor Boucher is no stranger to town hall, having served as councillor since 2012. A previous

Volunteer of the Year Award winner, she brings a wealth of community experience with her to this new mayoral role.

I'm looking forward to a fruitful working relationship with the Antigonish Town Council and I ask my colleagues in the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating all councillors, especially Mary Farrell, Andrew Murray, and Laurie Boucher, on their success in the 2016 municipal elections for the Town of Antigonish, and wishing them the best of luck in their term in office. Thank you.

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

JONES, BRIAN: TORONTO ARGONAUTS - DRAFT CONGRATS.

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Lockview High graduate Brian Jones. Brian was drafted to the Toronto Argonauts, having just finished his fourth year with the Acadia Axemen of the Atlantic University Sport.

At Lockview High, Brian's first love was basketball but he changed sports shortly after being approached by officials of the Fall River Dragons football program. Brian says his success shows young players that it is possible for their big dreams to come true if they put in the hard work. As far as Brian knows, he is the first player to go pro from the Dragons football program.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Brian Jones on being drafted to the Toronto Argonauts, and wish him every success for his future. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

BAYLIS, PROF. FRANÇOISE - ORDER OF CAN.

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured today to congratulate Professor Françoise Baylis on receiving the highest honour in the province, the Order of Nova Scotia.

Professor Baylis is a professor in the Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University and is the Canadian Research Chairman in Bioethics and Philosophy. She is the founder and the head of the NTE Impact Ethics and interdisciplinary team of researchers who work in the fields of health, bioethics, and public policy. Professor Baylis' work with people outside the medical profession has made complex issues, such as stem cell research and new reproductive technologies, understandable and accessible to the public.

Professor Baylis has been published extensively on a wide range of topics and has also been a recipient of numerous awards and honours over the course of her career,

including having been appointed to the Order of Canada earlier this year for her work in the field of health care ethics.

I am very proud to have Professor Baylis as a member of our community and would like to both congratulate and thank her for the incredible contributions to the academic and medical communities both here in Nova Scotia and across the country.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

KNOCKWOOD, FREEMAN DOUGLAS - COMMUN. COMMITMENT

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Freeman Douglas Knockwood is a Mi'kmaq elder who has much to teach us about strength of spirit. Doug, to those who know him well, was immersed in the true native culture as a child and flourished in his environment. Life changed dramatically when he was forced into residential school, where he suffered untold abuse and learned what it was to be hated. He overcame alcoholism, homelessness, tuberculosis, the loss of five ribs and a lung, and profound heartache; and relearned his culture.

Using his spiritual teachings, he dedicated himself to helping the youth and other community members reclaim their language and culture and overcome addictions. He co-founded drug and alcohol treatment programs for the Mi'kmaq and worked across the country. His work has earned him an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities from Acadia University and, recently, the Order of Nova Scotia. This well-respected, much-loved elder is a hero to many of his people and an inspiration to us all.

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

FARRIS, CATHY - COMMUN. DEDICATION

HON. LLOYD HINES: I rise today to recognize an outstanding individual, Cathy Farris. Ms. Farris has been a teacher since 1977 and a lifelong resident of Sheet Harbour. Along with her husband, Anthony, they have been the long-time volunteers that have kept the MacPhee House information centre open to tourists and residents alike.

On a yearly basis, Cathy writes for grants for summer students, sits on the hiring committee, and helps train the students who are hired to work the MacPhee House information centre for the summer. She also oversees property and grounds, ensuring that it is well maintained.

That's not all this amazing woman does for her community. She sits as a director for the Sheet Harbour and Area Chamber of Commerce and Civic Affairs. She is the

chairperson of the Sheet Harbour marina committee. Along with many volunteer activities, she takes part in the annual Terry Fox Run.

I want to thank Cathy for her unrelenting dedication and love for her community. It's truly an inspiration. It's folks like her who volunteer that truly make our communities and province a better place to live.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

WILSON, D'ARCY: ARTWORK - OWENS ART GALLERY

HON. LENA DIAB: I rise today to tell you about the recent work of D'Arcy Wilson. D'Arcy is the daughter of a dear friend of mine, Cheri Wilson, who I see regularly at Bethany United Church, the church located right across the street from my constituency office.

D'Arcy's work is opening today at the Owens Art Gallery in Sackville, New Brunswick. This is a piece that she has been working on for the past year and a half. I'm so excited about this work, entitled *The Memorialist*, because of its connection to Halifax Armdale. *The Memorialist* touches on Andrew Downs' zoo in Armdale, the first in North America, called Downs Zoological Gardens, and his taxidermy, for which he was world-renowned.

I also want to acknowledge Shirley Hill, who was helpful and generous in showing D'Arcy the property on Joseph Howe Drive where the zoo was located. I also want to mention that my constituency office is located on the original zoo grounds.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

GARAGE GUYS: CANCER FUNDRAISING - THANK

MR. TERRY FARRELL: I'm rising today to recognize the Garage Guys. On September 24th, the Garage Guys hosted their bigger and better auction and dance. The event was a fundraiser for the Cumberland Cancer Assistance program.

The Garage Guys are made up of local contractors, building suppliers, and business people, including Dave Carter, Dave Clarke, Jim Baker, Bob McLean, John Lake, Steve Gibson, Bill Costin, Donald Furlong, Casey Concrete, and Harrison's Home Building Centres. These dedicated community-spirited folks collected donations for auction, including a completely installed two-car garage. This incredible event raised \$120,000 to directly support the needs of cancer patients in Cumberland County.

I ask all members of this House to join me in thanking and congratulating the Garage Guys.

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

BOUDREAU, MARK: FEED N.S. - ASSISTANCE THANK

MS. PATRICIA ARAB: I would like to recognize Mark Boudreau, Loblaws Atlantic corporate affairs director. After Feed Nova Scotia expressed a need for more food donations this past summer, Mark made sure that Atlantic Superstores were there, advertising and making it easier for Nova Scotians to donate to those in need. After record numbers of donations were received, Mark was quoted as saying, we've been very humbled by the response by the customers so far and that he feels we have a responsibility in our communities when people are in need.

Thanks to Mark and his efforts, many more companies and community groups stood up to help our province's families. Thanks to these efforts, Feed Nova Scotia was overwhelmed by the public's generosity, especially from young families bringing their kids to the Bedford Highway warehouse.

I would like the members of this Assembly to join me in thanking Mark on his efforts to help Feed Nova Scotia feed many Nova Scotian families that needed the assistance.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

SPRYFIELD DIST. MARKET: VOL. BD. - THANK

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, the Spryfield District Market began in the Spring of 2016 and has had a very successful first season. The residents of the area now have a local market where they can purchase Nova Scotia products such as vegetables, fish, meat, baked goods, and crafts. The market is held at the Lions Rink in Spryfield every second Sunday.

The market has attracted some 25 to 40 vendors, and with the harvest season in full swing there are many fresh vegetables available for purchase. Now residents of the area have easy access to locally grown products.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the volunteer Spryfield District Market Board for their hard work and commitment. Through their hard work they not only brought the market to Spryfield, they managed it for several months and have seen it grow into a huge success.

I wish them continued success and appreciate their commitment to bring quality Nova Scotia products to our community.

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

HFX. CO. UNITED U-14 TIER 1 GIRLS TEAM - PROV. TITLE

MR. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, the Halifax County United U-14 Tier One girls team represented Nova Scotia at Nationals which were held October 5th to 10th in Moncton. During the season the dedication of players, coaches, and parents, helped to make this season a successful one. They worked hard, played hard, and grew both individually and as a team and worked towards winning the provincial title.

At Nationals the team played their best and gave it their all in the field. They won and they lost and they all left feeling positive about their performance and experience they gained.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Halifax Country United U-14 Tier One girls on their provincial title and commend them on their hard work and dedication in representing our province at Nationals.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**PARK VIEW PANTHERS/NEW GERMANY SAINTS:
REG. TITLES - CONGRATS.**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to recognize two schools that recently won regional soccer championships.

First, the Park View Panthers captured their ninth consecutive Nova Scotia School Athletic Federation Regional Championship, earning the right to host the Division 1 Boys Provincial Championships this week. The Panthers finished the season with a 14-2-1 record. This year they defeated Avon View 4-2 in the semi-finals, and Horton 1-0 in the final match. Park View is looking forward to winning its first provincial title since 2014.

The New Germany Saints boys also will be hosting a provincial championship this week, having also won their regional title. The Saints are looking to avenge last season's loss in the provincial final after having won it all in 2014.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate both the Park View Panthers and the New Germany Saints on winning regional titles and wish them the best of luck in their provincial tournaments.

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

**KEDMI, IRIS/PINO, ROSE/ FEST. BADDECK ORGANIZING COMM.:
WORK - CONGRATS.**

MS. PAM EYKING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Iris Kedmi and Rose Pino and the rest of the Festival Baddeck organizing committee on all their hard work and dedication for making this inaugural event such a major success. The outdoor street festival took place July 4th, August 8th, and September 1st, and was a celebration for all ages. Locals and visitors were welcome to experience the Village of Baddeck at its finest, with buskers, live music, dancing, local foods, artisans, and so much more - all free of charge.

Mr. Speaker, an event like this takes months of planning and I want to thank the entire organizing committee for all their hard work. I think I can speak for all the members of our community when I say I can't wait to see what they have in store for next year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

LUCKETT, PETE: N.S. BUS. HALL OF FAME - INDUCTION

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize entrepreneur Pete Lockett, of Wallbrook Mountain, on his recent induction into the Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame.

A native of Nottingham, England, Mr. Lockett immigrated to Canada in 1979. He grew his fruit and vegetable business from a single retail outlet in Saint John to a multi-million dollar fresh produce enterprise. Pete's Frootique and Pete's ToGoGo outlets are well known to all Nova Scotians. In 2015 the chain, then known as Pete's Fine Foods, was sold to Sobeys.

After moving to Kings County, Mr. Lockett operated a farm in the Gaspereau Valley which supplied fruit and vegetables to his retail outlets. In 2010 he launched Lockett Vineyards, located on the slopes of the South Mountain with a dramatic view of the Gaspereau Valley and the Minas Basin. I ask all members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Mr. Pete Lockett on his induction to the Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame, and wish him all the best in his future business ventures. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

FORAN, NICOLE LOUISE: COURAGE/BRAVERY - THANK

MS. JOYCE TREEN: I rise today to tell you about Nicole Louise Foran and the Nova Scotia Medal of Bravery she received on September 28, 2016. On April 9, 2009, Nicole was a flight attendant on CanJet flight 918 from Halifax to Montego Bay, Jamaica.

The flight landed in Jamaica and some passengers were about to disembark while other ones were about to board.

Then the unthinkable happened: an armed gunman broke through the security and boarded the plane, holding 159 passengers and crew hostage. Nicole and a colleague were able to negotiate to free the passengers in exchange for their valuables. After eight hours of being threatened at gunpoint, Nicole distracted and disarmed the gunman at exactly the same time that the authorities entered the plane. Nicole was the sole crew member to voluntarily return to Jamaica to testify in court resulting in the conviction against the hijacker.

I ask all the members of this House of Assembly to thank Nicole Louise Foran for her courage and bravery in saving the lives of so many on this day.

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

MEMBERTOU SPORTS COMPLEX - OPENING

MR. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I rise to talk briefly about a very exciting event that is happening this weekend for the community of Membertou. After many years of hard work and perseverance by Chief Paul and Council, and the entire community, I will be taking part with all levels of government to open the new Membertou sports complex. This is a state-of-the-art facility that will serve our entire community - the CBRM - and will allow us to bring more regional and national events, so it's a very exciting time for the community of Membertou. This is great new facility for our community, and I stand in my place to congratulate Chief Paul, Membertou Council, and the entire community of Membertou for their hard work, perseverance, and ensuring this state-of-the-art facility is available for all our community to enjoy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

GOODWIN, GRETA & LARRY - WOODLAND OWNER OF YR. (W. REGION)

MR. GORDON WILSON: I would like to congratulate Greta and Larry Goodwin of Hillgrove, the 2016 Western Region's Woodland Owner of the Year. The Goodwins manage a woodlot and run a small maple syrup operation on the same 230 acres they purchased from Larry's grandparents in 1968.

The Goodwins are keenly aware of the role they play as stewards of the land, and as part of their role, actively encourage people to enjoy the outdoors. Recently Larry extended the Acacia Valley Trail two kilometres on their property, and helped restore a 1.5-kilometre wheelchair-accessible section of the trail. For this, Hike Nova Scotia presented them with their Summit Award. On October 1st, as part of the Western Region

Field Day, the Goodwins were presented their Woodland Owner of the Year award. On that day, the Goodwins welcomed their neighbours to their home and encouraged people to go enjoy the woods as their grandparents had done many years ago. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

**SMITH, IAN/CLEARWATER TEAM
- RIDE FOR CANCER FUNDRAISING**

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, the Ride for Cancer event was held in Halifax early in October to raise money for the fight against lymphoma and leukemia. I say it was held in Halifax, but that's where it ended. The participants biked up to 130 kilometres. They started in Mahone Bay, went along the Aspotogan Peninsula, and eventually ended up at LED Lighting in Bayers Lake.

I want to commend the bikers - all of them - for taking on this daunting task. It's a bit hard to imagine biking that far for those of us who bike for half an hour in our family rooms, and think we have accomplished something great. The money raised will go to support patients battling leukemia and lymphoma, and will help purchase endobronchial ultrasound - or EBUS - scope technology for the QEII. EBUS technology will provide improved imaging, and patients won't need invasive surgery for the procedure - a huge improvement.

I'd like to particularly commend the top fundraisers, the team from Clearwater, led by CEO Ian Smith. They raised over \$83,000 because their donations were matched by the company. Kudos to them and to Clearwater for stepping up.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you everybody for those Member Statements.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

PREM. - TEACHERS: MEDIATION - AGREE

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Yesterday, the Liberal Party began advertising to try to explain away its complete mismanagement of its impasse with teachers. In that ad, the government says directly - or the Liberal Party does - that they want to work with teachers. Well, now teachers have asked for mediation. I would like to ask the Premier, is he agreeable to sitting down at the table and mediating his dispute with teachers away?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): We were prepared to sit down with the conciliation board, which we've said to teachers. We have what we believe is a fair offer on the table. If they have other ways of finding savings that they want to use towards keeping a long-service award, but provide those savings back to the taxpayers of Nova Scotia, we're prepared to have that conversation.

MR. BAILLIE: Teachers asked the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education for conciliation. She never heard back from the government. That's why there's no conciliation. Now they're asking for mediation, but rather than agreeing to that, the Premier gives his usual stock answer which leaves everyone - parents, students, the whole province - wondering why they won't go back to the table. I don't know what they're afraid of at the negotiating table.

I tell you this: when you advertise that you want to work with teachers, and then you frustrate every effort that teachers are making, that parents are hoping for, to actually work with them, that is false advertising. It is wrong. Why is the Premier advertising one thing and doing the opposite?

THE PREMIER: We continue to work with teachers across this province. They've raised legitimate issues around data collection and other things that are happening inside the classroom. We're reaching out and talking to those teachers, and working with them to find solutions. From the very first time in October 2013, we've invested in classrooms, we've capped class sizes, hired more math and literacy teachers, hired more teachers in general, and continued to invest in the classroom.

What I have said - if the honourable member would go back and look at what's happening with the collective agreement, there were two different times when our government reached a collective agreement with the union leadership, and their membership said no. The last time, we actually accepted what the union brought to the table. If they want to change their mind, what are they going to bring to the taxpayers of Nova Scotia to offset the increases they want?

MR. BAILLIE: The place to work that out is actually a negotiating table. He's asking you, Mr. Speaker, and us in this House, what they have to put on the table. He should be going to the negotiating table, a conciliation board, a mediator, and asking them. All of us agree there needs to be classroom improvements. The government agrees. The Opposition agrees. Teachers agree. Parents are speaking up in frustration because they agree. Why won't he go and talk to teachers at a negotiating table with a mediator and work out these very differences?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member should know that's exactly what we said. It's exactly what we said we would do, that we would go to the conciliation board to have the conversation about that. The Teachers Union said no. They don't want to go and bring to the table savings to taxpayers. They don't want to say that they should pay 35 per cent

of their health benefits like every other public servant. They want to continue to accumulate 195 sick days. At the same time, they want every other taxpayer to contribute to a bonus when they retire. At the same time, they want us to invest in the classroom.

Here's what happened, Mr. Speaker. Three years ago, that Party chose to give a 7.5 per cent pay raise and take \$65 million away from students. We've chosen another path: a 3.5 per cent pay raise and investments in classrooms.

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

HEALTH & WELLNESS: LONG-TERM CARE CUTS - INFO. REFUSAL

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: My question is to the Premier. Our caucus has asked the Minister of Health and Wellness for details about the government's cut to long-term care six times on the floor of this Legislature. We filed a freedom of information request. We wrote a letter to the minister. We requested a review by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner. Yesterday, we asked the minister for the seventh time if he would finally table documents showing the extent of the cuts to long-term care. Is this really what it takes to get information from this government?

Will the Premier apologize for his minister's failure to provide members of this House with accurate information about long-term care cuts?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. It gives me an opportunity to thank the Minister of Health and Wellness for the work he's been doing across our province, continuing to collaborate with our partners, continuing to make sure that we provide health care in communities across our province.

The amalgamation of the district health authorities into one authority is now allowing us to look across our province to deliver health care services and I'm proud of the (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I again want to thank the Minister of Health and Wellness for the work he is doing, the collaboration he has been doing across the province. The fact that we have amalgamated into one single health authority now has allowed Nova Scotians to have access to a unified health care system.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, over two years this government has cut more than \$200,000 from the budget for Saint Vincent's Nursing Home; they have cut more than \$150,000 from Oakwood Terrace. In total, over two years, more than \$8 million was cut

from the budgets of nursing homes and residential care facilities. More than \$6 million of that came out of budgets of non-profit facilities.

Mr. Speaker, does this Premier still think it's reasonable to ask non-profit nursing homes to provide care for seniors with \$6 million less in their budgets?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank nursing homes across the province caring for our parents. There were four administrators here a couple of weeks ago who said that the changes to their budgets have not affected the quality of food, has not affected delivery of service. They did raise the issue that on an ongoing basis they may have some challenges.

The Minister of Health and Wellness has reached out to continue to work with them, to make sure that the quality of care that we all expect to be there - and we're going to continue to do so. Again, Mr. Speaker, I think we should all be proud of the work that many of our colleagues are doing across this province to care for our seniors.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, these cuts were made in the Spring, and the minister waited until October to reach out to these facilities to ask if they are having any challenges. This government has only one idea, cut - cut services, cut benefits, cut programs, and cut budgets. There is no rationale for these cuts and there has been no understanding of the possible impact on these cuts on seniors living in long-term care.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier agree to restore funding to long-term care facilities across our province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. He couldn't be further from the truth. We have on the table an increase in salaries across the entire public sector. We have \$59 million that we are spending more on home care than that government did. On top of that, we're spending \$65 million more in classes across this province, that that government cut out. This isn't a government that's cutting. This is a government that is moving forward in partnership to make sure we have sustainable services in this province that Nova Scotians have come to expect.

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

PREM.: PORTLAND FERRY TERMINAL - N.S. COSTS

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, last Spring Nova Scotia taxpayers paid all the bills in the City of Portland to upgrade their ferry terminal, to paint the lines in their parking lot, and so on. Now we know from Portland that they collected \$85,000 in fees from the Yarmouth ferry.

Mr. Speaker, they got the gold mine, we got the shaft. Will the Premier explain to the taxpayers of Nova Scotia why it's fair that Portland collects the money and we get the bills?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question and I want to thank all of those citizens across our province who have made sure that this year was a boom year in tourism.

Mr. Speaker, while the honourable member stands up, time after time, being pessimistic about this province, Nova Scotians are optimistic and we're going to stand with Nova Scotians.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I think the Premier needs a math mentor, not just the students, because the ferry traffic was down this year, even though the cost is going up. That's the problem. In fact we now know, from the *Portland Press Herald*, that Bay Ferries intends to ask our taxpayers for \$10 million to \$12 million next year to continue to subsidize the ferry. They told us - the government did - it would be \$9 million, now it's \$10 to \$12 million.

First of all, we're hearing it from Portland, not from our own government, and secondly, it's going to cost 30 per cent more. I'd like to ask the Premier why we have to find out from Portland and has he been given a budget that shows we owe 30 per cent more next year to Bay Ferries?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again, like every time the member stands up, he is inaccurate. He goes on and on and on - because he makes it up on the fly, doesn't make it true. The reality is (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: The honourable member suggested I could use a math mentor. I could use all the help I can get, Mr. Speaker. Unlike the honourable member, I don't believe I have all the answers.

MR. SPEAKER: I'd like to remind the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, before we proceed, that indicating that taxpayers are getting the shaft is unparliamentary.

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

PREM. - NSTU: MEDIATION - AGREE

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Premier. Yesterday the Nova Scotia Teachers Union asked the Minister of Labour and Advanced

Education to appoint a mediator. Unfortunately, however, it seems the Premier only wants to talk about contracts and benefits if it's in front of a camera. He even went so far as to ask if teachers want him to cut health care funds from the most vulnerable Nova Scotians to cover their wages. But wait - after all of his cuts to seniors' long-term care facilities, it seems the Premier has already done this.

My question for the Premier is, will he please stop wasting time and money on rhetoric and partisan ads and agree to mediation with the NSTU, as the teachers have requested?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. At every step, she's wrong. We put \$59 million in home care to invest in seniors across this province. We'll continue to do so. We've invested in housing for seniors, and unlike that Party, we've invested in classrooms and kids. When she was sitting on this side of the House, she sat on her hands when she took \$65 million away from kids.

MS. ZANN: I think anybody who knows me knows that I've never sat on my hands. I don't think I'd ever be able to.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday a group called the Nova Scotia Parents for Teachers held a press conference right here at Province House. This group yesterday had 400 members online; today they have close to 3,000. An online poll by *Metro News*, with more than 4,000 votes, found that 87 per cent of people support teachers. It seems everybody but the Premier understands that the classroom of 2016 is not the classroom of yesterday.

My question for the Premier is, is the Premier now willing - instead of running partisan ads - to listen to Nova Scotians and get back to the bargaining table with the Nova Scotia Teachers Union?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member. I want to remind her that the ad she's seen is paid for by the Liberal Party - unlike when she was in power and the government was paying for the ads. You remember the slogans, Mr. Speaker.

Furthermore, we stand with teachers. We believe in teachers and what they're doing across this province. It's why we put \$65 million into the classroom. She's absolutely right - it isn't the classroom of yesteryear, because it was devastated by that Party when they were in power. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Well, Mr. Speaker, now we know where the Richmond taxpayers' money went when it went into the Liberal Party account - it went to pay for Liberal Party ads. That's a good use of their money, I guess. We also know that George Armoyan and his family, the owner of Scotia Learning, gave \$19,000 to members of the Liberal Party who were running in the last election - \$12,000 to five Cabinet ministers.

We asked yesterday why those five ministers were in Cabinet when discussions around the decision to buy those schools owned by Scotia Learning were made, and the Premier said it never went to Cabinet. Mr. Speaker, I have the Order in Council here where it did in fact go to Cabinet; I'll table that.

I know the Premier cleaned this up with the media yesterday, but the question remains. Why did he allow those five members, who are in a clear conflict of interest, to stay in the Cabinet Room when million-dollar decisions were being made?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, they weren't in a conflict of interest. The honourable member would know that the amount of dollars on the Cabinet Table was decided in the 1990s. The amount to buy those schools was delivered in the original contracts. We exercised our right because we believed it was in the best interest of taxpayers.

MR. BAILLIE: The Cabinet decided to spend \$86 million. It had options. It may even have taken the best option. We don't know. I wish we could see their math. But I'll tell you this, Mr. Speaker - it is a conflict. The province's own conflict of interest policy is very clear on that, where it says, "Conflict of interest exists when the duties and responsibilities of an employee are or potentially could be compromised by his or her personal and private interests."

Mr. Speaker, there were five Cabinet Ministers in the room when this \$86 million decision was being made, who are in receipt of \$4,000, \$3,000, \$2,000 and another \$2,000 each - in the case of the Liberal caucus chairman, three-quarters of his campaign was funded by the Armoyans.

How can the Premier say there is no conflict when that much money was donated to members of the Liberal Party?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I want to remind the honourable member that the purchase price of those schools was negotiated in the original contracts. There was an exercise clause in there that by October 31st the government had to exercise its right to purchase those schools. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development could not negotiate a better lease arrangement than what we could get from the value of that.

If that changes, Mr. Speaker, we will lease those schools, but we exercised our right because it was the best value for taxpayers. At the same time, we wanted to be able to send a message to those 12 communities that those schools would be there for the long haul for their children.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - HEPATITIS C: N.S. CASES
- HARVONI RECIPIENTS**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I tried to get this question in yesterday but was unable to, so to the Minister of Health and Wellness.

The other day in debate on the NDP's Fair Drug Pricing Act, the minister spoke about the success of their hepatitis C program. Patients who would eventually die of liver disease now have the hope in the form of a cure in new biologics called Sovaldi or Harvoni.

My question to the minister is, can he give us an idea on the number of Nova Scotians with hepatitis C and how many are receiving Harvoni?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: The member opposite saves those very important questions for the last 30 seconds of Question Period, but I appreciate that he brought it back on the table today.

There are currently 347 Nova Scotians with hepatitis C. Some are receiving treatment through their private insurance programs and we're there, as a government, to look after those who do not have such programs.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: We are concerned at how the program is being rolled out - and how the cure is being rolled out, never mind the program - the cure for hepatitis C. The program is very restrictive on who can get the cure and I know the cost of the drug can range from \$55,000 to \$80,000 for an eight to 24-week treatment. That's expensive, but if we can eradicate this virus across all socio-economic populations, the savings on treating liver disease will be huge, not to mention that it's our duty to help people who need our help.

My question to the minister is, will the minister adopt a true eradication plan to ensure that no more Nova Scotians need to suffer from this virus?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I would inform the member that it's always a clinical decision between the patient and the doctor as to what course of treatment they receive and when they receive it. He is right, there can be great savings certainly to the lives of those impacted by hepatitis C, as well as the cost to the health care system, but I guess it's a time

to remind all Nova Scotians that prevention indeed is the best measure that can be taken when it comes to hepatitis C.

Currently the Nova Scotia Health Authority is looking at that comprehensive program, especially in relation now to the opioid panel that has been put together, and certainly safe needle exchange is part of that program.

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

PREM.: P3 SCHOOLS - ABANDON

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. This week this government announced that it would start the process of buying P3 schools that should have been built and owned by the public in the first place. It is going to cost \$87 million - and that's just the first round.

Let me be clear, this is a cost of cleaning up a big mess that the Liberals made going into P3 schools 20 years ago. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier pledge to abandon P3s in the future so Nova Scotians won't be faced with the costs of cleaning up another Liberal P3 mess 20 years from now?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As he knows, one of the many challenges in governing is you have to make difficult decisions – well, wait a minute, they didn't make any difficult decisions. But typically governments have to make difficult decisions. We look at all the options before us, just like their government did when they signed the P3 agreement up the hill.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Well I'm not very surprised that the Premier has not learned his lesson. I'd like to remind him that the other terrible P3 precedent is the Highway No. 104 Cobequid Pass. The private owners of the P3 have been making money hand over fist for years, and just this year the government tried to suggest that more highways be built by this P3 model.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier tell Nova Scotians why is he so attached to P3s - are there any benefits for the public or are the benefits just for the particular friends of the Liberal Party donors who get the large contracts?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the allegations put out by the member are simply false, but I would tell you who is benefiting from that highway - those families. That was brought to a government when 10 to 20 to 30 to 40 people were being killed on that highway - it was being named Death Highway. How many lives is that member prepared to put at risk? It's why we're looking at tolling highways. He said a fire chief from Barneys

River said he has gone to too many wrecks on the highways and have to go to too many families to tell them that they've lost a loved one. We're looking (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: The member for Pictou East, I hope he stands up and defends his community. He stands in this House all the time; he sure does. He runs when he has to do some - but I want to tell the honourable member, we're going to make sure we have safe highways.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

NAT. RES.: FORESTRY HARVESTING POLICIES

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, it wasn't long ago that I stood with the current Minister of Health and Wellness on the Hollis Street steps in front of a forestry rally that was opposing the NDP's lack of action on reducing clear-cutting, ending whole-tree harvesting, and setting targets for cutting in the province. On that day the now Minister of Health and Wellness said that we must have an annual allowable harvest on Crown lands in Nova Scotia because right now they are not the golden standard that the Crown lands should be.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources just recently issued a report that says the department has no plans to implement the province-wide allowable cut, so why does the Minister of Natural Resources disagree with his colleague who says that an annual allowable harvest is needed, and without it Crown lands don't meet a gold standard?

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. A careful review of our five-year look at the Natural Resources Strategy reveals that we are fully intended to go down the direction of implementing all the 93 recommendations that came from that process.

In terms of the total annual cut, that's a very scientifically engineered process. We're in complete control of what is being cut, we know the species, we know the locations - and remember that 70 per cent of the land that is being harvested in Nova Scotia is private land, but on the Crown lands I can assure the House that we're in full control of what we're doing. Thank you.

MR. YOUNGER: Mr. Speaker, the minister seems to be saying something very different than what was in his own update just a few months ago. The minister's colleague at the time also lobbied for things like larger riparian zones in the same speech and he spoke about clear-cutting targets. Just a month before the 2013 election he wrote in a newspaper "The goal of reducing clear cutting by 50 per cent of the total harvest remains as elusive today as when government made that promise about four years ago."

I see the Minister of Health and Wellness laughing, I'm sure he likes the quotes. Mr. Speaker, that same comment could be made today and in the minister's Natural Resources Strategy update he has walked away from the clear-cutting targets, refused to create whole-tree harvesting rules, and says there is no plan for the allowable cut.

Mr. Speaker, why has the minister walked away from the long-time Liberal Party policy and his Cabinet colleague's own commitments and bills he has introduced over many years?

MR. HINES: Mr. Speaker, forestry is not just about numbers; it's more about getting the best value from the land while maintaining a healthy ecosystem and a sustainable supply of wood - emphasis on the healthy ecosystem. This goes way beyond the simple arbitrary assignment of an arbitrary target. All aspects of biodiversity are being considered and taken into account, using a science-based approach to produce the greatest yield for the greatest number of people in the Province of Nova Scotia. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: INVERNESS HOSP.
- SURGERY CONTINUATION**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Mr. Speaker, for over 100 years we've had surgery at the hospital in Inverness. We have a surgeon who is expected to retire in December, and another one not too far behind. I also think about the economic activity that this means for Inverness, with a surgeon and six nurses and an administrative person - there's probably about \$1 million in payroll that's coming into the area. So is there a plan in place through the Department of Health and Wellness and through the Health Authority to ensure that surgery continues in Inverness?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I thank the member for raising that question. I know that the Health Authority sometimes will run into trouble in terms of recruitment as we now know right across this country, confirmed recently at the accord meetings, that every minister is up against the wall in terms of recruitment. There are just not enough doctors in some categories and areas available right across Canada, and I know that recruitment is certainly under way.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I also want to take the opportunity just to highlight the point that Inverness, while it's not a regional hospital, it is two hours away from the closest regional hospital, be it in Sydney or Antigonish. I know the minister is aware of that and I know he understands the importance of having services that are still available to people when they are living that far away from a regional hospital.

Mr. Speaker, I think about the convenience for local patients, less travel for their families when they're going to see loved ones who may have just had an operation. If they don't need to travel to a regional hospital that means a lot to them. I also think about possible delays and what that can mean for the health of patients who need an operation. If surgeons are not replaced, will this actually save money or are we going to lose an important health care service in Inverness?

MR. GLAVINE: I certainly will find out for the member opposite what the health services plan is for Inverness hospital. I know the great work that has been done there through the years and again, in that particular geography, having an array of services is certainly very, very important to that part of the province, and I will provide the member with an update next week.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

PREM. - PR CAMPAIGN: FUNDING - SOURCE

HON. PAT DUNN: My question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, we learned yesterday that the McNeil Government is launching a public relations campaign rather than talking with teachers and working out their differences. The Premier said a second government-funded ad campaign is on its way, something he used to criticize the NDP for. My question for the Premier is, why is the Premier using government money in a PR campaign rather than returning to the table?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As he would know, his Party exercised their right to put an ad on TV a few months ago; we as a Party have exercised our right to spend money to invest in an ad for TV. As I've said, as a government, we will communicate with Nova Scotians when necessary, but we have not used any government money to go on a campaign against education or teachers.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, we saw this with the Seniors' Pharmacare. The Premier moved forward with the decision to raise seniors' premiums, until it became so unpopular that it was impacting his public image. Then he launched a \$17,000 PR campaign using money to do damage control. My question to the Premier is, how much taxpayers' money is he willing to spend to do damage control this time?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As I travel this province, Nova Scotians are grateful to have a government that is not only investing in programs, not only investing in classrooms, not only investing in wait times, but at the same time living within its fiscal means. I hear the honourable member's Leader stand up in the House, I also hear the honourable member stand up - where would they find the money, where would they take it from in order to give the kind of increases they think they should give?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**COM. SERV. - SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS:
LIVING CONDITIONS - VET**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Community Services, there is a desperate need for more and better quality, affordable housing units. Many residents living on social assistance live in horrendous conditions with bed bugs, mice, and cockroaches. Recently, media reported on a building that did not have working plumbing in many units and required tenants to use the facilities in unoccupied units on other floors.

So I ask the Minister of Community Services, if the government is paying rent to private landlords, do they not have an obligation to ensure that social assistance recipients are not living in inhumane conditions?

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: When a rent supplement is supplied to a private developer, Housing Nova Scotia goes in, carefully vets that building, carefully vets the history of the building, and then keeps an eye on it during the course of the longevity of the rent supplement. I believe the building you are speaking of is a private landowner, which I have absolutely no jurisdiction over. The HRM bylaws - and I see over the last couple of months that they've actually been enforcing them, have been moving in on landlords to demand that they have a quality standard for their buildings in HRM particularly.

MS. ROBERTS: Of course not all people on income assistance who need to rent in the private sector are able to access rent supplements. I'm worried that residents on social assistance are afraid to complain about their living conditions because there are very few affordable units available on the private rental market. If they withhold their rent to protest poor conditions, the policy of the Department of Community Services is that they will withhold that portion of their income assistance cheque.

So I ask the minister, what is her department doing to address the problem of untenable living conditions in the affordable private sector rental market?

MS. BERNARD: Unfortunately, it is not under my jurisdiction to ensure that a private developer or private landlord maintain the quality of living in their privately owned buildings. But I can assure the member that when there are rent supplements that are paid for by Housing Nova Scotia, we carefully vet those units and we work with those landlords. We have a great relationship with many landlords in this jurisdiction, in HRM, and we make sure that where our clients are living is clean, safe, and affordable through those rent supplements.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - SPRINGHILL HOSP.:
LOCUM DOCTOR - SUPPLY**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: I would like to share with the Minister of Health and Wellness the posted closure hours for the emergency room at All Saints Hospital in Springhill for this week. Monday was 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Wednesday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Friday 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. This is an unacceptable level of service to the people of Springhill and area. They were certainly promised much more by this government and the previous NDP Government for emergency services there.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness again, will he provide a locum doctor immediately to the people of Springhill so that their emergency room can be open?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I thank the member for bringing the question back to the floor of the Legislature. It is unfortunate that one of the local doctors is out sick for the month of November.

In talking with Dr. Lynn Harrigan and the Health Authority, they are working as quickly as possible to provide a locum. I think there's about \$8 million to \$10 million in the budget for locums, and they are working as quickly as possible to provide, for the remainder of November, a locum physician.

MR. BAILLIE: I appreciate that, and I hope that we see that doctor immediately because the closures anticipated for November are 27 days. For 27 out of 30 days, the emergency room in Springhill is going to be closed - open three days.

The minister wants to say that this is because of a doctor illness. Three doctors have left Springhill with lots of notice. It's not like the Health Authority suddenly today had this problem. They have known for months that they were short doctors.

So I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, would he tell the people of Springhill now when they will see this locum doctor and what they are doing to recruit permanent doctors to Springhill?

MR. GLAVINE: What I can tell the member is that they are working as quickly as possible to provide a locum for the area. We know that in some communities the number of doctors is right at the threshold of when one is sick or decides to take professional development; there is a gap for sure. So the Health Authority, as I said, is working as quickly as possible. In the long term, the member opposite will have to wait a little while to find out how successful our recruitment is going.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

EECD: SCHOOLS - PLACEMENT POLICY

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

On December 23, 2013, just two days before Christmas, this government announced the construction of five schools in Liberal constituencies without any due process of public consultation - and I'll table that. It was a political reward, a Christmas gift for voting Liberal, for the ridings of the Premier, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and the Minister of Natural Resources.

I heard the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development say yesterday in this Legislature that school board decisions were final - I guess that only applies if it's not a Liberal Cabinet Minister's school.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister tell this Assembly and the people of Nova Scotia why there's one set of rules for themselves and another set of rules for the rest of the province?

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm really pleased that the member has raised the question and, if he was really following the process, he would understand that the schools that were announced each year, whenever they are announced, are schools that boards have identified based on a request to school boards about what capital projects, whether they are new or whether they are renovations, that they see as a need.

From that list, year after year, some of those get approved and the ones he is speaking of in particular were submitted by the boards long before we formed government.

MR. LOHR: I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. I will redirect, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier.

The December 23rd announcement of 2013 also applied to Bridgetown. The AVRSB plan for Bridgetown was for renovations to the Bridgetown High School and the Bridgetown Regional and Elementary School in 2014-15; I will table that plan. Also, the AVRSB has a policy, that they do not want elementary and middle and senior schools combined, if possible, which is what happened - and I'll also table that.

A Christmas gift for Cabinet Ministers, ignoring the standing policy of the AVRSB. Bridgetown is happy but, Mr. Speaker, my question, what does the Premier say to the other areas of the province losing their schools or having schools in serious need of repairs?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. The issues around the Bridgetown schools have been ongoing. If you go back to

around 2000 when that Party was in power, the school board of the day identified challenges with the Bridgetown Elementary School. (Interruptions) You'll get an opportunity to reply, I'm sure.

Mr. Speaker, the school boards across the province went out into communities and, to their credit, talking about the declining population in the community of Bridgetown and surrounding area, they laid out a series of options - one of them was a P-8 and one of them was a P-12. They worked with the community and the community chose that they wanted a single school, a P-12, in the community of Bridgetown.

They went through the board to put that on - he's very right, there was an issue for a renovation. That renovation, in order to convert the high school from 1956 to be able to accompany those young 4-year-olds coming in would have been approximately about \$20 million. The new build was a bit more. The school board at that time recognized it was better value for taxpayers to build a new school.

It's that simple. We are not pitting kids against kids, Mr. Speaker. That member should know better than that.

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

**FISH. & AQUACULTURE - MARINE PROTECTED AREAS:
GOV'T. (N.S.) LEAD - DETAILS**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

Canada has made an international commitment to protect 10 per cent of its coastal marine areas by 2020. It has also set a short-term target of 5 per cent protection by 2017, yet with this deadline just a year away Canada has protected only just under 1 per cent.

With only a few provinces being able to help the federal government, the scramble to reach this target could have a significant impact on Nova Scotia and the fishing industry, so I'd like to ask the Acting Minister, who in the government is taking the lead on this issue of marine protected areas?

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable member for that question. Obviously it's not a question I certainly have the answer for, but I will endeavour to make sure that he gets the answer for that question and he'll have it as soon as the minister returns from his Fisheries trip.

MR. BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, newsflash: my understanding is that the Minister of Environment has the lead on this particular topic, and she walked away from the table last time she was with her counterparts.

Mr. Speaker, fishers are concerned that given the short time left to meet this target, decisions may be made in haste that could unduly affect the fishing industry. As fishers know, if you are not at the table, there's a good chance that you are on the menu.

I'd like to ask the minister, how is she working with fishers to ensure that their interests are represented in negotiations about marine protected areas?

MS. MILLER: First of all, I want to thank our fabulous Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture for the work that he's doing. Nova Scotia (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Environment has the floor.

MS. MILLER: Nova Scotia's success story in our fisheries export has certainly been legendary - the first time this has ever happened in our province. (Applause) I will endeavour to ensure that the minister has the questions and that he responds as quickly as possible.

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

**EMO - THANKSGIVING 2016 FLOODS:
VICTIMS - FUNDING CLARITY**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister responsible for the EMO. On Wednesday the Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister admitted that it has been a struggle for 17 homeowners who lost their homes and everything in them during the Thanksgiving floods. A spokesperson for these homeowners says that support for these families from the province has been unclear and slow. Families who are living in hotels paid for by donations are being told that they have to find alternate accommodations. I'll table that information.

My question to the minister is, will the minister provide some clarity for the victims and tell them when they will receive funding to begin rebuilding their lives?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the question, and I appreciate the distress that those folks have been in over the course of recent weeks. All of us can imagine the impact to our families had any of that devastation happened to any of our homes, which is why we are expediting this process as quickly as possible. We have sent additional resources into that area to assist with the inspections and appraisals. We have eliminated the \$1,000 deduction from the government-funded disaster relief program

to assist people. We've upped the cap from \$80,000 to \$200,000 to help these people move forward with rebuilding their lives.

Right now, resources are being focused specifically on those homeowners who have been displaced. No one should be under any pressure to move out of a hotel. All emergent issues should be taken care of.

MR. MACLEOD: I will say to the minister that there are a lot of people who have been working very hard on this file. (Applause) It is to the credit of those individuals that things are moving the way they are. We're appreciative of that.

The minister and the government have said time is of the essence, and we all agree with that - winter is coming, and Christmas is coming - yet haven't told anybody how they can expect funding from the government for their new homes. Mr. Speaker, 17 families have lost everything, and they are uncertain about their future and how and when they'll get back on their feet.

The question is very simple. Will the minister commit to contacting the affected families and explaining the government's plan for them, and if so, when?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, we have sent additional resources into that area specifically to help those people in that situation. I, of course, would be pleased to reach out personally and chat with those homeowners. I do hope to be up in Cape Breton myself, and would appreciate the opportunity to meet them on site.

We have had 250 applications come in to the department for disaster relief. That speaks to the effort that is being put in to expedite this process. I wish I could give the member in this House a specific timeline on when dollars will start flowing to the individuals. That is very difficult, because it is complex. It involves paperwork from insurance companies and of course a lot of paperwork that citizens have to do. But we do have resources in place to help those individuals. We have help lines available for people that require additional assistance, and if there's anything else that we can do to assist that member and those folks, please know that the province will be there.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - NURSE PRACTITIONERS/
FAM. PRACTICE NURSES: LOCATIONS - DETAILS**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. A few weeks ago, the minister announced that the province would hire 22 nurse practitioners and family practice nurses to help ease the pressure on the health care system. My question to the minister is, when will these people be hired to ease the need for family health care in the province, and in Cape Breton, and where will they be situated?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I know a number of communities were identified where some of the 13 nurse practitioners and the eight or nine family practice nurses would be heading. That plan is now continuing to be executed through hiring, and I know the Sydney area is one of those areas where NPs will join clinical practices that already exist.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, there are at least seven nurse practitioners in Cape Breton now that are not working as a nurse practitioner. They met with the Health Authority last week and were told there was no money to hire them. If there's no money to hire them, where's the money coming from for the 22 people they're looking for? We have people ready to jump in now to help ease the burden on the system while we move to our so-called saviour, the collaborative practices, in five to 10 years. So will the minister commit to meeting with this young group, and make sure that the money announced a few weeks ago will be used to help hire these medical professionals?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, one of the important areas that we know has to have the best planning is where these nurse practitioners, family practice nurses, can be best placed to look after the highest number of people needing primary care, and I know that process is well under way and I can certainly provide more details as the planning goes along.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - DOCTOR SHORTAGE:
PRENATAL CARE - EFFECTS**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, this government was elected on a promise of a doctor for every Nova Scotian, a promise I notice that they have recently removed from their website. Three years after being elected, there are still over 100,000 people without a family doctor, and this is particularly concerning for pregnant women who need access to prenatal care. Ongoing prenatal care reduces the risk of complications and increases infant health. So does the minister know, of the 100,000 or so Nova Scotians without a doctor, how many are pregnant women who are in need of prenatal care?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, while I wouldn't know the exact number of people who, in fact, require prenatal care, what I do know is that in our communities across Nova Scotia we do all we can - through current family doctors, nurse practitioners, midwives - to make sure that the best care is available to those who are seeking that kind of preparation for birth and the plan for follow-up care is well in place.

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, many of them are concerned because of the need to call a 1-800 number, and I know the government just recently announced a new number to call. The previous number took four to six months for someone to return a phone call to someone who needs a family physician. Midwives and midwifery services could help ease

the concern for many Nova Scotian women who are pregnant and need prenatal care, but since taking office, there hasn't been any expansion of midwifery services across the province. There's three areas in the province you can get that, so I'd like to ask the minister, when will the government expand the use of midwifery services in Nova Scotia? It could help many Nova Scotians.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is right, midwifery is a very valuable service that provides . . .

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, if I may, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. FARRELL: I'd like to draw the members' attention to the east gallery where we have Scott Lockhart. Scott is a native Springhiller who lives in that community and does business. He was instrumental in the federal campaign to have Bill Casey elected as the Member of Parliament for Cumberland-Colchester. I know he's also going to be instrumental in a formidable campaign to have a Liberal member elected there in the next provincial election.

I would ask that all members of the House give Scott a warm welcome. (Applause)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Public Bills for Second Reading.

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 62.

Bill No. 62 - Municipal Government Act and Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of Bill No. 62, amendments to the Municipal Government Act and Halifax Regional Municipality Charter around water conservation and supply.

Mr. Speaker, as the members of this House are aware, Nova Scotia, particularly in the southwestern region of the province, has undergone a water shortage unlike anything we have experienced in recorded history for this province. At the height of this water shortage there were approximately 2,000 homes on dug wells that were without a water supply. I know we can all agree and sympathize with people undergoing that level of distress and disruption in their daily lives. That number has since dropped to a little shy of 1,000, so thankfully the rains have been bringing the water table up to a point where half the individuals affected now do have a water supply again in their homes.

Throughout this period EMO worked with our municipal partners, our ground search and rescue volunteers, volunteer fire departments, our corporate partners like Labatt's and the Retail Council of Canada, to ensure that every single homeowner impacted by this did receive a water supply both for drinking and for daily use, Mr. Speaker. There was a cross-department effort put in - Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, Natural Resources, Agriculture, Municipal Affairs, Environment, and EMO - to ensure that people were taken care of during this challenging time.

I do want to take this opportunity to thank all those individuals, particularly those folks on the ground volunteering, to ensure that all those people who needed water were receiving it. There are still facilities available for individuals who do not have running water for showering and for laundering, Mr. Speaker. To date it seems like those facilities are meeting the demands that are out there and they will remain available in the event that this is prolonged any longer.

There are also short-term options that we are able to engage if this does proceed into the winter, God forbid. We're all hoping for rain before then, but there are options available and we will ensure that people do have water supplies in their houses available to them in the event that this does proceed in a way that is not what we want.

However, this bill allows us to focus now on a long-term strategy, Mr. Speaker. This bill extends the Property Assessed Clean Energy program, which is a North American program that allows individuals to apply for financing, through their municipality, to finance energy conservation projects, and this bill is expanding that program to include water conservation and supply projects.

So by making these changes municipalities will be able to work with individual homeowners to develop a financing plan that is affordable and makes sense for them to

either drill their dug wells, or build a cistern, or develop any other water conservation or supply project they believe they require on their property.

I think this is a good move and it will help Nova Scotians prepare for the future in the event that this situation does happen again. This will give Nova Scotians security and ensure that they are fully prepared moving forward.

We've undergone consultation with our municipal partners. All the municipalities that have been affected by this water shortage have indicated that this is a program that they buy into fully and will proceed with implementing. I think that's great news. Yesterday we had the CAO from Barrington, in the member for Argyle-Barrington's riding, a wonderful CAO - I know he's a good addition to the municipal team there - Rob Frost, in town to speak about the importance of this initiative. I know that our partners are very excited to move forward through this.

I will note that, for low-income Nova Scotians who are unable to finance projects like this, there are options through Housing that can allow them to upgrade their water systems, their wells in particular, if there's issues with water quality or sustained dryness. There are options available for Nova Scotians as well.

Another topic that has come up is community wells or municipalities building water supplies for their entire communities. There are a lot of government dollars available for projects like that if municipalities do prioritize that. Through the New Building Canada Fund, the federal government will provide 50 per cent of the costs associated with those sorts of projects, and the next 50 per cent will be split between the province and the municipality. That would allow people to invest in clean energy and waste water initiatives. We will ensure that those projects are prioritized next year when we move forward with the second phase of that plan.

In closing, I just want to say that I know this has been a very difficult situation for a lot of people. Thankfully, through the work of countless volunteers and all of our partners, we were able to get water to all those who have needed it. We're now in a position to help homeowners prepare for the future and for communities to prepare for the future as well, to ensure that our infrastructure around water supply is at a level where we will have security of supply moving forward.

I do look forward to hearing the comments of my colleagues.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I'm pleased, as always, to stand in my place and speak on Bill No. 62. I was happy to hear the minister's comments. I think this absolutely is a step in the right direction.

We know that this summer was very difficult, especially on southwestern constituents. Many Nova Scotians were hit really severely this summer and did not expect to have such water shortages. We all know how wells ran dry.

There are still wells that are dry, and water supply has definitely disappeared quicker than anyone had hoped. We know that there have been really months now that families have not had access to drinking water and, therefore, cannot brush their teeth or get their kids ready for school. It really does create a lot of stress.

One thing though that I was very aware of through media was that Nova Scotians' generosity immediately kicked in from all over. I believe earlier in this Chamber, the member for Lunenburg stated in their statement it was really nice to hear how generous everyone was and how well everyone came together during this difficult time. Neighbours helped neighbours, and as well, companies came forward with donations.

For instance, Mr. Speaker, we know that Labatt partnered with Nova Scotia EMO to bring over 80,000 cans of water to people affected by these drought conditions. The company and employees made this generous gesture not for thanks or recognition; they did it because they saw Nova Scotians in need. They knew that they could help, and that's what we're supposed to do as humans.

While this generosity should be commended, and we are thankful for that, I do worry that we are going to see a lot more of this with climate change. I don't think anyone can deny climate change. We've seen one of our driest summers ever, but I fear that we may be seeing many more in the near future.

I know everybody wishes to take time to make sustainable water conservation a priority, and we have to help them do that. I think it is the responsibility of all of us in this Chamber, but in particular, Municipal Affairs, to work with other municipalities, and educate employees and councillors there, to help provide the necessary tools and programs to promote water conservation efforts.

Further, municipalities must provide viable and responsible financing rates to homeowners looking to take advantage of this program. Once again, I'm very pleased that this program is there. There's financing that can be stretched out over 20 years, which is fabulous.

I know some of the current homeowners on the southwestern shore are still in a difficult spot, and I wish this had been in sooner, but at least it is happening now, and we are moving forward. Once again we know that homeowners want to take the steps to be more environmentally sustainable, but cannot always afford it. Nobody wants their family - or friends or loved ones - to have to go through what many families had to go through this summer, and some are currently still having difficulties.

Together with education from residents, we will learn and use the necessary tools and programs to promote water conservation efforts. We must also ensure that these tools are not financially out of reach, so we want to make sure that those who are borrowing the money - there's not interest rates that are out of reach. I'm not sure what the formula will look like, but that will certainly be a concern.

We will certainly watch very closely as this program unfolds, but I do believe it will enjoy success and relieve much stress for those who may have these water challenges in the future. I look forward to hearing presenters at the Committee on Law Amendments and once again, I thank the Speaker for allowing me to stand in my place and speak on this bill.

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

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, a pleasure to stand and have an opportunity to speak on Bill No. 62, the Municipal Government Act and the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. To me, the interesting comments I heard from the Minister of EMO - I was encouraged by his presentations on this particular bill so far, and I can tell you that I'm encouraged with the comments that I've heard up until this point, and I know I look forward to Law Amendments Committee.

Yesterday the CEO from Barrington - which was my home at one time - I know that not only is it going to be Barrington, but there's many of the constituencies across Nova Scotia, particularly in rural Nova Scotia, where the majority of wells are dug wells. I really believe that this bill will have a significant impact, and given the tools for the municipalities to allow taxpayers to have that opportunity to spread that financial cost over 20 years, I think it would be an interesting lure to bring people in to alleviate an issue that has really affected a number of people.

Mr. Speaker, I won't go on at length, but I want to say that climate change is real. Our waters are warming, particularly our oceans, and we are going to see more, unfortunately, of these severe weather conditions. I know the Minister of EMO is interested in talking about a drought in one end of the province, and if you look at the other end of our province we're talking about flood conditions. I want to publicly acknowledge the work that EMO has done and this government with those flood conditions in Cape Breton.

I find it interesting that we have the two extremes, and we have to deal with that in one year. I guess that's the point I'm trying to make, that these severe weather conditions are not going to go away, and it's good to see a bill like this come forward, and the municipalities, the taxpayers of Nova Scotia - those who are directly affected can have an opportunity to address that. I really believe there have to be some long-term programs in place, and this is one that may affect people who have a lack of drinking water.

I will look forward to Law Amendments Committee. I'm hoping other taxpayers, municipal units, representation come forward to Law Amendments Committee and give their views, but on the face of it, I really believe that the minister is doing the right thing in moving this in the right direction, and I look forward to Law Amendments Committee. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to stand here today and speak on Bill No. 62 - 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 Municipal Charter.

This summer's drought was devastating to many of my constituents in Lunenburg, the South Shore, and southwestern Nova Scotia. This was the worst summer recorded since they started taking records in 1880 of dry weather conditions - and I think that speaks to the crises that we had in southwestern and the South Shore of Nova Scotia. I know there were times when we were told by Cindy Day and Peter Coade that we would have rain, or showers, and there were many nights when I'd read on Facebook that there was a downpour in Lunenburg or a downpour in Bridgewater, but in Mahone Bay we didn't get a drop of water - and I think there are other areas of Nova Scotia that we're hearing the Valley was receiving rain or Cape Breton was receiving rain, and these much-needed communities and pockets around Nova Scotia weren't getting a drop of rain.

It led to devastating conditions for many people and, as you heard the minister say this morning the situation has improved somewhat, there are about 1,000 people now without well water. They're still providing assistance to those people, which is wonderful. We're seeing the water table still dangerously low and, with the upcoming winter months, we desperately need rain to fall before the freeze sets into the ground and the snow falls. So, I know other members of this House, like myself, are really hoping for some rain this Fall - and that can't come soon enough.

Towns such as Windsor, they had to put in conservation measures, and that meant people weren't able to wash their cars, they were asked to fix their plumbing, they were told to stop watering their plants, et cetera, to conserve water. And I know other communities had to do that - some didn't even have a choice because they just didn't have the water to do it.

So, water we know is the most important substance here on Earth - all life, all plant life, all human life requires water to survive. In the average home of two to four people, those households consume 680 to 1,360 litres of water a day - and that's just for your everyday cooking, washing, cleaning, maintaining your gardens, showering, and hygiene practices. So, that's a considerable amount of water and if you think of families going without that amount of water each and every day, many who are still going without that

amount of water and really conserving what is brought in to them and being supplied to them, and many having to go elsewhere to take showers, fill water jugs, and whatnot.

Many of these people ended up purchasing new pumps so that they could reach further down their dug wells, and some were digging new wells and at a cost of \$3,000 to \$4,000, and others were drilling wells which cost at least \$10,000 or more. So this is an expensive operation for people to take, and it doesn't just affect people who have a bit of savings. There are people on limited budgets who have been forced to look into finding some kind of financial arrangement so that they can make the adjustments to their water supply.

I think the financing that is going to be provided through some of the programs of this amendment will alleviate a lot of the stress that some of these families are suffering, and the proposed amendments will enable municipalities, and HRM as well, to support water conservation and supplies activities to recoup funds for these programs. They can do this through the PACE program which is the Property Assessment Clean Energy program. It's a financial model that is well-adopted in the United States. It allows municipalities to provide 100 per cent of a project's cost and have it repaid over a specific time period, with the amount being added to the property owner's tax bill. That way it's not upfront money from the property owner, and may make it a little easier for property owners to make these water adjustments for their homes.

This model also removes the upfront costs and it will also help municipalities purchase activities and education for these programs. We already have municipalities that are taking part in the PACE program. Here in Nova Scotia we have Solar City Halifax and Clean Energy Financing, which is offered by the Town of Bridgewater, the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, the Town of Shelburne, and the Town of Digby. There are third parties, Mr. Speaker, such as Efficiency Nova Scotia, and they can be contracted to administer such programs on a municipality's behalf. That's a good thing, and a lot of us are familiar with many of the programs that Efficiency Nova Scotia does.

The Department of Energy also provides financial support for administrative costs of PACE programs, so municipal units will be able to look into that as well. The ability to recoup these funds, Mr. Speaker, over specified time periods, enables municipalities to offer these programs to their constituents. These amendments will ensure that municipalities have the ability to address risk issues, such as water shortages, and it will help them prepare a way for the future.

Mr. Speaker, this summer, bottled water was trucked to Shelburne, Barrington. (Interruption) Chezzetcook, yes - Mr. Speaker, your constituency - and I know that many people in the Lunenburg area took part. I also want to mention the member for Pictou West - she thanked the private businesses, and individuals who came together to help out in this situation, transporting water to these areas, municipal units. There were marinas, comfort stations. I know there were MLA offices that were offering to fill water jugs and whatnot.

I know I appreciated all the assistance people have received, and are continuing to receive, during this water shortage. Our provincial parks extended their hours, I think some of them had to close for winterization, but some places, churches have remained open, and fire stations, for people to shower and fill water jugs.

This is a short-term solution right now; we know we have to look at a long-term solution, and this will help. Mayor Karen Mattatall from Shelburne has been very clear that this is just the start of what we're probably going to see in the future. This amendment will let us prepare for the future, and allow municipalities to prepare. We really know the only real long-term solution to this, Mr. Speaker, is to have rain. I know lots of us have done rain dances over the summer in hope we would get some. That hasn't happened in all areas, so they must be better rain dancers in Cape Breton than we are on the South Shore, that's all I can say.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the municipal units that have been the most affected by the water shortage are in agreement to this amendment and are looking forward to finding solutions for their constituents. That is wonderful, that property owners will have that financial assistance. They will need it to buy new pumps, and modify their wells, dig wells. It's also good for people who need to buy storage containers for their properties.

I have family members whose wells get low every summer, but this year people's wells went dry and that is really challenging for doing laundry if you have children, if you have an elderly person who is under home care and needs health service, they need a constant water supply. And there are businesses that found it very difficult to operate, they could not offer washrooms for their clients and often I know that businesses were trucking water so that they could function as a business. So this amendment will go far to help resolve this issue. And I think my local municipality, as well as others here, will really appreciate what this amendment will do to help their constituents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I did want to take the opportunity to attach myself to the comments that we have heard here today - and to support the bill as I understand it at this point.

Southwestern Nova Scotia has been suffering from drought really from June when things started to go a little south - I would say it was even before that because we really didn't have a big winter and the groundwater was just not there and we didn't get the snow normally what you would have sitting in the ground waiting to be used. It was just not there - and we didn't get the rain in June and we didn't get the rain in July, we didn't get the rain in August, we haven't had much rain in September, October wasn't that great either. And we are still waiting for some rain now in November.

So a lot of families who thought they could work it out, wait through their connections with neighbours or trucking their water in, providing the cistern system that they could just wait it out a little bit until rain came - they are finding themselves in a situation where the rain is not coming and of course cold weather is upon us. I think that providing funding to these individuals is going to be a good thing. It's not so much that these families cannot afford putting the wells in; they just can't afford it today is quite part of the problem. Where if you need to outlay \$5,000 or do a drilled well at \$10,000 or more, because in some cases I have heard of drilling - it seems like they are drilling three-quarters of the way to China at this point and they are not finding water, so it creates a whole other issue, but to find \$5,000 to dig a well or to find \$10,000 to drill one is just out of reach for most people I know within my constituency.

Some can and some did, some have gone and spent their money and have been able to find water on their properties - some haven't. We are finding that in some particular, sort of the southern more communities that we have, the Cape Islands, the ends of Pubnico, the ends of Wedgeport, those points even the groundwater is not there as they're drilling.

So I'm hoping beyond the issue of providing the dollars and cents to it, the government continues to work with these communities to identify more of, I would qualify, the dry spots or the hot spots that through, either hydrologist or geologist or what have you, to help those communities understand their situation and I don't think that situation is going to get much better over the next number of weeks at all.

I hope over and above what the minister is providing here today, which is a very, very good move forward, that the departments continue to work together to identify those areas that are going to need more help as it goes along. Drilling a well, digging that well and you hit the cap, you hit the rock and you can't go much further and still no water, does not help anyone, it's going to be a municipality lending money out for a well that is actually not serviceable so we want to make sure that piece is taken care of.

I don't know which organization actually would be helping with that, or how EMO with the municipalities, with maybe the Department of Natural Resources, can work together to ensure that we identify those areas that might be difficult to provide water to.

Finishing up here, it's simply through the communities we represent - we represent some pretty cool places. It is because of those cool places and those cool people that they've been able to get through the summer as they've gotten through it. There has been some great help by the municipalities and by EMO, but if you look at - you know, those hoses that are running from one house to another house, the people who are helping take care of the seniors, there's a lot of volunteered time and neighbours helping neighbours to make sure they've gotten through this.

I just want to thank those neighbours and community members for stepping up and helping their friends. I want to thank the EMO for its work with the municipalities, and the

municipalities themselves have done a phenomenal job as well. Once again, thank you to those individuals who have worked to make sure we've gotten through this drought.

To the minister, I know he's got a fair bit more work on this one. There are still some regulations to do, and the municipalities themselves have to get bylaws to help support this, so there are a number of steps that still have to be done. Hopefully that can be done in haste before Christmas rolls around.

Thank you for this opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

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 very much appreciate the comments of my colleagues and the support of my colleagues on this bill, particularly the comments thanking our EMO officials. Andy Lathem and his team have had a particularly busy season with a water shortage in one part of the province and a very damaging flood in the other. These folks have been working around the clock to coordinate all the various government departments that are required to provide adequate response to these situations. On top of that, they run our 911 service.

I think the quality of that office has been recognized in this House, and I think we do all owe them a great thank you and appreciation on behalf of the people of this province for the work that they do. (Applause)

As the members mentioned, the weather is an extremely humbling thing that can happen. Life is normal one day, then the weather comes in and your life is changed for a very long time. So we do need to prepare - citizens need to prepare - for these sorts of events in the future, and I'm happy to bring this in to allow them to start that process on the water supply side of things.

We also do want to recognize the indomitable and adaptive character of the individuals who have been dealing with this water shortage on their own property. The highest percentage of individuals who were impacted as part of this water shortage were in my constituency of Yarmouth, and throughout this entire time, I'm only aware of receiving one call to my office. As MLAs know, usually during these moments of distress we do receive a high volume of calls.

I think that really does speak to the quality and the effectiveness of the response and the effectiveness of the volunteers and everybody who helped, but it also does speak to the survivalist quality of these folks who have dug wells. These are people who do know how to survive in tough times, Mr. Speaker. They were brought up in the country. They know how to take care of their property. A lot of them hunt their own food during hunting

season and provide for their family that way. I think we do want to recognize that great quality of Nova Scotians and their ability to adapt to and overcome these situations. That is the most inspiring part of the story.

I thank the members again for their comments, and I do look forward to receiving any other feedback in Law Amendments Committee next week.

With that, I would like to close second reading of this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 62. 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 Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Public Bills for Third Reading.

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 36.

Bill No. 36 - Gaming Control Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 36, an Act to Amend the Gaming Control Act, now be read a third time and do pass.

Before I begin my closing remarks, I must take a moment to formally correct the public record. During my closing comments in second reading, I inadvertently referenced this bill as an Act to Amend the Liquor Control Act. That was an error, and Bill No. 36 is in fact an Act to Amend the Gaming Control Act.

I would now like to take a moment to respond to comments made by my colleagues opposite during second reading to elaborate and provide clarity to their questions.

The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington asked if I would speak in my closing to what Service Nova Scotia is doing to effectively issue gaming licences. He also

indicated he would have liked to have seen us address Chase the Ace regulations in this particular bill. Part II of the Gaming Control Act, which I am responsible for, already has strong and effective regulations for charitable gaming. Over the past year, however, I, along with gaming officials and key stakeholders - such as the Royal Canadian Legion's Dominion Command - have had ongoing and extensive discussion about Chase the Ace games, and we all agreed that they needed best practices guidelines and more rigour around them.

We all know how popular Chase the Ace games have become, and how important they are as fundraising initiatives for our Legions, our volunteer fire departments, and community organizations, including local churches. Each of us in this House has seen the benefits that Chase the Ace events can provide to not-for-profit organizations and communities. Just this past weekend, as my colleagues would know, the West Pubnico Legion Chase the Ace concluded raising about \$640,000 before expenses. We've seen similar fundraising successes in Inverness and Sydney. We've also heard inspiring stories of volunteers working full-time to make their community's Chase the Ace the successes that they are.

I want to acknowledge and thank the hundreds of volunteers across this great province who are delivering Chase the Ace games and welcoming people to their communities. They should be very proud of their commitment and the hard work that they demonstrate in serving their communities.

Most of us would agree, however, that in addition to the benefits of Chase the Ace games, there are challenges and inherent risks when community organizations and volunteers are dealing with large prizes, large amounts of cash, and an influx of game players to their communities. This puts tremendous pressure on those local communities. We have concerns around circumstances such as robbery, parking challenges, security issues, volunteer fatigue, ticket tampering, fraud, accounting errors, and the ability of emergency vehicles to continue to provide services that community residents expect.

Last year, as an example, we had a situation where two winning tickets were drawn at one game, a situation which put the licensee at risk for legal action, and put the game at risk of being subject to ticket tampering. That is why regulatory oversight, and ensuring that these games are operated with integrity, is critical. Therefore, we implemented new mandatory conditions earlier this Fall to better ensure Chase the Ace games are operated, at all times, with confidence and integrity, while also ensuring that government does not stand in the way of the community organizations that are operating these games as fundraisers.

We recently introduced, through policy, new conditions for Chase the Ace games which will better protect the organizations running them, their volunteers, and the Nova Scotians who play these games. This could be done through policy, and did not require amendments to legislation or regulations, both of which are robust, and are serving

licensees and government well when it comes to Chase the Ace games. I'll briefly touch on those new conditions.

First, we will require the involvement of a chartered accountant once the prize reaches \$50,000. This oversight by a CA must continue on an ongoing basis until the prize is won and will better protect the licensee, its volunteers, and the citizens who play these games.

Secondly, if a prize reaches the \$50,000 mark, the licensee must submit a security plan, and plan to place unique identifiers on their tickets to ensure that duplicate tickets are not in play or drawn. Unique identifiers on tickets will also significantly reduce the risk of fraud or legal ticket tampering, which is a true risk when prizes reach higher amounts.

At the \$50,000 threshold, officials from Service Nova Scotia must also be engaged to provide enhanced oversight. Again, the intent is to support the licensee and ensure that the integrity of the lottery is maintained for all involved: the licensee, the volunteers, and those buying tickets.

The third condition is that if a game reaches the \$100,000 threshold, we will require the licensee to switch from using roll tickets to stub tickets, which are tickets that the purchaser writes their name, phone number, and contact information on. We are already seeing some licensees start their games using stub tickets as a way to prevent ticket tampering, fraud, and the duplication of tickets in play, as well as human error in the managing of ticket inventories.

In addition to these new conditions, we created a best practices document last Spring for all Chase the Ace licences. I want to assure members of this House that gaming officials work very closely with licensees to support them, to guide them, and to monitor all aspects of the game to ensure that they operate in a safe, secure, fair, and ethical manner. I can also assure members of this House that Service Nova Scotia and I take very seriously our mandate to ensure the charitable lotteries and bingos we license are managed and operated with honesty and integrity and that there is no tampering, cheating, fraud, or room for accounting errors. The best practices and conditions we recently rolled out will help protect these games from fraud, human error, theft, and other unknown circumstances.

I also want to state for the official record, Mr. Speaker, that since 2012, we have issued over 700 licences for Chase the Ace games, and only 22 games in the past four years, or 3 per cent, have had jackpots in excess of \$50,000. The number of games that hit the \$50,000 mark is a smaller number, only about three to five each year, but it doesn't lessen the importance and attention that we have to give to those few lotteries. Although a small number of games each year grow to have large prizes, we are making sure that those that do have the proper support and oversight in place to ensure that they are implemented in a way that doesn't put the licensee or those playing the game at risk.

I am confident, as is the executive director of Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel and Tobacco, that our regulatory oversight, combined with the best practices guide and the mandatory conditions, will help ensure that Chase the Ace programs are being run with confidence and integrity, and that licensees are fully supported by gaming officials to ensure all aspects of the game run smoothly and without incident.

With regard to applying for charitable gaming lottery licences, we have a very efficient process in place that does not compromise the integrity of how these games are run. We understand that organizations that apply for these licences are non-profit community organizations, and most are 100-per cent volunteer based. Service Nova Scotia is in the client-service business, and as such, our role is to provide excellence in service while also fulfilling our role as regulator.

As I announced this past April, Service Nova Scotia is moving in a new direction to achieve its mandate, which is to balance regulatory oversight and service excellence, a client focus, and program modernization. As an example, Mr. Speaker, last winter, we reorganized the licensing function of Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel and Tobacco to use our resources more strategically and efficiently. We are receiving more applications for charitable gaming licences, mostly because of the popularity of Chase the Ace. As a result, we restructured the unit to work smarter and more strategically.

Our service standards for issuing licences is 10 business days, and we are meeting this target despite the high volume of gaming applications we are receiving, while not compromising our regulatory oversight responsibilities. Citizens and businesses can be confident that Service Nova Scotia is committed to moving to a higher level of service and can and will do so without compromising regulatory oversight. In fact, regulatory oversight and efficient service can and do go hand in hand. In other words, efficient service excellence and robust regulatory oversight are not mutually exclusive.

During second reading, the honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid spoke about the need to ensure that proper oversight is given to gaming to ensure that we minimize the impact of addictions and that he hoped the changes recommended by Bill No. 36 would not fast-track approving new ways of gaming or new gaming in Nova Scotia. Service Nova Scotia is responsible for Part II of the Gaming Control Act, which is the issuance of charitable gaming licences to non-profit organizations for bingos and ticket lotteries, of which Chase the Ace is a derivative. We provide robust, regulatory oversight to ensure these games are operated with confidence and integrity.

I also wish to assure the member for Sackville-Cobequid that Bill No. 36 is not a mechanism to expedite applications for charitable gaming licenses, or approve new ways of gaming in Nova Scotia. It is simply about formally delegating the authority to issue charitable gaming licenses to the Executive Director of Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel & Tobacco. It is an administrative change that does not preclude us from our ongoing work, whether it be via policy, regulations or legislation, to make improvements.

Before I became Minister of Service Nova Scotia, Mr. Speaker, the Executive Director issued gaming licenses on a day-to-day operational level. That would have been the case for any previous minister, and I know my colleague was the minister responsible at one time. This bill is purely administrative in nature, and is intended to align the wording of legislation with operational reality. However, that does not mean that I do not provide stringent ministerial oversight. I do, and I am confident that future ministers responsible for Part II of the Gaming Control Act will do so as well.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'll conclude my remarks and again move that Bill No. 36 be read a third time and do pass.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his remarks. We are speaking today on third reading of this Bill. I know it's very brief, but I think it gives an opportunity to talk about gaming, and the implications of giving - moving power from the minister to the Executive Director of Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel & Tobacco Division of Service Nova Scotia.

I can certainly see the merit, Mr. Speaker, in terms of making it easier, and perhaps more efficient, to get approvals completed. I know the minister has all kinds of folders of information requiring signature on his desk. I know that is the way it is in a minister's office. These changes are likely a good thing for everyone.

I want to talk a little bit about gaming. I know VLTs are one example of some of the gaming in the province, and from recollection, I believe VLTs are bringing in somewhere between \$100 million and \$200 million per year in revenue for the province. I should know that off the top of my head, Mr. Speaker. I thought it was closer to \$200 million, but I'm not getting any help from anyone here, so don't quote me on that number. But it's a significant amount of money.

I know it has been going up. It went up quite significantly in the past year or two. I know it corresponded with the removal of the My-Play System, which - I can't say there's a direct correlation, but I did notice that and I wondered about that. I know the My-Play System - I know people have said that it perhaps turned off the casual VLT gamer, and that may be the case, and maybe that's the reason why the revenues have come up for VLTs.

The fact is that the revenues have come up from VLTs, and I often think, is that a good source of revenue for the government? Certainly acknowledging the reality that if people want to gamble, they're going to do it somewhere, and VLTs are often located right in the community, and they provide people with a chance to gamble. Of course, Mr. Speaker, sometimes gambling isn't just for entertainment and that's where concern comes in.

Mr. Speaker, I think about who is playing those machines and can they afford it, and for the casual gamer who sees it as entertainment, that's fine. I don't have a problem with the province collecting revenue from that source, because it's entertainment and it doesn't matter who is in government but the reality is some of the people that are using VLTs are not playing it for entertainment but are instead using it for a payday and that is very unfortunate. It's not just affecting them - it's affecting their families. I think about those people and I think about what ways - I guess if we got rid of VLTs completely that would be one way of protecting those people from using gambling as means to make a payday; maybe they would go somewhere else.

That is a concern, and I know a number of years ago, not that long ago, the government of the day decided not to enter online gaming as a source of revenue for the province. I think that was a good decision because at the end of the day people are going to gamble online and those revenues are going to elsewhere. For the province to get into that, while it might raise money, it's again probably going to be raising money from a source that perhaps leads to others' misery or their family members' misery.

So I think about people who are playing the VLTs and the question being, can they really afford it? The odds of winning - well if it's for entertainment, the odds of winning are less important. If it's to make a payday, the odds of winning become very important. If it's not realistic that you are going to win - which in the case of VLTs it's not, the odds are against you - then it's no longer entertainment and if people are counting on it for a payday it's a recipe for misery. Because you will never get ahead, you will only get behind and then it starts to affect the rest of your life, you become indebted, it affects your family and then it affects things that go beyond money - it affects relationships, it affects people's happiness.

VLTs are creating a lot of misery for people. I think about the odds of winning and compare it to - sometimes when I worked at the bank, I used to go down and eat at the restaurant attached to the casino and when I would be going down I would be thinking, here are these people playing in the casino and we are playing in the biggest casino in the world with the stock market. There is some truth to that, we kind of joked about it but there is a science to the stock market and you can certainly have odds that are in your favour or much more in your favour certainly than a VLT machine or slot machine at the casino. But the point being that VLTs and casinos are not a way for people to make money because you are not ever going to beat the house. If people could beat the house or could beat the machine at the casino, the casino and the machine wouldn't be in business and the government wouldn't be running them.

So the odds of winning are not in people's favour. These machines have to be viewed as entertainment and entertainment only so how do you get that message across? I know that the government has means of doing that through marketing. I know that in the casino there is a person sitting right there if you are having some difficulties or feel as if you are maybe spending too much money or you might get some anxiety you can go and

talk to somebody right there and I think that is a good thing. Because inevitably that service I am sure is called upon.

I also think about Chase the Ace, and of course Inverness had a very, very successful Chase the Ace, raised a lot of money for the Legion, who was generous in sharing that money with other community groups and it also raised a lot of money for what we used to call the cottage workshop which I think the official title now is Mill Road Social Enterprises.

Just about a week ago they had the opening of a new centre, which used to be the Hoff in Inverness. If anybody was ever at the Hoff, it was a bar and a storied place, a place where you had your regulars, but it was also very busy on certain weekends of the year, when university students would be home, or in the summertime, certainly, with the Inverness Gathering.

The Hoff has been transformed into a new centre that allows people who worked at the Inverness Cottage Workshop - now they're working at this new location. I know they're very proud of their new facility, and I know it is providing a dignity of work for people there. It also has a focus on the early years - the point being that gaming is very important in our province. You can't walk into any community hall in this province that hasn't benefited from gaming revenue, whether it's in 50-50 ticket sales, bingos, or the latest craze, if I may call it that, Chase the Ace.

In Inverness it was incredible. I volunteered two of the final weeks, and it was amazing. I was selling tickets in the arena, upstairs, and as I was walking to the arena, there were cars parked everywhere. I parked strategically because I wanted to be able to get away at the end of the day without getting caught in the traffic jam. I remember that the member for Hants West was there as well, one of those weeks.

The amount of traffic was amazing, thousands of people coming into the community, all lured by the chance of winning a big payday. Of course, Mr. Speaker, I would say a much higher percentage of those lottery revenues stayed within the community of Inverness and area, and I think that's a great thing. I know we have the Lotto 6/49, I know that money finds its way back into the hands of the government, which is also the hands of the taxpayer, and certainly, there's money going to good causes, but in the case of Chase the Ace, most of the money stays right in the community. I think that's great.

In Inverness, I was walking to the arena, cars everywhere, entrepreneurs selling food, water. This started at the Legion, which is a small building in comparison to the arena. The arena - full-size ice surface in Inverness - I think it's NHL-size ice surface, it certainly seemed big when I was in minor hockey, compared to a couple of the other arenas - so we're talking about an arena packed with people, with entertainment going on. It was an experience, it wasn't just coming and laying down your \$20 and having a chance to win, this was entertainment. I'm sure the member for Hants West would agree that when he was

there, that people were enjoying themselves and they were making a day of it, and people were travelling in. Some of these people were travelling in from two, three, four hours away, so the place was packed.

When I got into the arena, Mr. Speaker, I think about all the people standing around outside and there was a helicopter flying overhead, an RCMP helicopter. I thought, isn't this interesting, that there's so much money here that the RCMP have been called in – actually, I think, they decided to go in themselves, which was a very good decision. When you have that many people in one location, you want to make sure there's law and order. Also, when you have that much money in cash floating around in one location, you need a chopper in the air, you need an eye in the sky, or as the truckers would say, you need a bear in the air.

Mr. Speaker, there was a strong RCMP presence. When we went into the room to get our instruction for the day, there were RCMP stationed right there because in that room, in that little dressing room in the back end of the arena, there was money coming in from the Legion - which is down the road from the area on Main Street - and there was money coming in of course at the arena. Later on, they had to open up the Broad Cove concert grounds because there were so many people they had to open up a third site for people to participate.

So, we go out to start selling tickets - and I have never seen so many \$20 dollar bills coming in so quickly. All I could think about was how, there has got to be some way I can figure out a way to have money coming in like this for myself. It was amazing to see people part with their money so quickly, and I think that is the power of gambling, and I think that's why you had the riverboats that we think about where they would have gaming activity. We think about the gold rush and the saloons and all the gaming and the card playing, and people - there's something about it, it's like a magnet. People are enamoured by that chance of winning money, and they will hand their money over for a chance to make it.

So, I think, you have to be there but, literally, it felt like every 15 or 20 minutes I had to empty my cash tray - and it was mostly \$20 dollar bills because people were paying mostly in \$20s because it's the common currency, but, also, you could buy four sets of tickets for \$20. Mr. Speaker, I would be sticking my hand in and grabbing literally a fistful of \$20s about every 20 minutes, and I would have to be careful that the bills wouldn't go flying out of my hand because I couldn't hold them all. I was thinking, wow, there's some money being raised here today, and people were parting with it.

I still remember four young men coming in, and they each laid down \$1,000 on the table; they were placing their bet. And you had of course people coming in just to drop a \$20. It was of some concern of course because somebody putting down \$1,000, that's a significant amount of money and there's no protection for those people there. But, at the same time, I guess it is their business. But, you couldn't help but think that maybe that

money was being taken from somewhere else - but those are stories we'll never really know, Mr. Speaker.

But, suffice it to say, there was a lot of money coming in. It was going to a good cause. I mean, the community would make 10 years' worth of fundraising in a day. Think about all the fudge that would have to be sold or the meals that would have to be sold and put on over years to make the same amount in an afternoon.

So, it's a very powerful fundraising tool. I think it's good for communities. I don't know what we can do to protect people maybe that are placing a bet who don't realize that it might not be the wisest thing for them to do. We do have to respect their privacy and their freedom to do that, but that might be an area where perhaps there is some responsibility for government to ensure there is some reinforcement for people when they're placing, you know buying their tickets in the case of Chase the Ace, that they should be thinking about what they're doing, and if they might not think it's the right thing to do, maybe there should be somebody they could go to talk to, although that could be difficult in terms of privacy, if somebody was at the event they might not feel comfortable, but it's something to think about.

Mr. Speaker, Chase the Ace has been a huge success and something that's doing a lot of good in terms of the funds that are raised for these community organizations.

Another significant fundraiser and actually another group that was involved in Chase the Ace in terms of giving up their real estate so people could park was the Inverness Raceway, where you can find harness racing on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings, and that is an institution looking at about 100 years of operation at the Inverness Raceway. You know, you'd have people - you'd have children there today running around the barns, helping to take care of the horses, whose great-grandparents would have been doing the same thing, right there in Inverness. So it's a family tradition, it's a big part of the culture of Inverness, and it is also gaming, and money is raised there.

I know the province contributes \$1 million a year, they've been doing that for many years now to help support that racing. People might say, well, why are they giving money to an operation, it's a gaming operation? To that I would say, it's more than a gaming operation; it's a hobby, it's a sport. Of all the types of gambling, I would have to say, if there is a type of gambling - now assuming that nobody is giving up money they can't afford to be giving up - if there's a type of gambling that actually has some social health to it, or value to it, I would say it has to be harness racing. I think of Kattie Graham of Judique whose vision has failed but Kattie is there every week and I know she was awarded, I think, Fan of the Year a couple of years back. That is an important outing for her every week and she loves the horses, and she loves the races, and I think that's a wonderful thing.

What an economic contributor to the community of Inverness. So for anybody to say, we're looking for money to take out of the budget, don't look to harness racing, Mr.

Speaker. That money is coming in the taxes that are earned on the feed for the horses, the veterinary fees and care the horses get, for the food and lodging, and gas taxes that are collected from people travelling to that event every week - twice a week in some cases, there are some loyal fans out there. That is an economic investment.

The alternative, Mr. Speaker, all those people, especially people who own horses, and all the money they put into them - it's not a sport where you make money, it's a sport where you hope to break even, and you have a great time doing it. The time and love they put into that sport, if they didn't have that, that money would probably be going to Cuba or to the Dominican Republic, because if they were looking for entertainment, if they didn't have harness racing, they might be travelling to one of those locations for a vacation. Instead, many of these people keep their money at home, and enjoy their entertainment at home, with harness racing.

Mr. Speaker, I would pose the question, is the \$1 million the government puts into harness racing, is that an asset or is it a liability? I would say it is very much an asset, for the points I have just mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, there's a new barn in Inverness. It's a few years old now. I do laugh because it's a big, blue barn which I think was maybe an acknowledgement of the provincial government at the time that made a significant investment in that, but that money has already been recovered in all the economic activity. I do laugh at the colour of the barn, I think it's a running joke at the track. I'm proud of that because the blue team was there for the raceway, and we've always been there for the raceway, and we always will be there for the raceway.

Mr. Speaker, harness racing is about keeping money at home in the local economy. It's about youth involvement. So many young people - and we think about what a connection people can have with animals and horses, who are very intelligent, very emotional as well. I have to tell you that I am a little bit afraid of horses, because they are so big and I've just not grown up around them. I remember seeing a scar on my father's bicep where he was bitten by a horse when he was a young teenager at home. The horse had him pinned to the floor of the barn, and the horse's legs were spread out, much like you would see a giraffe's legs spread out, and the horse had him pinned to the floor.

I don't know if his father came on the scene, but the horse took a fright and kind of let go of his grip. My father jumped up, and he said he still remembers hopping over the horse's outstretched leg and getting the heck out of that barn. Having a 1,200-pound animal pinning you to the floor with its teeth gripped in your arm - I saw the scar, Mr. Speaker. My father had strong arms. He had good biceps on him and strong wrists and forearms, but one of his biceps always kind of sagged a bit, and it was because the horse had damaged the tendons in there.

Suffice it to say I think about that when I see those big horses. I know they get wound up, not unlike a professional athlete when the adrenaline gets running. Those horses before they go out and especially once they come off the track, they've been competing, and they want to win. I don't know what's going through their minds, but we know that they're all fired up. So I'm cautious when I get around those horses, but they're beautiful animals.

I look at all the young people in the horse barns and how they are taking care of these horses and how much they love them and how well they're treated. I think about that bond that's created. I think about how important that is for young people, how important that is for their own personal development. They're developing very human skills and interacting with others.

They may be interacting with a horse, but the Minister of Justice and I were talking today about the puppies for prisoners programs and how dogs in that case are being trained by the prisoners and talking about how those prisoners need some love in their life too. Of course, man's best friend, you would be hard-pressed to find a type of love that is so forgiving and so unconditional. That's so important for them and getting their lives turned around. In the case of the raceway in Inverness, those horses are making a difference for those young people, and they're growing up with them. That affects who they are as they get older and make decisions in their own lives.

I think about harness racing, and I say that it's a diamond in the rough, especially in Inverness. It's the most authentic, real harness-racing experience you're going to have, I would say, in this province, but that's perhaps because I represent the area. I think perhaps even the people who go to the other two tracks in the province would have to say that Inverness is a pretty special place. (Interruptions)

I've heard that echoed by a number of people. They're talking about the beach; I'm actually talking about the raceway. (Interruptions) They're talking about the beach. But I hope they have a chance to check out the harness racing someday; it's an experience.

My point is that this is also about tourism. This is an attraction; this is part of the tourism product of Cape Breton Island. What a unique way to spend the afternoon. If I was travelling somewhere in the southern United States, and I was looking for what the locals are doing today, and if I got taken to the raceway like I would go to in Inverness, I would be fascinated just seeing local people there, seeing the passion they have for the racing - what a great afternoon, a real experience.

If you want to talk about real tourism - I'm finding now with the Internet that you have to be careful when you research where you're travelling to because you might find that you're going to the same place the other 10,000 people are going that day because everybody checked out the top 10 list of things to do in that area. But, Mr. Speaker, if I got

taken to a place like the Inverness Raceway, I would be as happy as I could be, and that would be my day's satisfaction right there for my trip.

Mr. Speaker, harness racing is something I think holds potential for Inverness, potential for more revenues for the raceway there, it is attracting people not from the local area, not those hard-core patriots for harness racing, but attracting more people, that being visitors to the province.

Mr. Speaker, these changes in this bill, if having the executive director being able to sign off helps with the efficiency of running the raceway and with their ability to get timely feedback and approvals from the province, then I think that's a good thing.

Mr. Speaker, I also think about the cat population at the raceway in Inverness. There are a lot of cats at the raceway and think about those little cats (Interruption) The Minister of Health and Wellness raises a good point, we should be spaying and neutering our cats, I think that's the point he's making - and certainly there are efforts to do that. I know there's a group in Inverness that tries to encourage that.

But there are a lot of cats at the raceway and they are tough cats. Nobody is bringing them a plate of warm milk, but I tell you, I think they're happy. They're living in their element, they have freedom and they have a good supply of mice - no offence to the mice, the mice are perhaps well served by lots of the hay that's around and they'd be able to stay warm, but without waxing too much on this, the cats are well fed and nature is taking its course.

I wanted to mention the cats because they are part of the raceway too. Maybe even Bubbles on the Trailer Park Boys would be interested to know that. We haven't seen Bubbles at the raceway in Inverness. Perhaps on the record today I could extend an invite to Bubbles to visit the raceway in Inverness because we know how much he loves kitties - he has even written songs about them, so that's the Inverness Raceway.

Just a short note on the Port Hood Raceway which has an annual race during Chestico Days. That's a really homegrown event, Mr. Speaker. If you think the Inverness Raceway is grassroots, come down to Port Hood for the annual race during Chestico Days, where people pull up in pickup trucks and when you pull in and park you're seeing licence plates from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, and just about everywhere else on the continent. Everybody is parking, bringing a chair and sitting down for harness racing where you can't even bet on your horse because there's no system to take the bets, but you can still place a bet by buying a ticket which shows a random order of the horses that are racing - that's how grassroots that track is.

People are there, the families are there, the kids are there, the chairs are there - there might even be some cold beverages there and people are enjoying themselves. That's one

of the best attended events during Chestico Days, Mr. Speaker. They're licensed; they are going to the minister for their approval to run that event.

These are important events for the province, Mr. Speaker, and that's why I'm taking the time today to speak about them here in the Legislature. I think to finish up, since I've taken almost 33 minutes here - I hope I've been entertaining; I hope I've provided some entertainment - I know it has been a long speech, but with that I want to say we will be supporting this bill and we look forward to the changes to move the powers from the minister to the executive director. I know it's a short bill but perhaps that provides (Interruption) One of the members is telling me it's a long-winded response to the bill, but I think we'll let it go at that and look forward to supporting this bill. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Business.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his comments and the entertainment on a Friday afternoon. It was indeed entertaining, but I will say this: I've been to the Inverness community on a number of occasions, and I do want to recognize the strength of the community and those components of the community that contribute to tourism and contribute to the experience that we all want to be able to communicate. If the member would put that YouTube video up, and become our Nova Scotia ambassador, we look forward to that in the future.

Just very briefly and very quickly, I do want to differentiate between Part I and Part II of the Gaming Control Act. My colleague referenced VLTs. They are not - for clarity - part of this bill. Part I of the Gaming Control Act, under the responsibility of my colleague, the member for Cape Breton-Richmond - I just want to ensure that there's no confusion - the changes that we're making are simply administrative and intended to provide the efficiencies and oversight that we should continue to apply, particularly in the area of Chase the Ace.

My colleague spoke about the public safety component of those games and how important these changes are in recognizing and identifying the organization and the planning that goes into these events, whether it's multiple government departments, the Department of Justice being one of them, and inherently the local policing service, Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, Municipal Affairs, Emergency Management - quite extensive and exhaustive resources available.

In the early stages of those games, as the prizes continued to increase and the recognition of those circumstances that my colleague identified, and the need to expand on that piece - public safety - and the ability of those individuals to continue to provide service in those communities, so it is unfettered, and the traffic can continue to move freely,

particularly emergency vehicles. So I did want to make that reference and thank my colleague for those comments.

Mr. Speaker, with those few comments, I move that Bill No. 36, an Act to Amend the Gaming Control Act, do pass.

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

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 41.

Bill No. 41 - Residential Tenancies Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Business.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 41 be read for a third time and do pass.

Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak once more to the purpose of Bill No. 41. The proposed amendments will permit alternative formats for residential tenancy hearings, such as telephone hearings. Currently hearings are only held in person, which result in lengthy wait times in dispute resolutions. The incorporation of that option will contribute to the reduction of those wait times right across the province. Secondly, to allow landlords to provide electronic copies of the Act instead of printed copies, and third, to transfer the fee waiver authority from the Minister of Service Nova Scotia to the Director of Residential Tenancies, which will reduce processing time. These changes will save both landlords and tenants time and costs associated with travel.

I'd also like to take a moment to thank my colleagues opposite for their positive feedback, and to address two questions raised during second reading. These questions are in regard to paper copies of the Act, and confirmation of receipt of an electronic copy of the Act. We understand that not everyone likes to conduct their business electronically, and that is why, if tenants receive an electronic copy of the Act from their landlord, they will have the option to request a paper copy of the Act through Service Nova Scotia.

This will ensure Nova Scotians have a choice in how they want to interact with us; in this case by paper or online. Also the standard form of lease contains a section where

tenants confirm that they have received the copy of the Act - this section will be changed, I believe the request is from my colleague for Sackville-Cobequid to allow tenants to confirm what type of copy they have received, paper or electronic, or a link to an electronic copy. It's important the Residential Tenancies Act is shaped to best respond to the needs and concerns of Nova Scotians. As minister responsible, I am committed to further modernizing the Act.

With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the comments of my colleagues.

MR.SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness

MR. ALLAN MCMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the minister has raised that point about electronic copies of the Residential Tenancies Act versus paper copies because that was one of the concerns we raised, that there may be people who get handed a piece of paper that says you can get your electronic copy here and it might be someone who is not familiar with using the Internet, it might be a senior who might have not gotten into what we call the computer age, and so I think that is a good point that people can still get a paper copy through the Office of Service Nova Scotia. I would presume - and the minister can later clarify when this is finished off - that landlords will be required when they are giving that electronic copy to also state if you wish to have a paper copy you can get one at Service Nova Scotia by calling this number and so on, so that people are aware that the option exists and have a quick way of getting a copy of that information.

So unless we hear otherwise from people, we will certainly be letting the minister know, but that should provide a satisfactory solution to that. But certainly if we hear, I would be letting the minister know if there are people who are not getting the copy of the Act and have concerns about that.

Mr. Speaker, I know this, and I am certainly not aiming to cause any confusion here, I know that the Residential Tenancies Act, I want to mention something else that is not related to these changes, but the minister probably recalls the Troy Trailer Court which almost closed a couple of years back. One of the things I noticed in the Residential Tenancies Act was that there wasn't really any protection for people who are renting a trailer or perhaps even owned a mobile home and had it on a lot for maybe 10 or 12 years, or even more - and at the time this became a big media story and the owner of the - we call it the Troy Trailer Court, that is how I had always known it - the owner of the facility was saying that he was just going to close it down.

It was not making money and there was a concern over the waste water treatment plant associated with it and he basically said that it was going to cost too much to fix and I am closing down and people are going to have to leave. Well of course we scoured the Act, spoke with people in the minister's department, the minister was concerned about it as well. Thankfully that situation and the problems that the residents faced were averted, but not

because of legislation, at least not that I could see - it was averted because somebody else came along and purchased the operation and kept it going.

So I just remember saying at the time, thank God, and I gave a lot of credit to the couple who purchased the facility and are continuing to run it, because had they not done that I don't think there was any protection in the legislation for the residents. What I would say is, in the event that there is what I'll call a looming bankruptcy for an owner of a facility like a trailer court - that doesn't happen overnight in most cases. They know months in advance if things aren't going well. They might be taking on debt to keep the place running.

The bottom line is that bankruptcies don't just happen at the snap of a finger, in most cases. Should there not be protection in this legislation for people who are living - as they are at the Troy Trailer Court - should there not be protection for them that the owner of the facility be required to give them some notice? Maybe it's 12 months' notice, that if the place might be shutting down, that they have to give some notice - because what we saw in the case in Troy, some people's homes could not be moved. They were older mobile homes, they had been there for a long time, and if you went to move them, there might have been problems in getting them re-established elsewhere. That's one point.

Another point is where would they go, Mr. Speaker? Mobile home parks are not everywhere, you can't just up and move down the road. That's an issue; point number two.

A third point: what about the cost to move a mobile home when you are on a fixed income? Some people finally paid off their homes and they didn't have to worry about that, but what about having to deal with having to move your mobile home when you are on a fixed income? If people have 12 months' advance notice, or if they are required to be given that notice under the Act, then at least they have a chance.

It's hard enough if you have to leave your home. I can't imagine what that would be like - somebody all of a sudden tells you, well, you've got to leave. Mr. Speaker, I think of my ancestors in Scotland, who got kicked out of their homes. Of course, we ended up here in Canada, in Australia, and North Carolina, and other places. I know that's something that is still remembered to this day, over 200 years later.

I think there needs to be protection in this Act for people like the people in Troy, who deserve to have somebody watching their backs so that if something should happen, that there be a requirement that they be given fair warning of it, so they can make arrangements so it's less disruptive for their personal lives, that might help them in terms of the cost to move. If you have to move at the last minute, Mr. Speaker, it's probably going to cost you more, because you are going to have to incur bills that you might not have had to incur, had you months to prepare and months to get the move done.

I raise that here in third reading, Mr. Speaker, because I know the minister is hearing that, and because I know his department is hearing that. I could put forward a bill in the

Legislature, but I think it's probably even more effective if I raise the points here for their consideration, because I'm thinking about this and I think this is the place for us to be thinking about that, here in the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to put that on the record but I will say that we will be supporting this bill, thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Business.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his comments. I'm certainly very familiar with the past circumstances of the Troy Trailer Court. As I indicated in my comments, I'm very committed to further modernizing the Act as we go forward. With those few comments, I move that Bill No. 41 - an Act to Amend Chapter 401 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Residential Tenancies Act - do pass.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 41. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 33.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Environment.

HON. MARGARET MILLER: On behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, I'm very pleased to rise today and move that Bill No. 33, the Fences Act, be now read a third time. I look forward to comments from my colleagues. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: It's my pleasure to rise and say a few more words about the Fences bill. I know this was the discussion of - we said quite a bit about the Fences bill, and in reality, we have no objection to the content of the bill except the point we were trying to make in our original remarks - was this the most serious issue facing the cattle

industry or the livestock industry or the sheep industry, or agriculture in general, in the province?

I think we made the point that while fencing is extraordinarily important, it is an issue that is changing over time. Parts of the Act that are being amended right now, I was surprised to learn, go back to the 18th Century. This is an Act that is steeped in history. The reality is that as time goes on, just like your home heating system gets better and your car gets better, the way farmers fence their animals gets better, in general.

That being said, not everybody is always willing or able to do the right thing, and the measures in the bill certainly are needed. I understand from talking to my friends at the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture that certain provisions in the Act were very important to them. Those have been maintained.

However, we will not be voting for this bill, as I said, simply because we do not believe that this is the most serious issue facing agriculture. Very few Agriculture bills have come forward, and to indicate our opposition - not to housekeeping. We believe there is housekeeping, and as I said before, in our home, we clean up the dishes after breakfast, after we get the kids off to school. In other words, the most important things get done first, and then the housekeeping gets done.

I could go on a lot longer about fencing, and I could entertain you all with more fencing stories. In fact, I was looking at the Act, and I know that fencing does not only refer to barbed wire - it could be rock fencing or all kinds of different things - but with those few words, I will take my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to make very many comments, but I did want to particularly thank the member for Kings North, both on the history of agriculture and cattle farming in Nova Scotia and on the workings of the House. I will forever remember his intervention on second reading.

I'm glad to say that I'm not new to the virtues of grass-fed beef, and when I eat beef, I do eat grass-fed from Nova Scotia. He is absolutely correct - it is considerably tastier, even though I'm striving to eat vegetarian as many days of the week as I can.

With that, I will take my seat.

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

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I do want to commend the Justice Minister for (Interruptions)

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

The honourable Minister of Environment.

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for her exuberance in this House. It's just wonderful to be so on the ball today. I think we're all looking forward to a really good weekend with our families in our constituencies.

I'm very pleased to be able to speak and to close debate on this Act for Minister of Agriculture simply because I also have a history in agriculture. My husband and I had a dairy farm for 25 years in Shubenacadie, and fences played a big role in our agriculture sector, certainly with dairy cows and with animals.

I can remember different instances where you didn't think you had to have a field fenced at all. I remember one day when our cattle (Interruption) Actually, it's even worse than that: our barn burnt down, and our cattle were all sort of shoved out of the barn to get them out of the scene so that they wouldn't perish in the fire. The fences around the barn were not - there weren't any fences up at all. I remember the stories of hearing the RCMP members down by the road trying to gather up all the young cattle who had never been outside before in their lives. It put on quite a display. It was interesting. It certainly brings forward the issue about fences and how important they are.

Also, one thing that the minister mentioned during second reading that I want to reinforce again, too, is the safety factor. When you have large animals - dairy cows can be up to 2,000 pounds; they're large, large animals. When you have animals like that on a road, or you have horses, or you have other animals, they do act as a possible hazard to motorists on the road. Who would ever want someone to lose their life simply because the fences weren't maintained?

I certainly don't think the members of the Opposition Party are going to say that they aren't going to support the bill and don't support human life. This is just one other factor in there.

Recently, we had circumstances in our community where we had some farmers who had cattle and weren't maintaining the fences very well. These were horses. My constituency office got calls on almost a daily basis. People were so afraid for these horses. I believe there were 10 or 12 horses, and they were out all the time. They were on the road. Motorists were seeing them on the road, and they were afraid of what would happen. The municipality had to act and involve the police in getting the horses off the road. Then they were returned to the farm, and the next day, it would happen again. The municipality didn't have the wherewithal to be able to do anything about that.

The Opposition has said that this is a minor thing, that there are many more important things. Are there? Certainly, there could be. But this is one thing that can be fixed here today.

With that, I move to close third reading of Bill No. 167, the fences Act.

MR. SPEAKER: Could I ask the honourable Minister of Environment to rephrase the motion with the correct number of the bill?

MS. MILLER: I move third reading of Bill No. 33.

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

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Minister of Community Services with an introduction.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: If we could turn our attention to the east gallery, I have two of my constituency folks with me. First is Patty Waller who has been introduced a hundred times (Interruption) And my new casual constituency assistant, Brandon Walker.

More than the two of them, who are lovely, I'm so very pleased to introduce Kasuni Hewapatherana and her mom, Lashika. The Speaker of the House and I just presented Kasuni with her bronze level of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in the Red Room. If they could please rise. Welcome to the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 44.

Bill No. 44 - Maintenance Enforcement Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: I move that Bill No. 44, the Maintenance Enforcement Act, be now read a third time and do pass.

I want to thank all the members of the House who spoke on second reading here in the House about this bill. It is clearly an issue that strikes at many of us in our communities and our constituency offices. Even members who are very new to this House have heard

from people who are having difficulties perhaps because of a lack enforcement on maintenance enforcement.

For those that are unfamiliar with it, because sometimes in government language, words like “maintenance enforcement” don’t mean that much, this is the program where government had stepped in in the mid-1990s to help with court orders for families that are experiencing breakup, so where parents are breaking up, and there are children involved, or there is a court order for support to one or the other member of that partnership. The Maintenance Enforcement Program was set up to help facilitate that.

It has had an awful lot of issues and trouble over the years. I became more aware of it in 2007 when the Auditor General did a big review of it, and in fact, a scathing report came out about how it was administered. At that point in time, there wasn’t even a director in charge of the program. It didn’t have strong management, it wasn’t well administered, and the funds didn’t have a lot of control around them. So much has improved since then, but it still remains a troubled program with about \$65 million in arrears; that is money uncollected that has been owed to families over many years.

In fact, only today, I spoke to somebody who knew of a friend whose children are now grown, but in the time when she was raising them, she had had to declare bankruptcy. Her credit rating had been really ruined as a result of not having the funds she needed to raise her children. This is a good-news story, in a way, because apparently she has just begun to receive some money as a result of maintenance enforcement. I think that reflects the fact that, although her children are grown, this money was owed to her, was owed to her to raise those children. It is being collected. It has been in arrears, and it’s being collected now; some money is beginning to flow. I think that that does show that the stronger enforcement efforts that we’re making in maintenance enforcement are beginning to be felt by people who had, frankly, long ago given up on ever getting any support.

We had heard about some of the recipients who are owed funds actually falling off our radar; we don’t know where they are. Sometimes we have to search for them because they have completely given up in despair that they will ever get any support from that court order.

I think it is so important that we hear that there is a ray of hope. I think we will be doing better for those who are currently raising their children and hopefully doing right by those who have been denied and whose ex-partners have, in fact, shirked their responsibility to their family and thumbed their nose at a court order in the process.

Anyway, we know it’s an emotional issue. We’ve talked about it here. It has affected members of the House personally as well as our many constituents. I’m very excited again today just to move third reading. I know it’s Friday, so I won’t speak as long as I did the first time. But it’s a subject that really is near and dear to my heart: 14,200 Nova Scotian families depend on this program, and that involves 16,400 children. We

really have to keep that in our mind all the time and not get lost in the bureaucracy of this. It's about those children, and it's about those families. We want to do the right thing by them, and this Act will increase our enforcement to help families that are most vulnerable to increase their economic stability.

Last September, Mr. Speaker, I committed to reviewing legislation for maintenance enforcement and making changes necessary to strengthen it. This has been done through this Act. We did, as well, have consultation with clients and stakeholders, and we received a lot of input that helped to shape this legislation.

I want to thank everyone who did participate. I think they will see much of the feedback reflected in the bill before us. These changes will increase the Maintenance Enforcement Program's authority to enforce child and spousal support payments that have been ordered by the courts.

Mr. Speaker, this has been a priority for the Premier, even from years ago, before becoming Premier. He has seen this as well as a local MLA, and trying to help families. He made it his mission to bring this to a national level, to ensure that the provinces across Canada are co-operating with each other, and that again, we can do right by the families who find themselves in a position where one parent lives in one province and one is in another.

We need to make sure we can work together so that the enforcement done in Alberta or Ontario, or whatever province or territory it might be, will be helping our families here in Nova Scotia. We will do the same in a reciprocal arrangement with those provinces. I think that's important.

Again, I think the Premier has made a lot of headway on that, and we're doing the best we can here to change our management, to change our enforcement tools, our practices, to involve more investigators to find people who are absent and unwilling to co-operate, and to just take firmer and more aggressive steps towards ensuring that we can help these families.

This legislation does provide our staff with those tools to help strengthen our enforcement efforts. It actually draws on the best practices from every other jurisdiction in Canada, so that we are taking those steps that have already been tried elsewhere and proven to have worked.

In closing, I want to say that I, and the government, are committed from day one to strengthen this program. We recognize the importance to families in a vulnerable state, and we recognize that we needed to do a lot to improve it. Mr. Speaker, there's still much more work to be done, but this legislation represents another important step forward in our commitment to more aggressive enforcement, better customer service, and improved communications with families who rely on us. With that, I complete my remarks.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, wouldn't it be wonderful if we could stop getting calls from people, our constituents, who are looking for their maintenance support payments? That would be great, because it would be a sign that the system is working effectively. I'm not saying this to criticize the minister or the system, I'm saying it because improvement is needed, and hopefully the changes in this Act will improve things for people out there.

We know, and I may be corrected on this, but the number that's running in my mind is there's about \$33 million in unpaid (Interruption) How much is it? Maybe it's closer to \$65 million - okay. In other words, there's \$65 million out there that has not been paid to families and children in those families, for support that has been ordered by the courts. It is based on the person who owes that money, it's based on their income, and based on what the court considered their share in helping to raise their children and to provide security for their children.

Mr. Speaker, this is very important legislation. I was surprised we didn't see anybody at the Law Amendments Committee meeting, because this affects a lot of people. I've gotten a lot of calls over the years from people who are trying to get their support and I've gotten calls from both sides. There was a gentleman here yesterday who was a payer, who we had meet with the minister, and something happened to him. I know that Maintenance Enforcement apologized to him for that.

I note in this legislation - one of the things is to have better communication with both parties. I think that's very important.

Mr. Speaker, I'm hopeful the changes here make things better for people, and at the end of the day, I do believe people should be supporting. There would be very few people out there who would disagree that people should be supporting their children. I look at some of the points in the bill - better communication with both parties; breaking down barriers, because there are people who are travelling, of course, across the country for work. I certainly know in this province many people are going back and forth out West. There has to be a way for provinces to work together to make sure people are getting their support payments.

We see measures in this bill to break down borders, and to enforce court orders in other provinces, also the importance of being able to update court orders. Mr. Speaker, I have never had to deal much with the justice system - I hope I don't ever have to - but I do have the impression sometimes that it doesn't always run as efficiently as you might like personally. If somebody's income changes, there should be an efficient way of getting that information into the system so that court orders can be updated, and I think there is an administrative tribunal referred to here, because if somebody's income changes, that does need to be updated.

Everybody is going to have to do with a little less but that can happen, even to people who are good people, who are making their support payments. So we need to make sure we don't just look at people who are making support payments as being automatically bad. There's a lot of people out there who are good to make their payments, and who do care about their children. I want to put that point on the record, Mr. Speaker.

I know there are many other points in the bill, there are even motor vehicle penalties - that's one way to stop someone in their tracks, if they are running away from making support payments, through their privilege to have a driving licence. That can be a bit of a double-edged sword, because you don't want to take away that person's ability to earn income, and to pay it, but if they've been persistently in arrears, maybe, unfortunately, that's what it takes to change someone's attitude.

There's definitely teeth in this legislation. We'll be watching to see how it proceeds in terms of its practical application. I do hope that I'm going to get fewer calls at the office because I hope people are going to get their maintenance payments, and get those payments on time so they don't have to resort to reaching out to my office, or the offices of all the other MLAs here in this Chamber.

We look at this legislation with hope, and we look forward to passing it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

MS. LISA ROBERTS: I wanted to thank the minister again for her work on this Bill and just maybe highlight for my colleagues in the House one aspect of her remarks related to this legislation which I found very interesting, and which I brought back to my constituency assistant, because of course, I'm still in the process of learning how to be of help to people who turn to my office.

One aspect of this whole program that I found very interesting is that it is voluntary, and one may sign up for it even if there is no reason to anticipate that there are going to be problems receiving and collecting support payments from the other party. In any relationship, parenting and finances are two of the issues that can cause stress between parties and how wonderful if, in a relationship that has already broken down, one no longer needs to deal directly with the other party, related to finances. This program allows people to sign up, and really have the payments process through the province, so there don't have to be more phone calls - is the cheque coming? You don't have to have children relaying messages back and forth to parties, which is such a significant source of stress for those children, because we know that for any child the breakdown of the relationship between their parents can be a powerful determining factor for their future lives, because it does cause stress in the home.

Certainly, in that conversation I had with my constituency assistant - this is a wonderful thing, let's encourage people to sign up for this, because you don't know what's going to happen in five years or 10 years or, as I discussed with the minister afterwards, one doesn't know when one party ends up in a relationship, potentially with other children then to support, if there will come to be issues in the future. Just taking the stress and the interaction and the friction out of that is, I think, a really wonderful service that the province is providing with this program.

In speaking with the minister, I understand that it is not a large administrative burden. It becomes very automatic after enrolment. Then that becomes a service that we're providing for Nova Scotian children into the future.

Thank you again for this work. I'm happy to say that we support the legislation.

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

HON. KELLY REGAN: I'm delighted to speak today on this bill about fences - just kidding. (Laughter)

I'm delighted to be able to stand in this House today to speak to this bill. As some of the members may know, this was a passion of mine when we were in Opposition, this particular issue.

I remember coming to Public Accounts Committee and requesting that we get a list of every single case that was in arrears and when it had gone into arrears. We ended up with reams and reams of paper with every single case that was in arrears. Then we could track and see how many cases were in arrears that were owed \$20,000 and under, how many \$50,000, or \$100,000. Some of the numbers astonished us.

I have to say that I dealt with some women who had come to my office who were in desperate straits who had, in some cases, wealthy husbands who had decided that they were not going to pay any money - not just for their spouses but for their children. I found that extremely troubling because, of course, those children were not getting the things that many of us take for granted. I found that deeply disturbing. We worked away at making some suggestions. I remember the member for Inverness was here making suggestions as well of things we could do to make our system better. I'm pleased to see that some of that is reflected in today's bill.

I am so pleased at the leadership the Minister of Justice has taken on this particular file and the leadership our Premier has taken on this file. He's a big guy with a big heart, and that's clear from his championing of young people in this province and making sure that parents who are supposed to pay do in fact pay. With that, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to say how pleased I am to see this come to fruition and to have played a tiny, tiny, tiny part in having this come to fruition today.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. DIANA WHALEN: It was good to hear a few other members of the House speak to this bill and lend their support to it.

I think the member for Halifax Needham has made a very good point: we should all of us be encouraging people who come to our office who are going through a divorce or separation to get enrolled in maintenance enforcement. It isn't a program just for people who are having difficulty getting their support. It's for everybody. It's there just to take out some of the anxiety and some of the difficulty around that.

Many, many, in fact 60 per cent of the people enrolled are paying regularly and have no difficulty. They are not in arrears. They pay the full amount on time. We should recognize them and acknowledge that there are many responsible, caring parents who are doing the right thing by their children and families.

We would encourage everybody to be part of the Maintenance Enforcement Program because it is just an extra help and takes some of the anxiety out of the situation. I think we should all do that in our roles.

I also think it's important to note that often there will be a backlash about these kinds of changes from those who are being asked to pay. We are sensitive to the needs of both the payor and the recipient.

But the bottom line is, no matter what your relationship is like with your ex-partner or ex-spouse, that is not what this is about. We don't care what two adults say or feel, but what we do really care about is whether or not they're doing the right thing by their children. The Premier said it countless times that this is about the kids. We want to make sure that those thousands of children are getting the support that their families can't afford, that will help them have decent lives. That's what it's about.

With that, I move to close debate on third reading of Bill No. 44.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 44. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Private and Local Bills for Third Reading.

PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR THIRD READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 47.

Bill No. 47 - Halifax Rifles Armoury Association.

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

MR. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 47 be now read a third time and do pass.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 47. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: 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.

[12:57 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Mr. Keith Irving in the Chair.]

[1:42 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 bill:

Bill No. 22 - Halifax Regional Water Commission Act.

and the chairman has been instructed to recommend this bill to the favourable consideration of the House, without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Ordered that this bill be read a third time on a future day.

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. I move that the House do now rise to meet again on Monday, November 7th, between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. At that time we'll call Bill No. 22 for third Reading, Address in Reply, and such other government business as may be necessary.

I would also indicate to the members of the House that the Law Amendments Committee will meet on Monday, November 7th, at 10:00 a.m. to consider Bill Nos. 52, 55, 59, 61 and 62.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now rise.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to rise to meet again on Monday, November 7th, between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

The House now stands adjourned until Monday, November 7th, at 4:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 1:44 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 385**

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 Nathan Lloyd Smith grew up in the community of Musquodoboit Harbour, Nova Scotia, the son of Lloyd and Charlotte, and brother to Karen; and

Whereas Nathan graduated from Eastern Shore District High School and Seneca College with high honours and subsequently joined the Canadian Armed Forces; and

Whereas Private Nathan Smith of the 3rd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry proudly served his country in Afghanistan, where in the pursuit of freedom and democracy, he laid his life down in the theatre of operations on April 17, 2002;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in (posthumously) thanking Private Nathan Lloyd Smith for his sacrifice in the name of our country and all we that we stand for.

RESOLUTION NO. 386

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 Dustin Drew is a resident of Lawrencetown and has been active in his community in various volunteer roles; and

Whereas Dustin has been a member for the Lawrencetown Volunteer Fire Department for five years; and

Whereas during these five years, Dustin has assisted the Lawrencetown Volunteer Fire Department with firefighting and other duties as required;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Dustin Drew for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents that are served by the Lawrencetown Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 387

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas Don Downe served as the first mayor of the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg from 2008 to 2016; and

Whereas Mr. Downe served as an MLA from 1993 to 2003, serving in a variety of ministerial roles, including Minister of Natural Resources, Minister of Business and Consumer Services, Minister of Transportation and Public Works, Minister of Finance, Minister of Environment, Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, and Deputy Premier; and

Whereas Mr. Downe retired from public life, choosing not to re-offer for the 2016 municipal elections;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly recognize the years of service Don Downe gave to the public as an elected official.

RESOLUTION NO. 388

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas Joe Feeney first moved to Mahone Bay in 1978; and

Whereas the same year, he was elected to Town Council, beginning a 40-year career of serving as an elected official; and

Whereas Mr. Feeney served six terms as Mayor, chairing numerous council and regional government committees and serving as chairman of the Electric Light Committee for the six provincial municipal partners;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly recognize the 40 years of service Joe Feeney gave to the public as an elected official.

RESOLUTION NO. 389

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Al Croft of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 10 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through his volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Al on his hard work and selflessness in giving back to his community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 390

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Allister Zinck of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 25 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through his volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Allister on his hard work and selflessness in giving back to his community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 391

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Andrew Zwicker of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 25 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through his volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Andrew on his hard work and selflessness in giving back to his community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 392

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Barry Zwicker of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 25 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through his volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Barry on his hard work and selflessness in giving back to his community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 393

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Dave Hiltz of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 20 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through his volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dave on his hard work and selflessness in giving back to his community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 394

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Earl Eisenhower of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 25 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through his volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Earl on his hard work and selflessness in giving back to his community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 395

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Harry Eisenhauer of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 25 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through his volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Harry on his hard work and selflessness in giving back to his community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 396

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Kathy Kently of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 10 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through his volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kathy on her hard work and selflessness in giving back to her community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 397

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Kevin Carver of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 15 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through his volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kevin on his hard work and selflessness in giving back to his community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 398

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Lionel Eisenhauer of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 25 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through his volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Lionel on his hard work and selflessness in giving back to his community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 399

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Marshall Zwicker of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 25 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through his volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Marshall on his hard work and selflessness in giving back to his community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 400

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Melanie Langille of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 15 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through her volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Melanie on her hard work and selflessness in giving back to her community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 401

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Peggy Hiltz of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 10years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through her volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Peggy on her hard work and selflessness in giving back to her community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 402

By: Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft (Lunenburg)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of the Province of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas volunteer firefighters selflessly put their lives at risk to help protect the lives of the people in their community and beyond; and

Whereas Mona Eisenhauer of the Walden Volunteer Fire Department was honoured by the department for 25 years of dedication and for making the community a safer place to live through her volunteer actions;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mona on her hard work and selflessness in giving back to her community through volunteering.

RESOLUTION NO. 403

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas Daniel Chedrawe is the President and co-founder of the Westwood Developments Limited, a proud Halifax booster dedicated to making the city world-class, a creative and responsible job creator and a tireless advocate for the social, cultural, and economic progress in our province; and

Whereas Daniel led a colossal capital campaign for a new boys' Grade 7 to Grade 12 division while serving on the board of Sacred Heart School, chaired the capital campaign of Our Lady of Lebanon Parish, helping to raise millions for a new parish building, and took on a leadership role as a board of trustees member for the QEII Foundation and the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Daniel has dedicated a great deal of his personal time and resources to organizations affecting positive change in Nova Scotia, all the while demonstrating great humility in his significant philanthropic undertakings;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly thank Daniel Chedrawe for his generosity, selflessness, and commitment to the betterment of our province.

RESOLUTION NO. 404

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas this year marked the 10th Anniversary of the annual Lebanese Cedar Festival, one of the premier cultural festivals in the region that ran from June 2nd to June 5th, 2016, on the grounds of Our Lady of Lebanon Parish; and

Whereas the Lebanese Cedar Festival started in 2007 as an opportunity for the community to show their talent to one another, the festival now attracts thousands of visitors, whether they are hungry for delicious cuisine or interested in learning more about the Lebanese community in the Maritimes; and

Whereas the festival aims to give the feeling of a busy Lebanese marketplace, while at the same time offering Canadian and multicultural attractions with well over 250 performers throughout the weekend, and over 150 volunteers preparing fresh food on site;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Father Pierre Azzi and all of the organizers of the Lebanese Cedar Festival on celebrating their 10th Anniversary, and wish them continued success in organizing many festivals to come.

RESOLUTION NO. 405

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas the Spur Festival is a new national festival of politics, art and ideas put together by the Literacy Review of Canada and Diaspora Dialogues, with the goal of sharing provocative and innovative ideas that are worth spurring into action; and

Whereas Spur Halifax 2016 focused around the theme of Our New Tribalism, exploring the new fluidity arising in gender, race, citizenship, and questions of identity and community; and

Whereas as part of Halifax Festival I led a Walking Tour of Lebanese Contributions to Halifax with Norman Nahas, President of the Board of Directors for the Lebanese Chamber of Commerce in Nova Scotia, which highlighted the immense architectural and cultural impact that over a century of Lebanese immigration has had on Halifax;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate organizers of Spur Halifax for hosting such a successful and engaging festival, and thank Norman Nahas for helping me to illuminate some of the tremendous impressions Lebanese Canadians have left on our city.

RESOLUTION NO. 406

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Immigration)

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

Whereas Dr. Maria Alexiadis, a first-generation Greek immigrant, is a part-time family physician here in Halifax and a general practitioner in psychiatry with the Nova Scotia Early Psychosis Program; and

Whereas Dr. Alexiadis has practiced medicine for 28 years, experienced healthcare from the perspective of a doctor, a caregiver, and a patient, and taken on numerous leadership roles in the medical community, including serving as both Chair of the Board and president of Doctors Nova Scotia and the Deputy Speaker and Speaker of the Canadian Medical Association; and

Whereas Dr. Alexiadis has served as the Coordinator of Doctors Nova Scotia's Professional Support Program which provides peer support to interns, students, and residents, volunteers each year with the Greek Fest at St. George's Greek Orthodox Church, and last year organized a fundraiser to promote the recovery of those living with psychotic disorders;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Dr. Maria Alexiadis on her professional success and thank her for all she does to improve the health and quality of life of the people of Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 407

By: Hon. Diana Whalen (Justice)

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

Whereas Jane Murphy says that she grew up learning from an early age that volunteering was just what everyone does; and

Whereas Jane has volunteered with many different groups over the years including the Girl Guides, the Rockingham Fire Department; Bosom Buddies, and St. Peter's Church, where she sits on the parish council and helps in so many ways; and

Whereas St. Peter's Church nominated Jane for the Mainland North Volunteer Awards and on May 28, 2016, she was honoured by the organizing committee with a volunteer award in recognition of her outstanding contributions to her church and the wider Rockingham community;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jane Murphy on being honoured by the Mainland North Volunteer Committee, and thank her for her lifelong commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 408

By: Hon. Diana Whalen (Justice)

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

Whereas volunteers of all ages are the backbone of Nova Scotia's communities, giving generously of their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on May 28, 2016, the Halifax Mainland North Volunteer Recognition Committee held their 13th Annual Volunteer Awards Banquet to recognize outstanding volunteers who consistently dedicate their time and talents to improving the lives of others; and

Whereas among the volunteers who were honoured was Evan Phinney, a recent Acadia University graduate, whose strong interest in photography and sports lead her to volunteering as a team photographer for the Acadia Axemen football team, and the Saint Mary's Huskies and Dalhousie basketball teams, as well as coordinating social media for the Acadia basketball team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Evan Phinney on receiving a 2016 Volunteer Award from the Mainland North Volunteer Committee, and wish her every success in her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 409

By: Hon. Diana Whalen (Justice)

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

Whereas volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, generously giving of their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on May 28, 2016, the Halifax Mainland North Volunteer Recognition Committee held their 13th Annual Volunteer Awards Banquet to honour the amazing volunteers from the neighborhoods in Mainland North Halifax; and

Whereas Kate Sullivan was among the volunteers, honoured for her initiative in starting the Clayton Park Fairview Neighbourhood Watch and for spearheading the formation of Engage Mainland North, a grassroots effort dedicated to increasing community engagement and connections;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in congratulating Kate Sullivan on being honoured by the Mainland North Volunteer Committee, and thank her for her ongoing dedication and commitment to strengthening our community and reducing crime in our neighbourhoods.

RESOLUTION NO. 410

By: Hon. Diana Whalen (Justice)

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

Whereas volunteers are the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's communities, generously giving of their time and talents while expecting nothing in return; and

Whereas on May 28, 2016, the Halifax Mainland North Volunteer Recognition Committee held their 13th Annual Volunteer Awards Banquet to honour outstanding volunteers from across Mainland North Halifax; and

Whereas among the volunteers who were honoured was Jim Duff, nominated by the Bedford Minor Basketball Association for his years of volunteer support at all levels and especially for his effort to grow their annual tournament, where he has significantly increased private sponsorship and ensured its ongoing success;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jim Duff on being honoured by the Mainland North Volunteer Committee, and thank him for his dedication to the Bedford Minor Basketball Association and to the wider community.

RESOLUTION NO. 411

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 Darlene Grady-Lunn is a resident of Conrod Settlement and has been deemed a "Halifax Hero" for bringing hope to animals in need; and

Whereas since 2012, Darlene has helped rescue about 500 animals, most being dogs; and

Whereas in 2013 Darlene established Marley's Hope Dog Rescue in Lake Echo, which is a registered non-profit, all-breed rescue organization;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Darlene Grady-Lunn for caring about the welfare of animals and giving them a second chance in life.