



House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS**

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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**First Session**

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2017**

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House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2017**

**Sixty-third General Assembly**

**First Session**

**9:00 A.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Premier.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and the House for giving me the opportunity to stand and say a few words, and I know that members from the Opposition Parties will do as well. I'm sure the member for Inverness will be able to speak in Gaelic. I'll leave that up to you, I won't punish the rest of the House with that.

Mr. Speaker, last week Nova Scotia and Canada lost a tremendous parliamentarian, someone whom Nova Scotians have looked up to for half a century when it comes to public life, and that was the loss of Allan J. MacEachen, better known in these parts as Allan J. He's one of the few elected officials who have gone to such high esteem but has never lost the fact that the title is Allan J. When people speak about him they speak with great affection. It has been a week of outpouring of affection, not only from Nova Scotians but from Canadians, who have talked about the impact that Allan J. had on this country. For some of us, in fact, his impact began before we were even here.

The things that he touched, like Medicare, the Labour Standards Code, the investments he made in making sure that low-income seniors got a supplement - all those things are just part of our way of life today for most of us. We didn't realize the journey that Allan J. took to make sure those things were in place so that vulnerable Nova Scotians would be looked after - ensuring that health care was indeed a right for every Canadian, working across Party lines.

Last week in Antigonish, last Sunday, one of the things that struck me - and I think sometimes it's lost in our current public life - was the outpouring across Party lines. He had the ability to reach across into New Democratic Party caucuses, into Progressive Conservative Party caucuses, and indeed his own to make sure that he fought for public policy that made sense for Canadians. I think much of what he took to the House of Commons came from his parents in Inverness. Often you'd hear people talk about the things that he would have seen growing up in poverty, the men going to work without pensions - all of the things that he took and built and made become part of who he was. It shaped the man.

No matter how high he climbed in his career whether it was as a Deputy Prime Minister - I'd like to refer to him as "Nova Scotia's Right Honourable" - no matter how high he climbed, he never forgot the struggle of his parents. Those are the people that he was elected to represent. I think one of the things that was extraordinary when people were speaking of him in the last few days - I think one of the persons said he'd one day be meeting Henry Kissinger and the next day he made sure he got back home to the kitchen tables in Inverness County, the very people he wanted to represent. It's where he was most comfortable; it's where he wanted to be. He ran to make a difference in the lives of the people of Inverness and indeed, by doing so, he made a difference in the lives of Canadians and in Nova Scotians.

There are so many young Nova Scotians that he took under his wing and gave them an opportunity to see the great institution of Canada. Some of them went on to become Premiers, senators, in the diplomatic core. Some of them came back to this province and have had a huge impact in the professions they chose to practise. All of them were impacted by Allan J. giving them an opportunity to go and see the halls of democracy in Canada and the impact that they could have on the country and the good that could come out of them.

I think one of the things that is sometimes lost - I know all of us in this House know how important this institution is, but Allan J. lived his institution. He could have gone and done other things, but he believed in the pursuit of good public policy. He believed in the impact that this institution could have on the lives of Canadians and Nova Scotians. He made sure that he continued to take the values that his parents and the people of Inverness gave him, and he made sure he imprinted those in public policy that reflected the kind of Canada that I think all of us want. The kind of Canada, quite frankly, that the rest of the world looks at and is envious of today.

You know, we are seen as a beacon globally when you get a chance to go out and the people talk about what's happening around the world. This country wasn't founded by accident. There was a lot of hard work, and Allan J.'s effort is part of that. As Nova Scotians, we should be very proud of the fact that one of our own, a guy who came from a small town, a small community, took those ideas in his heart. No matter how far he went, no matter what he did, he was not going to lose sight of the foundation of who he was that was built from this province. He was going to impart Nova Scotia values, Inverness values

on our large institutions that would have an impact on generations of Canadians. I'm one who quite frankly began to learn a lot more about Allan J.'s legacy unfortunately from his passing. The very things that we take for granted, he worked very hard to make sure they were in place.

One of the things the Prime Minister said in his remarks on Sunday: there probably would not be a Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in this country today if it wasn't for Allan J. His father, the Right Honourable Pierre Elliot Trudeau, is recognized for repatriating the Constitution, but Allan J. was the glue that brought that together. That journey wasn't an easy one; it took a lot longer than the Prime Minister of the day might have wished it had. But to get it across the goal line, it was Allan J. MacEachen who fought for the rights and freedoms of every Canadian to ensure that that Constitution would be repatriated back to Canada. As the Prime Minister said, without his effort, without his hard work, there may not be a Charter of Rights and Freedoms in Canada today.

As we stand in this House in an opportunity to recognize the great legacy of Allan J. MacEachen, I think it is only fitting that at the end of this, we take a moment of silence to reflect on the impact that Allan J. had on our lives, on the lives in this province and the life of this country. As many people have said, he's probably the greatest parliamentarian post-World War II.

He's from Nova Scotia, from Inverness. He never lost sight of that, nor should we. He never lost sight of the fact that he had the privilege of being an elected official and, through that, he could make a difference in the lives of individuals. He could also give individuals an opportunity, young people working in his office, taking a moment to explain to them the journey of how it was for this piece of public policy.

That's a privilege that all of us have. That's an opportunity all of us have, to be able to reach out to young people, some of whom are standing here today - welcome - to show them the importance of this institution and what can happen when good public policy comes together, what can happen when you have the privilege to sit in here to impact the lives of those citizens you are elected to represent.

One of the things Allan J. learned early on was never forget where you come from. He lost an election. He made sure that was never going to happen to him again. He made sure he got home to those kitchen tables frequently. I think some current members in that riding may have learned that lesson as well without losing - just keep showing up to the kitchen tables.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, as Premier of this province but more importantly just as a Nova Scotian, how proud I was and how proud I am of the outpouring of affection that came towards Allan J. and the impact that a boy from Inverness County had on this province and this great country. I look forward to hearing from the member for Inverness and the Leader of the NDP as we honour a true Canadian hero. (Standing Ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: The Honourable Allan J. MacEachen was a man of faith who had the wisdom that comes from it, wisdom that created social programs which have endured decades and will continue to be enjoyed by Canadians well into the future. He was a loyal friend of the clergy and he believed in the dignity of the person, that each person deserves the opportunity of education, health care, and the welfare of a guaranteed income as they aged.

Bha creideamh làidir aig Ailean MacEachuinn, agus chuir seo ris a'ghliocas a bh'aige. Gliocas a shoilleirich dha gu bheil còir aig gach neach air sochairean sòisealta mar a tha foghlum, slàinte mhath, is teachd-an-tir seasmhach.

He came from a place that mattered to him. His upbringing taught him values like generosity and concern for others. While his strength of voice carried him to the second-most powerful position in the country, he never forgot his roots. A Gaelic speaker himself, he was a champion of his people, the Gaels. His efforts can be credited with helping to keep the Gaelic language and culture alive through difficult times and place them on a firmer foundation which will allow their growth and maintenance for generations to come.

Bha e glé dhileas dhan dachaich a bu dual dha agus dha na daoine bhon dàing e. Ràinig e àrd-ìre ann an riaghladh Chanada, ach cha do leig e riamh às a chuimhne có às a bha e. Bha e 'na ghaisgeach dha na Gàidheil agus shaothraich e gus ar cànan is ar dualchas a ghléidheadh is a neartachadh.

[9:15 a.m.]

Strangely, just a week before he passed, I came across some notes that I had taken shortly after my first election, on a visit to Ottawa where I met with him for dinner back in 2010. Now perhaps it was coincidence, or perhaps one of those experiences common to the Gael where we sometimes see or have a connection with something before it actually happens, so I am able to share with you some of the advice that he shared with me: "Be kind to your opponents. Respect them and listen to them for you will learn from them. Never attack another's personal character."

If our best measure is how we treat others, Allan J. provided a good example.

Bidh cuimhn' air Ailean air feadh Chanada agus h-raid na dhachaigh fhein an inbhirnis. Sith dha anam.

He will be forever remembered across Canada and always in his home of Inverness. May he rest in peace. (Standing Ovation)

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



HON. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to briefly add my voice, and the voice of the New Democratic Party, to the chorus of tributes that have been raised across Nova Scotia this week on the passing of Allan J. MacEachen.

This chorus of tribute has been striking in the way that it has tended out of the vast array of Mr. MacEachen's political accomplishments and the way that it has tended to concentrate in particular on three of these: his central role, the implementation of Medicare; his pivotal role in the leadership that brought forward the Guaranteed Income Supplement; and his important place in the consolidation of a higher minimum wage in the Canada Labour Code. Therefore, one cannot thoughtfully survey the accomplishment-filled landscape of Mr. MacEachen's 96 years without registering the thought that what matters in these lives of ours are the places where we reach with scope and courage in the direction of humanity's great egalitarian agenda.

Mr. MacEachen's words from an autobiographical reflection of some 20 years ago may stand fittingly before us, ". . . social and economic change are possible, legitimate, and justified." (Standing Ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I'd ask that all members rise as we observe a moment of silence in memory of the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. We'll now move to the daily routine.

#### **PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

#### **PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

#### **TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

#### **STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today with sadness, but also with profound gratitude, and ask the members of the House of Assembly to join me as we pause to honour Constable Frank Deschênes, the Nova Scotia RCMP officer who was killed on duty last week. Constable Deschênes passed away while providing help to motorists on the highway in New Brunswick. His last act in this world was consistent with the way he lived his life, serving and keeping Canadians safe.

Constable Deschênes joined the RCMP in 2004 and was currently serving in Nova Scotia with Traffic Services. He had a history of going above and beyond to help and was often putting himself in harm's way to ensure the safety of others.

In 2008, a 26-year-old woman was in a car stopped on a railroad track near Truro and a freight train was speeding toward her vehicle. Constable Deschênes acted quickly and tactically as he used his cruiser to push her car off the tracks with mere seconds to spare before the train went by. It was his bravery that prevented a possible tragedy and derailment of that train.

This one act defines a hero. But this heroic act was not his only one. As an RCMP officer for over 12 years, his job was to confront danger. He made sacrifices every day so that we did not have to. But Constable Deschênes was not just an RCMP officer, he was a husband, a son, a brother, and a friend to his wife Savannah, his parents Bertrand and Marie Paul, brother Patrick and many extended family members. We extend our heartfelt sympathies as you go through this unimaginable time. I know that each of them would have played a major role in shaping Frank to become the incredible man that everyone knew him to be.

I also want to extend my condolences to the RCMP family, as I know first-hand what a deep impact this loss will have on every member in and beyond the Province of Nova Scotia. May you find comfort in one another as you continue to serve like Constable Deschênes, with perseverance and bravery.

As the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, I want to thank Constable Deschênes for his service to Nova Scotians and to Canadians. There are many people who have returned safely to their family because of his courage. We will forever be indebted to him for his service to our country.

I know my colleagues opposite will also be making statements in the tragic loss of Constable Deschênes. Following that, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of the House join in a moment of silence in his memory. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: I want to begin by thanking the minister for providing his statement to our office. On behalf of my colleagues and the Progressive Conservative caucus, I echo the minister's feelings of sadness, sympathy and gratitude for Constable Frank Deschênes. In Canada, we are so fortunate to have police officers like Constable Deschênes who are willing to risk their lives each day to keep us safe. We often think of police officers as crime fighters - as they are. However, they are also people who stop to help a motorist change a tire or advise a business owner on keeping their store secure.

They are brave men and women who simply want to make our communities a better place to live. That's why we are so sad when a police officer is lost in the line of duty. Through the two incidents referenced by the minister, we know that Constable Deschênes was brave and compassionate. He was exceptional, a true hero. There is no doubt that he was a hero to those who never had the honour of meeting Constable Deschênes. But he was much more than that to his wife Savannah, to his parents Bertrand and Marie Paul, and his brother Patrick. It is difficult to fathom their loss. We in the Progressive Conservative caucus extend our most sincere and heartfelt condolences to those who knew him best and loved him most.

Our hearts also go out to Constable Deschênes' colleagues in the RCMP. I know that they feel his loss deeply. They mourn a brother and a fallen hero.

Over his 13 years of police service, Constable Deschênes served his country and its citizens bravely. He truly made a difference that is a wonderful legacy to leave at such a sad time. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: I just want to take a few moments to also echo the heartfelt sentiments and sympathy offered by the minister. I hope to hear voices crack more often in this Chamber. It means that truth is being spoken.

The decision to become a police officer is one that I am sure no one takes lightly. By committing to serve and protect your fellow citizens, you are inevitably agreeing to put yourself in harm's way for the safety of others. By all accounts, Constable Deschênes performed this duty with courage and integrity. While his life has been taken far too soon, the example he set will live on forever.

On behalf of our caucus, I want to extend our heartfelt sympathies to the family, friends, and fellow officers of Constable Deschênes, especially - this is what struck me - his new wife Savannah, who mourned her husband in the same church where they were wed, and also his parents, who lost a child too soon. While they are no doubt grieving during this time of loss, I hope they can find solace in the fact that he lived a brave and compassionate life dedicated to serving others. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: I would ask that all members please rise as we observe a moment of silence in memory of Constable Francis Deschênes.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

#### **GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 3**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall:

(1) read and table the message from His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, transmitting the Estimates of Sums required for the Province of Nova Scotia for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018, for the consideration of this House;

(2) table the Estimate Books;

(3) table the Government Business Plans;

(4) table the Crown Corporation Business Plans;

(5) table the Estimate and Crown Corporation Business Plans resolutions;

(6) deliver my Budget Speech; and

(7) move that the Estimates of Sums required for the service of the province for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018, being Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, and the Crown Corporation Business Plans be referred to the Committee of the Whole on Supply.

For the information of the House, the budget will be presented on September 26, 2017.

MR. SPEAKER: The Estimates are tabled.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

**RESOLUTION NO. 4**

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

Whereas Alzheimer's disease causes memory loss, disorientation, and decreased judgment, as well as changes in personality, mood, and behaviour; and

Whereas every 68 seconds someone develops Alzheimer's disease, making it the most common form of dementia, which is a group of disorders that impair mental functioning; and

Whereas Alzheimer's disease is often called a family disease because of the physical and emotional toll it takes on family members, caregivers, and friends who are supporting loved ones;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House acknowledge September 21<sup>st</sup> as World Alzheimer's Day and encourage all Nova Scotians to support efforts to eradicate this terrible disease.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

[9:30 a.m.]

### **RESOLUTION NO. 5**

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

Whereas September 22<sup>nd</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> is National Coaches Week in Nova Scotia, and is a time to celebrate the significant and positive impact coaches have on our young athletes; and

Whereas this year National Coaches Week in Nova Scotia will focus on diversity and inclusion within the coaching community; and

Whereas a number of coaching workshops will be held from Membertou to Springhill to recognize and support the development of many coaches from our rich, diverse culture;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking and acknowledging all volunteer and professional coaches for the work they do to support our young athletes in communities across the province.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 6**

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

Whereas the International Day of Peace, or Peace Day, a day for humanity to commit to peace above all differences and to contribute to building a culture of peace, was celebrated on September 21<sup>st</sup>; and

Whereas established in 1981 by the United Nations General Assembly, this year's theme for peace is, "Together for Peace: Respect, Safety and Dignity for All"; and

Whereas this global theme focuses on engaging and mobilizing people to show support for refugees and immigrants, aiming to bring people together and remind them of their humanity;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize the importance of Peace Day and continue to work to strengthen the ideals of peace throughout our province and globally.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 7**

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

Whereas September 24<sup>th</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> is National Forest Week and two award-winning Nova Scotian woodlot owners are holding public field days to help celebrate; and

Whereas on September 23<sup>rd</sup> Western Regional winner David Bent will host a field day on his property in Annapolis County, and on September 30<sup>th</sup> I'll be joining the Provincial and Central Region Award recipients, Peter and Pat Spicer, who will welcome visitors to their woodland in Cumberland County; and

Whereas our forests provide habitat for our diverse wildlife populations, as well as recreational opportunities and economic benefits;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House recognize outstanding woodland stewards who encourage sustainable woodland management and increase public awareness of the importance of private woodlands.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 8**

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

Whereas arthritis is a chronic disease that affects 212,000 Nova Scotians of all ages, causing pain, swelling, and stiffness; and

Whereas the Arthritis Society promotes public awareness, provides help to those living with arthritis, and supports innovative research that will ultimately find a cure for this debilitating disease; and

Whereas Arthritis Awareness Month is focusing on the relationship among arthritis, employment, and education, as well as innovations that will help improve the quality of life for Nova Scotians living with arthritis;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House recognize September as Arthritis Awareness Month and encourage all Nova Scotians to support efforts and activities to eradicate this chronic disease.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

#### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 1 - Entitled an Act to Exempt Nova Scotia Residents of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (Maritimes) from Paying Vehicle Registration and Driver's Renewal Fees. (Ms. Karla MacFarlane)**

**Bill No. 2 - Entitled an Act to Repeal Chapter 1 of the Acts of 2017. The Teachers' Professional Agreement and Classroom Improvements (2017) Act. (Ms. Tammy Martin)**

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

#### **NOTICES OF MOTION**

#### **STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

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



**SHAG HBR. UFO CRASH - ANNIV. (50<sup>th</sup>)**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: On the night of October 4, 1967, it was reported that something had crashed into the waters of Shag Harbour, Nova Scotia. At least 11 people saw it, but the object was never identified and only left a residue of yellow foam. It was then referred to as an unidentified flying object by the Navy and the RCMP, who searched at the time. Since then, many people flock to the museum to hear its fascinating tale and explore its hands-on artifacts.

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Shag Harbour UFO crash, and it's marked with a festival with many surprises in store, including world-renowned keynote speakers. I would like to take this time to thank the Shag Harbour Incident Society for continuing to engage the community in such a great festival. I look forward to their continued success.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

**ROSH HASHANAH - NEW YEAR WISHES**

HON. GARY BURRILL: I rise today to mark the celebration of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, which began on Wednesday evening and will end tonight, this year marking the start of year 5778. I'm pleased to recognize the Jewish community of Halifax, including Shaar Shalom Synagogue near Oxford and Quinpool in the constituency I serve, and just outside the boundaries of Halifax Chebucto, the Beth Israel Synagogue at Coburg and Oxford. Rosh Hashanah is a time to wish everyone a sweet new year, often accompanied by honey cakes and apples dipped in honey. Rosh Hashanah also marks the start of the Jewish High Holidays. Shanah Tovah.

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

**MACEACHEN, HON. ALLAN J.: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

MR. IAIN RANKIN: I rise today to recognize the late Hon. Allan J. MacEachen. Allan's motivation for change was forged in the crucible of a mining town without benefit of government-backed security programs, based on the then-radical faith of to each according to their need. This was to be his life's work, or as Allan J. recalled in his own words, "putting bread on the table." MacEachen became acknowledged as the go-to behind the scenes, the great oracle of strategies, the repository of all legislative rules of order worth knowing - the very ingredients for getting the big things done.

Whether a citizen of this province or across the nation, everyone has directly benefited from MacEachen's works, the chief architect of social progress of his time. His reach is international - ocean security protection measures enacted by the UN for the enduring benefit of our fishers, the Guaranteed Income Supplement for low-income seniors

and, for all citizens, free Medicare. None of these programs were there in 1953 when MacEachen entered public life. They define so well not only the co-operative spirit of Inverness County but also Nova Scotia values brought to Ottawa to become Canadian values . . .

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

The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

### **MALCOLM, COURTNEY ET AL - CANADA 150 CONTRIBUTIONS**

HON. PAT DUNN: Courtney Malcolm, Brian Bowden, and Lisa MacDonald were honoured by Molson Canadian for their contributions to Canada during a special 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event held in New Glasgow in July. Malcolm is a member of both the Pictou County and Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame, recognized for his contributions as a coach, official, and administrator in hockey, track and field, and baseball.

Bowden is a well-known singer and MacDonald is CAO of the Town of New Glasgow. They are both known for their commitment and dedication to their community through numerous hours of volunteerism.

A total of 1,500 Canadians were honoured. Lisa MacDonald was also awarded one of the iconic Molson Canadian red fridges for her leadership in the community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

### **N.S. THRONE SPEECH (2017) - OMISSIONS**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I want to note the absence of an issue of great public importance from the Throne Speech yesterday. Around the world scientists and political leaders are grappling with climate change as an environmental and humanitarian crisis, yet it didn't merit mention.

One year ago many of my fellow members were making member statements about dry wells after a prolonged drought in Nova Scotia. While I'm grateful for the beautiful summer we had, far from the fires in British Columbia and for now the hurricanes of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean, the issue of our time and of our future is anything but far from our minds.

It is alarming to me that this government does not deem it worthy of mention. As elected representatives of the people of Nova Scotia, our leadership is required.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

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**HATFIELD, MEGAN ET AL YARMOUTH:  
PRIDE PARADE - ORGANIZATION**

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to recognize Yarmouth's Megan Hatfield, Cas LeBlanc, and Joey Benoit, who are the organizers of Yarmouth's first-ever Pride Parade. The parade was held on September 16<sup>th</sup> and was a huge success. Many individuals, groups, and businesses participated, and Main Street was filled with spectators of all ages from all over our community.

Mr. Speaker, I'm happy and proud that Yarmouth was the site of such a loving and inclusive event. I ask that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Megan, Cas, and Joey, and all the volunteer for their hours of hard work and dedication to seeing this wonderful idea come to life in our community. I'm sure this was the first of many Pride Parades in Yarmouth.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**RUSSELL, CAM - COMMUN. CONTRIBUTIONS**

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Cam Russell, Dartmouth East resident and Halifax Mooseheads general manager. As a former head coach and current general manager, Cam has been a huge part of keeping the Halifax Mooseheads franchise strong in our community. From engaging the team members in volunteering opportunities to keeping the team present and humble, Cam ensures that his players are positive ambassadors for the City of Halifax.

I wish to commend Cam for his many contributions to our community and province and wish the Mooseheads nothing but success in the season ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS - RECOGNIZE**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rise today and recognize all the hard-working early childhood educators in this province and in my constituency of Dartmouth South. I sit in this Chamber today only because I know that my son is safe at Dartmouth Day Care with people who love him, and whom he loves, and that my daughters are also engaged, nourished and protected by the amazing teachers they are so lucky to have and whom I would also like to recognize.

Of course, my husband does play a part, Mr. Speaker, but without those supports I could not be here today as part of this historic caucus. I know that others are not so fortunate and so, last, I want to make sure to recognize all of those parents in our province struggling

to find safe, compassionate, affordable care for their young children and to tell them that I am here working on their behalf.

MR. SPEAKER: I'd just like to remind all members to please respect the path of travel here between the Speaker's dais and those speaking on the floor.

The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

### **PETITE RIVIERE ELEM. SCH. - PLASTIC BAG GRAB CHALLENGE (2017)**

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to recognize Petite Riviere Elementary School for their great work in helping our environment.

The school recently took part in the 2017 Plastic Bag Grab Challenge. From this elementary school about 100 children collected 2,096 plastic bags which, in turn, diverts 16.8 kilograms of plastics from landfills.

From what I have heard, students had a great time taking part and learning valuable lessons in reducing, reusing, and recycling.

I'd like to acknowledge Petite Riviere Elementary School Principal Scott Rawding, Guidance Counsellor Kristy Boutilier, and all staff at the school, for teaching our students how to be community leaders and good environmental stewards. I would ask members of this House of Assembly to please join me in congratulating all the students who took part. They are an example to us all.

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

### **UPPER STEWIACKE VOL. FD/MEMBERS - EFFORTS ACKNOWLEDGE**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to acknowledge the efforts of Upper Stewiacke volunteer fire brigade which, with 50 volunteer firefighters and four trucks, is celebrating 70 years of service in 2017. Like those in communities across the country, these volunteers risk their lives for family and friends and neighbours and their hall is truly a place that brings the community together.

At this year's banquet, eight of the brigade's 50 members received awards recognizing a total of 185 years of service. Another award recipient, Bailey Crow, was one of the junior brigade members who received training but does not participate in firefighting. With such training programs, brigades prepare for emergencies of both the present and the future. Congratulations to the Upper Stewiacke volunteer fire department and its members.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

[9:45 a.m.]

**CARTER, WAYNE/FIN STAFF: FILM ROSTER - CONGRATS.**

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank and congratulate Wayne Carter and his staff at FIN, the Atlantic International Film Festival, for once again curating an engaging and challenging roster of films from Nova Scotia, Canada and around the world.

Of particular note at the festival are the movies made by local filmmakers like Black Cop by Cory Bowles, The Child Remains by Michael Melski, Pearls by Dartmouth North's writer/director Shelly Thompson, and so many more. Since the government's decision to cancel the Film Tax Credit, Nova Scotia filmmakers have had to face serious challenges to get their work made. I applaud them for their endurance and tenacity during this struggle.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**POOLE, HARRY: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, growing up in Herring Cove, I had the privilege to grow up as one of Marg's boys. Margaret and Harry Poole opened their house to help raise me and several other youth, including Shawn, Eddy, Jeff, Mike and Chris. Marg taught us manners and family. Harry taught us strength and hard work.

Marg and Harry had two biological children, Mark and Craig. Fifteen years ago, Marg and Harry lost their youngest son Mark in a tragic car accident. To say that changed everyone's life is an understatement. This past February, Marg passed away peacefully surrounded by love. Harry passed away Wednesday after a battle with cancer, but I suspect it was a broken heart that he finally gave into, as he missed Marg so much.

As I sat at their house last night, house empty, I remember how full of life that house used to be. To their oldest son, Craig, you are not alone. Besides your beautiful wife and daughters you still have Marg's boys. I will always hear Harry's words ringing in my ears "Brendan, shut up and get back to work." Rest in peace Marg and Harry.

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

**SCOTT, BERNIE/SACKVILLE VOL. FIREFIGHTERS  
- EMERG. SERV. ACHIEVEMENT PROG.**

MR. BRAD JOHNS: I rise today in the House for my first time and I am honoured to be able to do so, to send congratulations to high school English teacher Bernie Scott. In addition to his many years of dedicated service in educating young people, Mr. Scott has

gone the extra mile in ensuring that young people also receive vital extra training in life skills.

His most recent project is a collaboration with the Sackville volunteer firefighters on the Emergency Service Achievement program in June of this year. Almost a dozen young people graduated with the vital work experience, thereby assisting them in obtaining employment and providing employees with skilled workers. I would like to thank Mr. Scott for his continued enthusiasm and commitment to both young people and the broader community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

**BLACK COP: BOWLES, CORY - CONGRATS.**

HON. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the Atlantic Film Festival audiences were treated to the Nova Scotian premiere in Halifax of Halifax resident Cory Bowles' feature film Black Cop. This film marks a milestone in an interdisciplinary career that has included works in film, television, music, and installation.

Black Cop masterfully explores themes of revenge and resistance, while addressing topics such as anti-Black racism and state violence. As Cory Bowles has explained it, his film is an examination of, “. . . this world that people think is black and white, but there's so much more . . .”

I want to congratulate Cory on the momentous achievement of Black Cop and on the attention and examination its has brought to the feature's important subject.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**ANTIGONISH MLA CAMPAIGN:  
ORGANIZERS/CAMPAIGNERS/VOTERS - THANK**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: It feels good to be back for a second term representing the constituents of Antigonish in this House. Like any election, there is much work and long hours put in by many and I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to thank them.

First, I would like to thank the members of my campaign team and the volunteers who supported our effort, from the young people who came knocking on doors with me to the seasoned campaign veterans who organized and ran the campaign office. They all played an integral part in achieving the results we had. While there are too many to name here, I hope they all know that I sincerely appreciate their efforts. I would also like to acknowledge the local candidates Ray Mattie, Moraig MacGillivray and Ryan Smyth for their willingness to put their names forward to serve the residents of Antigonish.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who made their voices heard on election day. Whether you cast a ballot for me or any of the other candidates, I was happy to see the constituents of Antigonish exercise their right to choose their representative. I am grateful that they have selected me to represent them once again, and I promise to perform my duties to the absolute best of my ability.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**MACDONALD, DARLENE/TALLSHIP CREW:  
RDV 2017 TALLSHIP REGATTA PICTOU - CONGRATS.**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to acknowledge Darlene MacDonald, deCoste Entertainment Centre Manager, and her Tallship crew of more than 100 volunteers for making the RDV 2017 Tallship Regatta Pictou a huge success and a ray of sunshine on a gloomy weekend.

Pictou was one of 11 ports around Nova Scotia where tall ships stopped to honour the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Canada Confederation. Darlene and the volunteers worked tirelessly to bring together an event-packed, fun-filled weekend for people of all ages. They worked around the clock to make sure that Pictou's hospitality was highlighted and that everyone was welcomed. We saw more than 16,000 people visit Pier C to see the magic of the tall ships.

I congratulate Darlene and the Tallship Regatta Pictou volunteers on such an amazing weekend, and for their unflagging volunteerism and commitment to Pictou.

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

**PROVO, CHELSEA: ST. F.X. SUCCESSES - CONGRATS.**

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Chelsea Provo of East Preston on her success as a member of the St. Francis Xavier University X-Women's basketball team. Chelsea is a graduate of Auburn Drive High School and indicates that she has learned a great deal from her older brother who is a member of the X-Men's team. Chelsea's greatest attribute, according to her coach, is her composure under pressure, a hallmark of any top point guard. Chelsea credits her large family as a source of guidance and inspiration to work hard.

I would ask members of this House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Chelsea Provo on her many successes at St. Francis Xavier University.

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

**QUEENS CO. FAIR: OPENING (131<sup>st</sup>) - CONGRATS.**

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge that Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, marks the opening of the 131<sup>st</sup> Queens County Fair in Caledonia. This genuine historic agricultural fair in North Queens takes place over five days and includes many exhibits from all over Nova Scotia. Since its inception in 1886, it has become an institution in Queens County, and residents and visitors come together each September to experience livestock competitions, horsemanship events, exhibits, music, and wonderful food.

I am very honoured to congratulate the board of directors of this year's exhibition, their committees, and numerous volunteers. I look forward to attending and participating in the fair this weekend and personally congratulating those involved with its organization.

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

**WALLACE, RICK/BAXTER, JAMES:  
BREAKING WAVES FEST. - CONGRATS.**

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Rick Wallace and James Baxter, co-organizers of the Breaking Waves Festival in Freeport, and the festival's many volunteers for hosting their second annual Breaking Waves Music and Film Festival.

Last year, Mr. Wallace and Mr. Baxter wanted to organize an event where the community could get together and have some fun. After the first successful event, the organizers decided to hold this music festival and film festival annually and expanded it to two days. The festival opened Friday night with the opening gala and awards presentation. The film award winners were screened the following day at the Freeport Community Hall. This was held in conjunction with the music portion of the festival at the Freeport ball field which featured a lineup of Nova Scotia musicians, an exhibition of local artists, and food vendors.

In all of our small communities, it's important that we organize activities where we can all meet and have some fun. It is nice to see these activities promote local artists and musicians in our areas.

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

**SMITH, ROB: UNDERGROUND ENTERTAINMENT VENUE - THANK**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Rob Smith, a local contractor. Rob remodelled his building, which had unused space, to create Underground Entertainment, a venue that would provide Friday night dances with live bands to those 19 and over; Saturday would have children's dances for kids seven to twelve. The facility



could also be rented for receptions, birthday parties, graduation parties, showers, and other special events.

Rob saw the need for a community hall to serve the community and has filled that void. I'd like to take this opportunity and thank Rob and his crew for the creation of Underground Entertainment and the positive impact it has had on the greater Northside.

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

**GUYSBOROUGH-EAST. SHORE-TRACADIE CAMPAIGN:  
CAMPAIGN TEAM/SUPPORTERS - THANK**

HON. LLOYD HINES: I rise today to take the opportunity to recognize and thank those who played a crucial role in my standing before you today. For 30 days and many days and weeks leading up to the election call, our campaign team dedicated time and energy to my re-election. With their unwavering support, we made it to the finish line. I would especially like to thank my official agent, Dawn Grant, my campaign manager, Jack Hanafan, and my office manager, Beverley Simpson - your professionalism and experience led us to a smooth and successful campaign.

Mr. Speaker, I would sincerely like to thank my fellow candidates, Rob and Marnie, for stepping up and for very well-run professional campaigns. Lastly but most importantly, I would like to thank my wonderful wife, Patricia, and my children. Their support throughout my political career has been my anchor, and I couldn't have done this without them.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**MCKEAGE, DAVE: CAMP BRIGADOON - CREATION**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Finding a summer camp experience for a child with a chronic disease used to be a daunting task, one that Dave McKeage knew first-hand. As a child, he was diagnosed with cancer and spent the summer in the hospital undergoing a series of operations and chemotherapy. This fueled his desire to open a camp for people living with chronic illness. His drive to create a camp to help children living extraordinary lives to feel ordinary, grew stronger. In 2011, his dream became a reality with the creation of Camp Brigadoon.

Mr. McKeage wants children to live an ordinary life, but Mr. McKeage is far from ordinary. He is an extraordinary man who has created an extraordinary experience for children across the Maritimes.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

**AZZI, MSGR. PIERRE MICHEL: ELEVATION - CONGRATS.**

HON. LENA DIAB: I rise today to recognize an important milestone in my faith community. Tomorrow, during a solemn mass, Rev. Pierre Michel Azzi, Vicar General of the Eparchy of St. Maron Canada and pastor of my church, our Lady of Lebanon Parish, Halifax, is being elevated to the ecclesiastical degree of Monsignor. By the laying of hands by the Maronite Ordinary in Canada, His Excellency Bishop Paul Marwan-Tabet, Monsignor Azzi will take on his new title and join us in a celebratory dinner hosted by our parish council.

Monsignor Azzi has been a leader in our church for over 11 years. He has led numerous groups including our youth council, student support program, the Lebanese Cedar festival; facilitated the founding of the first chapter of the Knights of Columbus in our parish and served the people of Cape Breton, St. John's, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island.

I ask all members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Monsignor Azzi on his new title and thank him for the contributions he makes to the Maronite Catholic community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**C.B. ISLANDERS MIDGET AAA TEAM - TELUS CUP CHAMPIONS**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Congratulations to the Cape Breton West Islanders Midget AAA team Telus Cup national champions. (Applause) They were the first team from Atlantic Canada ever to win the tournament in its 44-year history. These young men never gave up. Trailing 4-2 in the third period, they found a way to score twice to put the game into overtime. Then at 5:39 into sudden death, a magical moment rewarded their hard work and dedication to each other.

This team's greatest strength was itself. This was a team that played like a team, everyone for each other. Every player on this team is a star, and all have played their roles during this successful season. Let us also acknowledge the commitment of their parents, coaches, staff, team sponsors, and loyal fans.

May we here in Nova Scotia's Legislature wish our Canadian champions well as they look toward the next season of hockey and the opportunities and dreams that lie before them.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

**BEDFORD BASIN YACHT CLUB  
- SAIL CAN. WILLIAM ABBOTT TROPHY**

HON. KELLY REGAN: I would ask members of this House of Assembly to join me in congratulating the Bedford Basin Yacht Club on winning Sail Canada's William Abbott Senior Trophy for the sail training program of the year in 2016. The award recognizes the fine training programs run by dedicated volunteers throughout the country. It's named after one of Canada's best-known yacht builders who was integral to the training program at his home club. To be eligible for the award, a training program must be run by a club or school member in good standing with Sail Canada, employ Sail Canada certified instructors, follow the Sail Canada program, and use Sail Canada material.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to note that this is only the second time that a Nova Scotia club has won the award. The last time was in 1994 when - you guessed it - the Bedford Basin Yacht Club won it as well. Today, the club will begin hosting the provincial championships in the Opti Class . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Time allotted for Statements by Members has expired.

[10:00 a.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for the members' statements has expired.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS**

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

**PREM.: HEALTH CARE INFO. - ACCURACY**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Nova Scotia Health Authority announced that 16 new doctors would be coming to Cape Breton. It turned out that that information was simply wrong. Among other things, they counted three doctors who had arrived over a year ago and had already been announced.

Mr. Speaker, clearly we have a government that is more interested in political spin than actually providing better health care to Nova Scotians, so I'd like to ask the Premier, what is he doing to ensure that the information Nova Scotians get about their health care is accurate?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question, Mr. Speaker. As he would know, we committed to continue to work with communities across the province. The Minister of Health and Wellness has been travelling across the province, meeting with health care providers, meeting with community organizations, meeting with communities that have invested their time, money, and energy in ensuring that their health care facilities are there, up and running, and vibrant. The minister will continue to work with all our partners to make sure that the appropriate health care team is in place.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians can have no faith in that answer when the agency that has been designed by this Premier to deliver health care gives them information that is simply wrong. In fact, that press release that announced 16 new doctors was shredded, its credibility was shredded by Dr. Mike MacDonald of Cape Breton in a letter two days later to the *Cape Breton Post*, where he pointed out that not only the doctors that had already been counted but that another in fact had not signed a contract yet and still another wasn't sure that he was going to go to that area at all. Yet a government press release went out claiming 16 doctors, but in fact it wasn't true.

How can Nova Scotians trust this government to deliver health care when they are not accurate with the information they provide to the people of Nova Scotia about their own system?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all those health care providers out there working with our government, working with the Minister of Health and Wellness to make sure we deliver health care and the quality of health care that Nova Scotians have come to expect and deserve, and we'll continue to work with all our partners to make sure that we have the health care team in place.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, we should certainly thank Dr. Mike MacDonald for being truthful with the people of Nova Scotia with what is really going on with health care in Cape Breton, rather than defend a press release that played on the hopes of the people of Cape Breton for better health care, that was nothing more than political spin, the Premier gets up and defends that.

Mr. Speaker, that is not good enough. Will the Premier now admit the truth, that our health care system in Cape Breton is in crisis and take the right steps to fix it, instead of defending the indefensible?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the honourable member for his question. I'm very proud of the work our government has done and the people across this province continue to invest in health care. The Minister of Finance and Treasury Board will stand on her feet next Tuesday tabling our budget which will have an investment in health care.

I'm really grateful for the people of Nova Scotia who gave us an opportunity to have a second majority in this province.

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

**PREM.: HEALTH CARE CRISIS - ADMIT**

HON. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, back in May in the course of the election, I had the opportunity on a number of occasions to ask the Premier whether or not, in his view, there was a crisis in Nova Scotia health care. On every such occasion the Premier indicated that in his view this was not the right way to be characterizing the health care situation in Nova Scotia at the moment. Yet according to Statistics Canada, since this government took office, the proportion of people without a family doctor has gone to 13 per cent from 9 per cent.

I want to ask the Premier, is he willing now to admit that there is a health care crisis in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to thank all those community members across the province who are working with our government to ensure that the health care teams are in place in their communities. We know there are pockets in this province where physicians are required, we know there are pockets where we need more nurses. We're continuing to work with those communities to make sure that the health care they deserve and require is in place.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, in August two residents of Halifax Chebucto - Theresa and Walter Zukauskas learned they would be losing their doctor in early November. Mr. Zukauskas was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2010 and since then he has had three different family doctors. He's on nine different medications at any given time, uses a wheelchair, and receives home care seven days a week, but he needs a medical professional to monitor his condition.

The Zukauskases have demonstrated significant medical need, but cannot find a doctor. Does the Premier not believe that their circumstances constitute a crisis?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As we know, there are families across the province who are looking for and require a health care team or family physician. We know the anxiety those families feel when they do not have access to primary care. It's why we're continuing to work very hard with our partners to ensure that we have the appropriate health care teams in place to be able to provide care to those families.

MR. BURRILL: Yesterday, AllNovaScotia reported that doctors in this province have all but lost confidence in this government. According to a Doctors Nova Scotia report,

also published yesterday, consultations held with doctors at 29 separate meetings around the province found that doctors are burning out and that patients are suffering as a result. The president of Doctors Nova Scotia speaks of the situation having reached a tipping point.

I find it entirely reasonable to ask the Premier, if this is not a crisis, then what is?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to thank those health care providers across the province who are continuing to work with our government to ensure that the appropriate health care is in place in communities across Nova Scotia.

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

**PREM.: C.B. MENTAL HEALTH SERV. - WAIT TIMES**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, wait times for adult mental health services have taken another big jump in Cape Breton Island. In May, the average wait time for mental health services was 354 days. That's almost a year.

Today that number has jumped to over 425 days. I'll table the government's own report that proves it.

I'd like to ask the Premier a simple question, why do Cape Bretoners have to wait 425 days to get the mental health services they need?

THE PREMIER: That wait time is too long and we're going to work with our health care providers to ensure that every Nova Scotian who requires access to mental health services are going to get them.

MR. BAILLIE: We have been bringing the crisis in mental health service delivery to this House for over three years now. The government has acknowledged that it's a problem for over three years. The Premier continues to rehash the promise that someday they will actually do something for the families that have a family member who has a mental illness, who may be in crisis, but the wait-lists just go up.

I'd like to ask the Premier, in the face of such evidence of hardship in our mental health system, why has this government failed to act to help families in mental health crisis?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I also want to thank Dr. Stan Kutcher, who's been working very hard with our government to ensure that we go in and identify the challenges being faced in communities across the province. He's made recommendations, and the Minister of Health and Wellness is implementing those recommendations.

We know there's still more work to do. We're going to continue to make those investments. As the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board stands on her feet next week, there will be additional investments in health care. We're looking forward to continuing to work with our partner.

I agree with the honourable member. That wait-list is too long, and we need to continue to work with all health care providers to ensure that we bring that wait-list down.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - C.B. CENTRE: SERVICES - REMOVAL**

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness.

People are talking in New Waterford. They've seen cuts to services in their community over the years, and they're worried that the cuts aren't done yet. While the minister has said he's committed to improving health care, we haven't seen much evidence of that where I'm from over the last four years. My constituents are worried that the situation we're in right now will only get worse. The combination of emergency room closures, staffing shortages, and removal of services has people in New Waterford feeling nervous about the future of health care in our town.

All summer, the minister has not responded to my requests for a meeting. Now that we're face to face, will the Minister of Health and Wellness give me his word that no more front-line health care services will be removed from Cape Breton Centre?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I'd like to thank the member opposite for the question. As she would know, part of my work in the first few months in my role as the Minister of Health and Wellness included a tour of the province, meeting with front-line health care professionals, touring facilities and practices and so on - that included a visit down to the New Waterford area to visit the facility - and having those conversations to hear first-hand from people within her community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, in June of this year I wrote to the Minister of Health and Wellness to express my concerns about the future of the New Waterford Consolidated Hospital. After a year of many emergency room closures, the Mobile Care Team was taken off duty for the summer and nursing staff were reassigned to the regional hospital in Sydney.

It is now September and as of last Friday, the summer nursing schedule has been extended until January 2018, leaving people in my riding without access to the emergency health care that they need.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness whether residents of New Waterford should expect the hospital to close permanently or if he can guarantee that we will not lose services at the New Waterford Consolidated Hospital.

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member opposite and members of her community that this government, through the Nova Scotia Health Authority, the IWK and our other health care providers throughout the province, will continue to work diligently to provide the necessary services in the health care system. That includes emergency services, making use of the resources within the community, within New Waterford, and throughout Cape Breton and the rest of the province, to ensure we can provide the best services to the people of Nova Scotia what we can.

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

**PREM.: FED. TAX GRAB - SILENCE EXPLAIN**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. The federal Liberal Government is planning a massive tax grab on the small business owners of the Province of Nova Scotia and indeed the entire country. The federal Liberals have labelled our own employers here in Nova Scotia as tax cheats, as people who are out to not pay their fair share, instead of recognizing them for what they are, which is the people who make our economy grow.

In the face of this pending hardship our Premier has had nothing to say publicly to defend Nova Scotia employers. Obviously, the Premier is putting the needs of the Liberal Party ahead of the needs of small businesses here in Nova Scotia.

I'd like to ask the Premier, why is he staying silent in the face of such a massive tax grab against Nova Scotia's small businesses?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the honourable member that Nova Scotians have decided that I haven't remained silent on their issues for the last three and a half years and have given me the privilege to stand here again. (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: I again want to remind the honourable member that I worked not only with this federal government but the previous federal government. I've had many discussions with senior members of both governments. The only difference is that unlike the honourable member, Mr. Speaker, I don't run for a microphone to disclose every conversation I have.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the people of Nova Scotia, as much as it pains me to say this, did put that Premier in that Premier's chair and they expect him to stand up and



defend them when they are called tax cheats, when they are made to feel like they are doing something wrong because they are employing fellow Nova Scotians and making our economy grow through our small businesses.

He can defend the backroom deals that he makes as much as he wants, but people want to know where he stands. Does the Premier support the federal tax changes, yes or no?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians know where I stand: I stand directly with them.

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

**PREM.: SM. BUS. TAX CHANGES - OPPOSITION DECLARE**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Well no, Mr. Speaker, they don't know where he stands on this very important issue because he won't say. What they are beginning to realize is that when given a choice between supporting the Liberal Party and its needs and supporting the small business owners of Nova Scotia, he supports the Liberal Party and that is not right.

Our economy is at risk, 40 different small business groups have written to this Premier and asked him to speak up and yet he has not. I'd like to ask the Premier, why won't he say publicly now that he is against the small business tax changes that the federal Liberal Government is imposing on Nova Scotia businesses?

[10:15 a.m.]

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to correct the honourable member. That decision has not been made - whether or not that tax change that he is referring to - will be implemented. There will be an opportunity for all Nova Scotians to express how they feel about those changes, whether in favour or against.

I am taking that opportunity, Mr. Speaker, at the highest level in government to express their positions and concerns which would have been raised to us by not only small business owners in terms of those that are out there, but our health care professionals that are in have expressed their concerns. We are making those expressions on their behalf to the federal government, and I look forward to continuing to do that and we will see what happens.

MR. BAILLIE: Well apparently, Mr. Speaker, the Premier does have a position on this. But it is a secret position; Nova Scotians are not allowed to know what it is. Every Nova Scotian has the ability to provide their input, but they are not allowed to know what

the Premier himself thinks of these federal Liberal tax changes. That is a bizarre and ridiculous position for the Premier of Nova Scotia to take.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it is not lost on the small business owners here that this tax grab will not only benefit the federal government, but the provincial government will get a windfall in new taxes as well. So I would like to ask the Premier, how much money is his government going to make if these tax changes go through?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the honourable member that may be how he is focused on this issue, but that is not the position that we have taken as a government. There is a broader issue when it comes to the impact that this will have. We have heard very clearly from doctors across the province, the impact; I have heard from small business owners, the impact this will have on their businesses - and we are communicating that to the national level, and we are going to continue to do so.

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

#### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: FUNDING FIGURES - ACCURACY**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: This government made a lot of empty promises about improving health care during the last election - and you know that we welcome any and all initiatives that improve the health and wellness of people of this province, but we believe that it should receive accurate information.

In the 2017 Liberal platform, it reads: "We have increased funding by \$ 8.1 million each year as a part of a 'long waiter' strategy . . ." - and I will table that document - yet according to every Budget Address tabled by the Liberal Government those numbers are wrong - and I will give you table number two. So my question to the minister is, will the minister be sure to provide accurate figures going forward and not use campaign-style rhetoric to conform or comfort Nova Scotians waiting three and four years for surgery?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. You know, we continue to recognize that we need to do things more efficiently in our health care system. That process to improve the services to Nova Scotians, including the area of surgery, may require doing things a little differently and might also require more investment.

I ensure Nova Scotians and the members opposite that we continue to move forward in that regard. When it comes to accuracy of information being presented, I encourage the member to be cautious with throwing rocks in a glass house - and I would like to table this message where a statement out of that Party refers to factually incorrect information that was not included as part of the release from Mr. Don Mills, CRA.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Well, it is a good thing that we have the Auditor General in this province, a person who can look at everybody's document and make sure that they are correct. The Auditor General reported that the department is aware of at least \$35 million needed up front to address the wait-list of orthopedic surgeries - and I will table that.

The Auditor General pointed out a series of weakness in the planning by the department and on the failure to deliver on certain planned programs. Mr. Speaker, my question is, which document should Nova Scotians believe - the 2017 Liberal campaign platform or the Auditor General?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, what I would like to assure the member opposite, and indeed all Nova Scotians and members of this House of Assembly, is that we are going to pursue the work we have done in the past in improving the number of surgeries, doing more surgeries, orthopaedic surgeries, across the province, making changes to ensure that the people of Nova Scotia can receive services, including surgery services, not only in their local region but where wait-lists may be shorter in other parts of the province.

Those are the steps we are taking to move forward to help address this issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

### **EECD: PRE-PRIMARY PROG. - DETAILS**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: My question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Mr. Speaker, last year the government completed a review of regulated child care that included consultation with thousands of Nova Scotians. In the recommendations from that extensive review there is no mention of pre-Primary.

Since the government started with the rollout of its pre-Primary program we have heard from families worried that they don't know if or when the programs will start, child care providers who are concerned about losing staff and centres that have lost space. I'm not sure where the fire is, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, does the minister agree with families and child care providers that when it comes to programs for our children, it's more important to get things done right, not just to get things done?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, we have a problem in Nova Scotia; we know that pre-Primary education - because of research, evidence and other facts that have been presented by experts - is key to providing them a better start. It is linked to lower

anxiety levels, it is linked to a better transition to an academic learning environment. It's key to screening for learning disabilities at a younger age so we can better prepare for those students.

Only 25 per cent of our kids of pre-school age in this province are accessing those critical programs, Mr. Speaker. While the Opposition Parties fight to maintain that status quo, I assure that member and every member in this House that we will move forward on an ambitious agenda because he have high ambitions for our kids.

MS. CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I suggest that's an agenda that may come at the cost of child care for all other ages in this province. One of the challenges identified by the 2016 review was the insufficient programming for children with diverse and special needs. When I wrote to the minister with my concerns about inclusion in pre-Primary, the minister's response was that the children in those programs would have access to the same supports they would have in regulated child care. I'll table that.

Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware that the review done by his own government found those supports to be inadequate more than one year ago?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I took great interest in that member's comments earlier during members' statements where she said we need to speak the truth in this House. That member has perpetrated things that are not true, misleading the public . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'd like to remind the minister that we're getting into tricky territory there, implying that other members are not telling the truth.

MR. CHURCHILL: Here are the facts, Mr. Speaker, that member suggested that these pre-Primary classes that we are working to implement are not inclusive sites for learning. That is absolutely and unequivocally false. These are inclusive learning sites that will support children of all diverse needs in our classrooms, and I am very excited to keep moving forward with our partners in the child care sector. We have a vested interest in them, we support that sector to the tune of \$55 million. We have a vested interest in the success of our child care sector. We invest in that sector to the tune of \$55 million a year. We are in negotiations with the federal government that will see additional funds for that critical sector.

I share the same goals as the folks in that sector, that all students, all children in Nova Scotia have to have access to these programs which we know have a positive impact on their lives.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: TATAMAGOUCHE TRAGEDY  
- SERVICES INVESTIGATE**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Earlier this week we all heard of the horrible tragedy that happened in Tatamagouche. As details of the incident are coming out, one aspect of that tragedy is the alleged failure of our health care system in addressing mental health. I know that all members of this House take issues like this very seriously. We have to ensure that the system is not failing Nova Scotians.

My question is, has the minister launched an investigation as to the health care services, were they adequate or not adequate in this particular situation?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for raising the question. Of course, the situation he refers to is a tragic situation and I believe it is fair to say on behalf of all the members of the Legislature that our hearts go out to those families and the community affected.

What I would like to highlight, and caution the member of course though, is that this is a situation which is an active investigation, ongoing, towards the incident and allegations around it. So it would be inappropriate to speak to details while such an investigation is ongoing.

MR. HARRISON: Thank you. I'm just happy that the investigation is taking place.

In Cape Breton, we know there have been several heart-breaking stories from families who have lost loved ones to mental illness. Last year, another incredibly sad story emerged in Upper Big Tracadie in the loss of an entire family. Anything that can be done to prevent those struggling with mental illness from escalating and hurting themselves or others is certainly essential. Will the minister commit to addressing any gaps in service or weaknesses in the system that can be identified by staff or by doctors?

MR. DELOREY: Again, it's a very tragic situation, one that hits particularly close to home, literally, from my own situation there. Of course, I can assure the member and all Nova Scotians that the area of mental health and opportunities to improve the services across this province are indeed a priority. It is very important to us. We know that one in five Canadians do suffer from mental illness throughout their lives. It's very important that we work to support those families and community members and our friends throughout this process. The health care system is part of that.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: COLE HBR.-EAST. PASSAGE  
- PHYSICIAN RECRUITMENT**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Last month, I met with the department of family medicine to discuss the fact that my constituency of Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage doesn't have a single family doctor. I recently received a letter from Dr. Rick Gibson which followed a meeting we had, and I would like to table that. This letter stated that the Department of Family Practice would only support a physician who chooses to practise in our community if there's also physician cross-coverage ensured. My question to the minister is, why is this government making it more difficult for our community to recruit a family doctor instead of easier, when so many Nova Scotians don't have access to primary care?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Thank you to the member for the question. I acknowledge your first question in the Legislature. Congratulations.

With respect to the area of family physician recruitment, work is ongoing throughout the province for recruitment. We'll continue those efforts, led by the Nova Scotia Health Authority. We heard loud and clear from physicians throughout the province that indeed the intentions of the recruitment process to identify the most acute areas, the areas that were most in need, to prioritize those areas, was not sufficient. Flexibility in working with physicians to identify communities they want to work with, we're committed to allowing that to proceed.

MS. ADAMS: It appears from the letter that I tabled that the people from my constituency must not only recruit one family doctor, they also have to find somebody else to cover for that doctor if they're on vacation or take a professional development day. At a time when our government should be knocking down any barriers that prevent a doctor from servicing my community, they appear to be putting up more and more roadblocks. My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, will the minister commit today in this Legislature to working with me and my constituents of Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage to secure at least one family doctor rather than working against us?

MR. DELOREY: What I can assure the member opposite and I think perhaps even more importantly all Nova Scotians, is that in my role it's important that I work on behalf of all Nova Scotians to work with them, with the Nova Scotia Health Authority, the IWK, and our health care partners to ensure primary care services are provided throughout this province. We made it very clear in our platform commitment that primary care services and improving those across the province is a major commitment. I've been tasked with leading that on behalf of our government and all Nova Scotians in my role.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North. (Applause)

[10:30 a.m.]

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY STRATEGY  
- IMPLEMENTATION**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: This question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Nearly three years ago, the former Minister of Health and Wellness announced this government would proceed with implementing an Acquired Brain Injury Strategy. Unfortunately, several years and deadlines have gone by with no progress. This inaction has left thousands of Nova Scotians wondering whether the government is listening.

I have a young man in my constituency who is 22. He has been prescribed physio three to four times a week, and has received one treatment since May. This is not acceptable to him or others like him. Will the Minister of Health and Wellness provide a timeline for the implementation of the Acquired Brain Injury Strategy?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question - again, another first, congratulations on that. With respect to the Acquired Brain Injury Strategy, I'd actually like to acknowledge the work of my colleague - the former Minister of Health and Wellness and current Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage - for his work and leadership throughout his term in office to put the acquired brain injury initiative, working with (Interruption)

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

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, the work that he did with the Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia to produce a report that came forward late in 2016. I've been working and had recent meetings with BIANs, the Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia, to discuss with them the results of that report.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, the Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia recently registered its disappointment with these unexplained delays in delivering a brain injury strategy. Unfortunately, our minister even admitted publicly that the hasn't had an opportunity to read the report, and I will table the remarks.

Nova Scotians are disappointed that our Minister of Health and Wellness has not taken the time to read this strategy. The question, Mr. Speaker, is, has the minister found time since that article to read this critical consultation report on acquired brain injuries, including the recommendations made to his government?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, what I'd like to make the member opposite aware and indeed those members of the public, particularly those interested and involved - you

know, patients and caregivers and those affected by acquired brain injury - that indeed I have taken many steps since coming in, and the importance of this particular initiative.

One of the first organizations that I met with - I reached out to the Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia to meet with them very early back in August to discuss with them the report that was provided. I was briefed on the report, continue to read through in detail the report that was provided, but also after meeting with the Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia, made some commitments to move forward on, some initiatives that could be done including ensuring that there is an acquired brain injury lens put towards some other initiatives taking place within the department. For example, in the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Time allotted for the minister's answer has expired.

The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

### **LBR. RELATIONS: BILL NO. 148 - COURT OF APPEAL**

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, this question is for the Minister of Labour Relations. One month ago, on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Liberal Government proclaimed the Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act. The day the bill was proclaimed the government announced that they would send the sections of the bill to deal with the wage pattern to the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal. My question for the minister is, why did he not have the whole bill sent before the courts?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the question. We believe that the elements that we have advanced to the court are the basic principles of the argument and we look forward to the outcome of the court's direction.

MS. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I am well aware that the government believes that they can ask the courts to rule what they deem to be the central question, but experts have raised concerns about the constitutionality of freezing the Long Service Award, a benefit that was freely bargained for and agreed to in past negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, if the minister is so confident that Bill No. 148 will pass constitutional muster, would he at least agree that he would have received a clear answer for all Nova Scotians had he sent the whole bill to the courts, rather than just a slice of it?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, to my colleague's point, expert opinions vary. One of the challenges we face quite frankly is that often subject matters have opinions on both sides of the argument. We believe that the argument is grounded in the principles that we have advanced and we look forward to the outcome of the court's direction.

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



**HEALTH & WELLNESS:  
HOME-BASED ORAL CANCER MEDICATIONS - UPDATE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness once again. Eleven months ago, almost to the day, I stood in this Chamber and asked the previous minister about funding for home-based oral cancer medications, funding that would provide patients with the same coverage as facility-based treatments and that minister, the previous minister, promised that he was looking into it.

Eleven months ago, Mr. Speaker, is literally a lifetime for someone suffering from cancer. Almost a full year later, does the new minister have any good news for patients who have been prescribed a home-based oral cancer treatment?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for raising this very important topic in the Legislature today on behalf of individuals across the province who are suffering from cancer and may be prescribed take-home or oral-based therapies.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member opposite that I know firsthand that my predecessor, the current Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage, did indeed take that issue very seriously. I know that as the former Minister of Finance and Treasury Board. We certainly did take that to heart to make commitments in our platform and you'll see us continue to move forward on that initiative.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Well the way I understand it, Mr. Speaker, the previous Minister of Finance and Treasury Board didn't give enough money to the Minister of Health and Wellness at the time in order to do this, so let's hope that the new Minister of Finance and Treasury Board gives the current Minister of Health and Wellness the money to do this.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? No news is good news and if that's good news, I think most Nova Scotians would prefer no news.

We know that home-based cancer treatments reduce burden and stress on both the patient and the health care system, yet this government has refused to provide equal coverage to those patients who have been prescribed this form of treatment. Will the minister commit to funding or giving us an indication that maybe in the budget that is coming up in a few days, that oral cancer treatments will be covered finally, fairly and equitably to our patients?

MR. DELOREY: Again, thank you for the question. Mr. Speaker, I can certainly assure the member opposite that a great deal of work has been done, was done before I came into this position. I'm proud to have the opportunity to continue the good work of my predecessor and work with my colleagues to continue moving forward on this. As I said, I

think Nova Scotians in the near future will see some progress on this important file. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: REG. PHARMACARE MEETINGS - OUTCOME**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Earlier this month Deputy Ministers of Health from across the Atlantic Region came together to discuss a regional approach to Pharmacare. Now after how badly the changes to the Seniors' Pharmacare Program went over last year, it makes sense that this meeting should give us all reason to pause. This government has said time and time again that we will see consultations from one end of this province to the other before any changes are made to Seniors' Pharmacare or indeed Pharmacare.

I'd like to ask the minister today, what was the outcome of these meetings on a regional Pharmacare plan?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: It's very exciting that an initiative that we've certainly been championing here in the Province of Nova Scotia to bring this forward as an agenda item to work with our sister provinces in a collaborative initiative to advance, really, what would be a major enhancement and shift in the delivery of services in our provinces, Mr. Speaker. Indeed I think it's interesting this morning talking about the role that Allan J. played in making major policy shifts. Indeed, it's very exciting to be part of moves and discussions in that regard. Thank you.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I wish I could take comfort in the fact that this government is the one leading the charge, we've seen how they roll things out. So this government does not have a good track record on implementing major changes, particularly in our health care system and it does not have the best track record in consulting with Nova Scotians.

We heard this government say time and time again that it would consult with Nova Scotians from one end of the province to the other on changes to Seniors' Pharmacare. They haven't even started that, they haven't even started those consultations and now they are off chasing a new, shiny object.

I'd like to ask the minister today, let's go back to Seniors' Pharmacare, do you actually have any intention of consulting with Nova Scotians? If so, when might you get around to starting?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I take a bit of exception to the suggestion that the member opposite made, that we don't have a great track record with making change in our health care system, including the conversation about the Seniors' Pharmacare Program.

There are 12,000 more Nova Scotia seniors who are not paying any premiums for their Pharmacare in the province because of changes that this government (Interruptions)

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

MR. DELOREY: Just in case the member opposite missed it, I'll restate: that's 12,000 more seniors in the Province of Nova Scotia (Interruptions)

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

MR. DELOREY: In response to the Pharmacare Program, 12,000 more Nova Scotia seniors not paying premiums for their Pharmacare services in the Province of Nova Scotia because of changes this government made. We'll continue to make positive changes in our health care system.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

#### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: ANNA. VALLEY HOSPICE CONST. - TIMELINE**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. On August 18, 2016, the Premier re-announced a new agreement between the Nova Scotia Health Authority and the Valley Hospice Foundation for the construction of a new hospice on the site of the Valley Regional Hospital. I will table that.

During that announcement, the Premier said, "Residents of the Annapolis Valley have been working tirelessly on this project for over a decade, and soon their dedication will pay off." Well, Mr. Speaker, on April 5, 2017, prior to the election, the Premier visited Cape Breton and promised a new provincial hospice policy framework to help the Hospice Palliative Care Society of Cape Breton negotiate with the province, and during that time, reiterated the commitment to the Valley.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the member have a question?

MR. LOHR: My question for the minister is this, when will the residents of the Annapolis Valley see their more than 10 years of effort rewarded with the shovel hitting the ground for the new hospice?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I appreciate the member opposite reiterating the commitments that have been made and the partnerships that we've entered into with groups like the Valley, to move forward on a new hospice in that area, the work that's ongoing in Cape Breton to provide them - well, we've provided them with the framework and discussions as to the proposal that they'd be bringing forward that would adhere to that framework - those works continue.

As far as when a shovel will hit the ground, I'd have to check in with project managers working on that project. Again, the commitment to move forward is there. That would be a project-based process for that work.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, if announcements counted as actual work, we'd be fine.

The release I tabled stated that construction would begin in 2017, and 2017 is now two-thirds or three-quarters over. The hospice was supposed to be finished by 2019. My question is, we had a tender awarded in 2013. Has that design work been finished, and will we see construction begin in 2017?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, thank you again for the question. It's my understanding that the design work has been completed and a site has been selected. Again, actual work on the initiative continues to move forward. I look forward, as I believe the people in that community do, to seeing those shovels hit the ground.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

#### **JUSTICE: ADULT CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - YOUTH ISOLATION**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. On September 12<sup>th</sup>, Justice Anne Derrick rejected a request to have a young offender carry out the remainder of his sentence at an adult correctional facility. For over a year, this youth has been held in conditions described by Justice Derrick as "social isolation." I'll table that. She ruled that the youth should be returned to Waterville, where he can resume the important intensive treatment he had been receiving.

Senator Kim Pate also weighed in on this case, saying, "The fact that Nova Scotia correctional authorities have re-segregated the youth in the face of Justice Derrick's decision is shocking."

I'd like to ask the minister, was he aware that this youth had been held in segregation for over a year?

HON. MARK FUREY: I thank my colleague for the question. What's important here is that the health and safety of offenders and staff are both of paramount importance to our government. I want my colleague to know that we will respect the decision of the court. As we speak, Correctional Services and the IWK are working on a plan to facilitate the expectation of the court.

MS. CHENDER: Right now, Mr. Speaker, there is a national conversation happening about the use of segregation and close confinement in our justice system. Through an access-to-information request, our caucus has learned that the department has undertaken an internal review of its close confinement policies, and I'll table that. This is

in contrast to the Province of Ontario, which conducted an independent review and released the results to the general public.

Advocates, the public, and front-line workers deserve to be involved in discussions of how to improve our justice system. I would like to ask the minister, will he commit today to tabling the results of the internal review here in this House?

[10:45 a.m.]

MR. FUREY: One of the elements of that process is to gather information internally first and foremost to address policies and the existing circumstances. But as we evolve, Mr. Speaker, I'm more than prepared to share our findings with my colleague and members of this Legislature to ensure that we are all informed, and that we continue to prioritize the well-being of both our offenders and our employers who work in those facilities.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - NORTHSIDE GEN. HOSP.:  
FULL ER SERV. - RESTORE**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Last Sunday, over 100 residents of the Northside area gathered to protest the emergency room closures and loss of doctors at the Northside General. The emergency room is supposed to be open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and sees over 10,000 patients a year when it's open. When the emergency room closes, patients must travel over 30 minutes to an already-crowded emergency room at Sydney that was never built to handle the patients from the Northside. My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, will the minister commit today to restoring full emergency room services to the Northside General Hospital?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member opposite for the question. Obviously, the priority of health care in the Province of Nova Scotia for the people of the province is a priority. We heard that loud and clear, I think, over the years. All governments recognize the importance of providing health care to our population. We'll continue to expand our investments, our platform. We have made it very clear that we heard Nova Scotians. We're prioritizing particularly in the area of primary and emergency care. We'll continue with that work as we move through this mandate.

MR. ORRELL: This 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. was supposed to be a temporary issue that was going to be corrected. So if this is a priority for this government, I hope that means yes, he's going to restore full emergency room at the Northside.

In 2014, lab services changed at the Northside General Hospital, and concerned citizens were worried about the change in the role of our hospital. Long-term care patients started occupying beds that were once designed for short-term care patients and patients

recovering from surgery. Earlier this week, I checked, and the Northside was advertising for renal dialysis and emergency room nurses as well as two family physicians on the Northside. The citizens in the area deserve better service than the government has provided us.

My question to the minister is, when will the Minister of Health and Wellness come to the Northside General and tell the people of the Northside what the future plan is for our medical facility?

MR. DELOREY: Again, as I mentioned earlier, the work of the province throughout the province for all Nova Scotians including those in Northside and across Cape Breton, both industrial Cape Breton and the Strait region and indeed right across the province, is to continue to work to recruit physicians and front-line health care workers including nurse practitioners and others who can support the services needed by the people of Nova Scotia, particularly in the primary care area.

This is an important area, and it's an area that requires work. It's ongoing, Mr. Speaker, and we'll continue that commitment, continue working with the people of Nova Scotia and our partners at the Health Authority and the IWK.

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

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. During the election, this government promised to target funding for food budgets at long-term care facilities. Of course, it was this same government that stripped food budgets in the first place, leaving seniors with inadequate service. My question is, will the minister commit to immediately restoring the food budgets in long-term care facilities? (Applause)

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker . . .

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

### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

### **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition. You have 46 minutes remaining.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to return to my Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne from yesterday. Just before I get into a further analysis of the Throne Speech itself, I do want to take a moment and recognize a number of Nova Scotians, some who were listed in the Throne Speech and some who weren't, who deserve recognition either because they passed away in the past year or because I just feel we should recognize them at this time.

In the Throne Speech itself, Mr. Speaker, the government very appropriately recognized the contributions to our country of Allan J. MacEachen, and all three Parties spoke eloquently about that. This morning I just want to add my voice very briefly to those who respect his accomplishments and his contribution to our province and our country.

Mr. Speaker, Paul MacEwan was a former member of this House. I did have the privilege of knowing Mr. MacEwan a little bit, having talked to him on a number of occasions, and I think it's appropriate that he is recognized. I hope his family takes some comfort from the recognition that he has been provided here.

Ralph Fiske is another member of this House, a former member who has passed away, another gentleman who I knew a little bit over the last number of years. I also want to extend our sympathies and thanks to his family at this time.

Dianne Brushett, a former Member of Parliament from Cumberland-Colchester, was my MP at one time, Mr. Speaker, from my home of Truro. I want to recognize her as well as she was recognized in the Throne Speech. The former Mayor of Mahone Bay, Joe Feeney, another individual who in my travels I got to know and will miss very much and want to extend our sympathies to Mr. Feeney's family as well.

You know, Mr. Speaker, they were politicians and they've done wonderful things and I think they deserve our thanks. I'd like to add a number of examples of people who support the political process as volunteers, who also passed away in the last year, who often don't get the accolades that they deserve because none of us would be here without them, none of us would have the robust political system that we have without them. I hope members don't mind if I just pause for a moment and recall Aldon Turner of New Ross. Aldon Turner worked on PC campaigns for decades and decades, who only recently passed away. I want to give you a sense of how committed he was as a Conservative. He was a farmer and if you wonder where the only blue-coloured barn is in Nova Scotia, it's Aldon's barn in New Ross.

He had been sick for a number of years and I went to visit him last year. What I remember most about Aldon is he was so committed to the cause that he asked to speak to me for a moment on a serious matter because he had a confession to make. Of course, I am not in the business of receiving confessions, far from it, but he had chosen me to make his confession to, in front of his daughter and son-in-law, I might add. Alden wanted me to know - and he was very serious, he was kind of trembling when he confessed to this - that in fact he never told anybody but he had once voted Liberal and he wanted me to know that, Mr. Speaker. It was in the 1960s and he had held that secret his whole life but he felt the time had come to confess.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we can all be gracious. I forgave him for that sin that day and was honoured to have the opportunity to do that. So that's Aldon Turner, a great, great worker.

Along the Eastern Shore, Mr. Speaker, there is another great volunteer supporter of our system and yes, of our Party, who I had the honour to know and that is Roddie Robertson who, according to our Party records, was the longest-standing continuous member of the Progressive Conservative Party, having maintained his membership annually for 76 consecutive years. He was over 90 years old when he passed away. He worked on every campaign during those 76 active years of membership, including the May 2017 campaign. I just think it's important that we recognize the contributions that people like Roddy Robertson make to our political process.

I will name one more and I know that there are many, many more from all Parties besides these three, and that is always the risk when you identify people and single them out. But I know a lot of people in the Sackville area will understand when I mention Hugh MacDonald and his incredible contribution to the community, to our Party, and to the citizens of the Sackville area over many years. He lived a full life and passed away just a few weeks ago and we miss him. I want to honour him by mentioning him today at this time.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the people we have lost there are many who continue to support our process, in each of our Parties, who go without recognition. One person still with us going strong who will turn 100 years old next months is Bill Cox of Shelburne and I just want to recognize the incredible work that Bill Cox has done for democracy, for the PC Party, and for the County of Shelburne over those 100 years.

I am looking forward to attending his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, along with the member for the area, the member for Queen-Shelburne. While I have a moment during Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne to recognize Bill Cox's pending 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, I want to say on behalf all the members of the Legislature, Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Bill Cox of Shelburne. (Applause)



Mr. Speaker, in tribute to all those people past and present that send us here, I think that it is important that I return back to my fair and balanced analysis of the Speech from the Throne at this point in time.

I said yesterday that it was a disappointment; it has no vision; there is no new action; it is a rehash of the same old promises that never seem to come to any concrete improvements for the people of Nova Scotia, and that the Premier himself had set the tone of lowering expectations among Nova Scotians that anything real would happen as a result of this Speech from the Throne or, indeed, this session of the Legislature, and that is a shame.

We should have a Premier and a government that lifts people up, that gives them hope, that shows them there is a better way, but that's not what we have. What we have is a Premier and a government that likes to push people down, lowers their expectations, tries to cause them to expect less and less of their government. He specifically pointed to pending cyberbullying legislation, and basically told Nova Scotians not to expect much when the government brings forward the new cyberbullying Act.

I want to highlight that because that is a shame. This is one of the modern, serious challenges of our time. It touches on the safety of our young people, it touches on the mental health of our young people and, indeed, all Nova Scotians. It is a challenge that people want their government to take up and accept and move forward on boldly.

The previous NDP Government put in their best effort of a cyberbullying bill. Yes, the courts struck it down two years ago, and we have been calling on this government to bring forward strong new protections in the area of cyberbullying ever since, and we got the same answer every time: wait and see, wait and see. Meanwhile, young Nova Scotians wonder where to turn when they are being bullied online; parents worry about their children and how they will be protected. Teachers, school bus drivers, social workers, educational assistant, and everyone who works with our young students in our education system wonders if they will ever be given the tools they need to intervene and protect young people.

Police officers have no guidance from this Legislature on what cyberbullying is, whether it is an offence; what the penalties are; how they can go about protecting people or making an arrest and that is not an acceptable situation.

Finally, we are told by this government that they'll be bringing in a new cyberbullying Act in this session of the Legislature. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that here on this side we are ready to embrace a strong, new, cyberbullying bill that will protect people from this awful, new, modern peril. Yet just days ago the Premier decided to tell Nova Scotians it ain't gonna be much, don't expect anything strong, it might not even make it all the way through the Legislature. After two years and all the lawyers they have at their disposal to find the path forward that respects the Constitution and provides new

protections, we're going to be given what is admitted by the Leader of the Government to be a watered-down bill that may go nowhere.

[11:00 a.m.]

That is very disappointing to hear, not just for us but for all Nova Scotians who want to see strong action taken in the area of cyberbullying. Yet what we're given is an exercise in lowering people's expectations.

The same with the IWK expense scandal that's going on right now, Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians are looking to their government - where are you on this? Are you offended by this? What are you going to do about this? They are calling out. When their own money, their donations and their taxes that go to the hospital for women and children's health end up in somebody else's pocketbook. Now it has been referred to the police and the government has no official position on this. They want to wait and see what somebody else has to say, whether it's the Auditor General or a volunteer Board of Directors, the government again is doing its best to shift people's attention somewhere else so they don't have to take action, even in the face of such an offensive action at the IWK.

Mr. Speaker, I asked the Premier where the government is on these tax increases for small businesses this morning. As you saw, there is no government position or, if there is one, it's a secret position and we're not allowed to know what it is. Again, an exercise in pointing the finger somewhere else, lowering expectations that anyone will stand up for our small businesses from the government side. This Throne Speech confirms what Nova Scotians were sensing, that this is a government that just wants to make sure they don't expect much from them, and that is not right. No wonder that only 53 per cent of Nova Scotians voted in the last election, when they had been told for four years don't expect much.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most disturbing things about that election was the turnout, something everybody in this House should be concerned about; 53 per cent is not only a new low, it is a new low by a lot. Almost half of the registered voters chose not to vote. They sensed there's some disconnect between what their daily lives are all about and what their political leaders are talking about.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have all the answers as to why that is and we all bear some responsibility for figuring it out, but one thing I do know, when they have a government that tells them not to expect much, they change the channel to something else.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of challenges in Nova Scotia right now. Our economy is stalled, there are job losses that are piling up, our health care system is in crisis, our mental health system is dissolving before our very eyes. When people do stand up and support the health care system, like making a donation to the IWK, they see some of their own money taken from the very services that they had donated it for. Then they see their

government have no position on it, other than that's up to somebody else. No wonder they disengage.

A Throne Speech is supposed to provide a vision of a way forward, a picture of a better day. In the past, governments of all stripes have used their Throne Speech to give people hope that health care will get better, that more doctors will come, that people with mental illness will get the help they need, that young people will have jobs.

What happened to those days, Mr. Speaker? What happened to the times when governments actually showed us a little vision? Now we have a government that thinks the Throne Speech is all about telling people don't expect too much from us, don't expect things to get better, and when there's a problem we're just here to officially point the finger at somebody else. Well, there is a direct tie-in between the way this government operates, the way they write the Throne Speeches, and the low voter turnout that we see in elections today, and that is a shame.

You know, Mr. Speaker, one of the big issues of today is our environment, maintaining our pristine bays and harbours, lowering greenhouse gas emissions into our atmosphere, doing our bit as a province to turn around climate change. It is a big, big issue and, sadly, the government had nothing to say about this big issue in their Throne Speech.

Now some might say that's an omission. Well, it is an omission. The question is, was it a deliberate omission or did they just forget about the environment? Well neither of those two options is a good one, Mr. Speaker, but I'm going to suggest to you that it was deliberate, that it was intentional that the Throne Speech not mention the environment because the Liberal answer on the environment is so wrong and they know it and they want to bury it. They don't want people to pay attention to it.

Mr. Speaker, as we watch hurricane after hurricane, category 4, category 5, and flood after flood hit major cities in our neighbouring country to the south, we know every country has to stand up and do their bit to clean up the environment and the atmosphere, including this country and including this province, and that's what we are committed to. I would hope that's what every Party is committed to and yet we have a Throne Speech that is silent, deliberately silent because how you go about it is what really matters.

We now know from Ottawa and from this provincial Liberal Government that the Liberal answer is to tax people more, to put an extra charge on the essentials of life like home heating fuel, like gas for your car, as if somehow people will just stop heating their home or driving to work and everything will be better. Well, Mr. Speaker, to me that shows that all the Liberals are interested in is using climate change for another tax grab because it is not proven - in fact it's a fallacy - that that will actually improve greenhouse gas emissions, or any other environmental concern, for the very obvious reason that they are taxing the essentials of everyday life in a province that already has the highest taxes in the country, in a province that already has the highest cost of living in the country, combined

with some of the lowest average incomes. Nova Scotians are struggling to pay the bills they have now. They are told we need to act on climate change - we do need to act on climate change - and then they are told the answer is that they have to pay more.

There is no question that in this session of the Legislature this government will bring in a cap-and-trade bill that increases the cost of everyday living and does nothing for the environment because Nova Scotians will just have to suck it up and pay the extra bill. Well that is not good enough for Nova Scotians and their pocketbook and it is not good enough for the environment either, Mr. Speaker. We have the worst of both worlds.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, it's clear where we stand on charging Nova Scotians more. We're against that, we want to find ways to bring the cost of living down, we want to find ways to bring taxes down. We want to find ways to leave a few dollars in their pocketbooks so they can live and prosper here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say on a positive note that the Progressive Conservative caucus will be bringing strong, new environmental legislation to this session of the Legislature to show Nova Scotians how we can do our bit as part of this country and part of this planet to clean up the environment and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, because if you truly care about the emissions into our atmosphere, if you truly care about climate change, then you will regulate that directly, make polluters pay, set real targets for greenhouse gas reduction, set real targets for nitrous oxide reduction and sulfur dioxide reduction, set real targets for mercury emissions directly, and enforce them, Mr. Speaker.

That is the way that Nova Scotia has succeeded before and it is the way we should go about succeeding on environmental improvement in the future, and I look forward to the day in this session where Nova Scotians examine the cap-and-trade carbon pricing plan the Liberals are going to bring in and calculate the effect on their own pocketbook, on gas prices, on home-heating fuel costs, and then look at the package of environmental bills that the Progressive Conservative Party will bring in that don't indirectly talk about the environment through increased taxes but directly improve the environment by regulating the things that matter to Nova Scotians - like keeping our atmosphere clean and our bays and harbours pristine.

That's a clear contrast between the government over there and the Progressive Conservative Opposition and I'm proud of it, as we all should be, because put some numbers around this. Professors of economics at Saint Mary's University have actually done the math; they have taken the greenhouse gas targets that are being imposed on Nova Scotia, from Ottawa, over the next 15 years and backwards calculated what that will mean in gas, per litre; price per litre; and home-heating fuel costs, per litre - 9 cents a litre more on gas; 9 cents a litre more on home-heating fuel. That is on top of the 15.5 cent provincial excise tax and the 10 cent federal excise tax and the 15 per cent HST that we already pay on our gasoline to drive our cars to get to work - on top of it.

I think Nova Scotians would say, well we already have a carbon tax then. We have a carbon tax of 25.5cents excise tax and 15 per cent HST – and, by the way, the HST is actually a tax on top of the other taxes, as immoral as that is. And you know what? They may wish they could cut back on that bill but they have to get to work every day, they have to get to the grocery store, and they have to get to the drug store to fill their prescriptions - and in particular outside the City of Halifax that means driving a car, and the distance doesn't get less but the bill will go up under the cap-and-trade plan of the Liberal Party. That's a bad example but even worse is what's going to happen to people who heat their homes with home-heating fuel.

The government says their cap-and-trade plan is a made-in-Nova Scotia plan. Well, they should have taken a look at what Nova Scotians actually do - 60 per cent of Nova Scotians heat their home with home-heating fuel. We have the highest usage of home-heating fuel in all of Canada, and they're going to get hit with another 9 cents on their fuel costs to heat their house. We saw what happened when power rates went up - we actually had seniors on fixed pensions in their homes, in their apartments, literally closing up rooms and stuffing towels under the door to keep the heat in the few homes that they could afford to heat. That was an unfair hardship that was imposed on those seniors.

Those are the ones who use electricity to heat their homes. That wasn't enough for the Liberal Party, now they're focused on the 60 per cent of us who use home-heating fuel and they want to add 9 cents to our home-heating fuel bill. How many people are going to heat their homes less? I would hope none, because they can't afford to do that. We shouldn't ask them to do that when there is a better way, and the better way is to directly cut down on the emissions that go into the atmosphere - and you know what? Free up our entrepreneurs, free up our major industries, free up the manufacturing base of this province to actually innovate to bring their emissions down. That is how it's supposed to work. Rather than tax people more, look to how we incent our business generators, our job generators, to squeeze under ever-lowering emission targets.

[11:15 a.m.]

That is how we move this province forward and, if there is any doubt, I point to the Environmental Goals and Sustainability Act of 2007, introduced by a Progressive Conservative Government, supported by all Parties, which actually did this very thing - set real targets, have them lower over time, set multi-year commitments, clean up the air.

Nova Scotia is a better place today because of that bill and we have done our bit and are continuing to do our bit for climate change across this country and around the world. And, in fact, the Leader of the Liberal Party, himself, the Premier, has pointed to that action as reason why Nova Scotia deserves a break from Ottawa.

He didn't win that argument because we still have this cap-and-trade trade bill coming. But he pointed to the accomplishment of this better way to try to make his case. I

wish that he had won the argument. It was a good argument; we do have a lot to show for ourselves. Our emissions are down. And now we have international agreements like the Paris Accord which have set new targets for the whole world. We have a proven way forward that does not tax people more. That is what we should be doing. I look forward to the debate when the cap-and-trade legislation comes in, so we can show Nova Scotians the two ways forward on the environment.

Mr. Speaker, there are things in every Throne Speech that we can support, so let me turn to a general area focus that we need to get behind, and that is doing more for the most modest income Nova Scotians. The new disabled Nova Scotia provisions that are pointed out in the Speech from the Throne are a good thing to do, they are a good way forward, and I look forward to legislation to come in the hopes that it matches the rhetoric in the Throne Speech yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, even actions to ensure that Nova Scotians who find themselves on income assistance or who find themselves in need of help from their government are strengthened are a good thing. We want this province to prosper, of course. We also don't want anyone to be left behind as the province grows and prospers in the future. We need to strengthen supports for people who are not able to provide for themselves. That is a good thing.

Having said that, it needs to be matched by a real vision for stronger economic growth and jobs. There is none in this Speech from the Throne. That is where it falls flat because, at the end of the day, for Nova Scotians who are able, the best social program is a job which pays a decent wage, where government taxes their fair share and no more. With the dignity, pride, and self-reliance that comes with that job, I wish the government spent some time on this principle in the Speech from the Throne, but they have not.

Instead, we have three pages on supporting people who don't have jobs. That is good, but it is only good if we actually have a real vision for providing jobs too. How many people who are on income assistance now would rather be standing on their own two feet with a real job and paycheque? A lot of people, Mr. Speaker, and what they want is not more handouts, What they want is that help to get up that first rung on the economic ladder, and then to climb as high as they are able. We support that. We support putting people on their own two feet, giving them tools they need to become self-reliant, giving them the dignity of a real job. There is nothing on that in the Speech from the Throne. And I say that at a time where Statistics Canada in their labour force survey continue to report grim news for the Province of Nova Scotia.

I know that here in downtown Halifax people walk and see that there are a number of cranes up building new buildings and that is a great thing. That is terrific, but that is not a sign of more jobs unfortunately. The Labour Force Survey for Nova Scotia for the month of August - the most recent one - shows that our unemployment rate jumped a whole percentage point, up to 8.9 per cent. That's at a time when the rest of the country is surging

forward with jobs and Nova Scotia is going the other way. How a Throne Speech could be brought to this House that has no plan for economic growth, when our unemployment rate is climbing, is beyond us.

That is not a blip in the statistics, by the way. In August 2013, four short years ago, when this government was on the verge of being elected, 453,700 Nova Scotians were working. Today, unfortunately, only 444,600 Nova Scotians have jobs. That is a loss of 9,100 jobs in the four-year term of this government. That is 9,100 families that don't have a paycheque. That is 9,100 fellow Nova Scotians who have been robbed of the dignity of work, robbed of the opportunity to stand on their own two feet, robbed of a time to be proudly self-reliant as the employment market continues to shrink. That is roughly the labour force of the Town of Truro that has disappeared in the last four years.

I think all Nova Scotians get it, that in addition to the financial hardship that this shows, that's 9,100 fewer people who are also not paying taxes to support our health care system or our education system or our community services programs, among other things.

This government wants to go down the road of taxing the remaining people who are working more with cap-and-trade and, I'm sure, taxing them more when the marijuana legislation finally makes it to this House someday. But where is the vision for growth? Where is the hope that there might be a way to spark our economy and create jobs? Where are the taxes we can lower to get people out creating jobs again? Where are the regulations we can cut back to free up our entrepreneurs to make things happen in our economy? Even when threatened by Ottawa, by a massive tax grab on our small businesses, we have a Premier and a government that won't stand up against that.

Mr. Speaker, 9,100 families in this province are waiting for their government to show them some hope. Yesterday in this Throne Speech was an opportunity to do that, and yet it did not happen.

I will table this document for the benefit of the members, by the way, in case anyone is wondering where this comes from. It is the Labour Force Study that is published monthly by Statistics Canada.

I will say this: when the NDP were in, and jobs were being lost then, they would point to the global recession, or that all of Canada was suffering, or that all of the Western world was suffering. There was some truth to that at the time. It wasn't enough to say "Oh, well, the whole world's in recession, what can you do?", but at least it was a truthful statement.

Now that same report shows that every other province is moving forward, except Newfoundland and Labrador. New Brunswick, P.E.I., Quebec, Ontario, all the Western provinces, B.C., the territories - they're all moving forward. They are growing. This is not some national economic problem that Nova Scotia somehow has gotten caught up in. The

only thing made in Nova Scotia by this government on the economy is the job losses that we are facing while everyone else is surging ahead. I don't think it's a coincidence that our job creators are stuck when we have the highest personal income taxes in the country, the highest sales taxes in the country, and in many places the highest property taxes in the country.

We have been calling on the government to bring forward a growth plan so that we can actually start to build an economy that allows taxes to come down at least to the national average. Mr. Speaker, there's a little hope. There's a little hope. Free up job creators. Put in place strong and clear rules of the game so we can take advantage of our natural resources to create jobs. Give people a break when they take a risk, mortgage their home, and hire their neighbour so that we can have more homemade jobs. But none of that is happening.

In the face of our stagnant economy, the government is looking for new ways to tax those of us who remain. That is a vicious circle. The higher the costs go, the fewer the jobs that come. The higher the costs go on the remainder, the more people leave. That is the vicious circle that we are on.

We want to break that vicious circle. We want to break it and actually turn it into a virtuous circle where the cost of living comes down and the red tape comes down, and the jobs go up, and we can afford to cut the cost of living a little more, so the jobs go up higher, Mr. Speaker. That is the proven way. But under this government, it is not the Nova Scotia way, and 9,100 families know it for sure. Where is the vision for more prosperity? We actually need a government that shows us a little hope.

Let me say this: it doesn't take a miracle. This province has all it needs to succeed. It has all the resources, all the talent, all the universities, the community college. It has all we need to prosper. We have great ports. We are in the middle of multiple great trading patterns. We're part of the North American Free Trade Agreement. We're part of the European free trade agreement. We're in the middle of both.

We make world-class products like the world's best lobster fishery, which is headquartered out of Advocate Harbour, Cumberland County, I might add. (Interruption) There may be a few who disagree on that minor point.

But my point is, we have all it takes. We should be surging forward. We should be world leaders in Europe. We should be world leaders in Mexico and in the United States. We should be world leaders in China, which is actually a good story. Yet jobs are going backwards.

What is it that's holding us back? Is it our natural resources? No, we have great forests, great fisheries, and great potash. You name it, we've got it. We have great trade. We have great ports. What is it that's missing? The Throne Speech actually answered that



question. The Throne Speech answered the question all Nova Scotians are wondering about. With all of the ability and prosperity that is right before our eyes, what is missing? What's missing is a government with the vision and political will to get us there.

That is what the Throne Speech showed today and yesterday, Mr. Speaker. Instead of having a government that gets us going and shows us, "Let's go. The future is that way. We can go get it," we have a government that prefers to tell us why we can't have things, why we can't do things, why we should expect less, why we should just go home and give up.

That should have been the title of the Throne Speech, now that I think about it - Nova Scotia, go home and give up. That's what they should have called the Throne Speech. It summarizes it very well.

[11:30 a.m.]

If you are a teacher or a film worker, Mr. Speaker, you are told to go home and give up. If you are out at a bargaining table looking for a decent wage, you are told to go home and give up. If you don't, we'll impose a solution for you. The courts are going to spend years spending millions of dollars sorting that out.

Now, if you are a small business owner, like the many that I described briefly a moment ago, who has a great idea, who mortgages your house, who works together with your husband or wife to make this business happen, to get it off the ground, who has the nerve to hire a neighbour and put him on the payroll in hopes that this business idea works out, you are told by the Liberals that you are a tax cheat for having the gall to take that risk. You are told basically to go home and give up, that's what the message of the Liberals in Ottawa is.

Or you are a doctor who went through medical school and piled up hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt, whose spouse - your husband or your wife - probably worked while you were going to school. You didn't earn a paycheque until you were over 30 years old and so your working life is maybe 25 years. You've got to pay off your debts, so you incorporate and you recognize the contribution that your family has made to putting you in this great position as a doctor and you are just starting to get out from under that debt, maybe buy a house and you are almost 40 by that time. Then you have a Liberal Government tell you that you are a tax cheat. They are telling you if you are a doctor, go home, give up, we don't appreciate you, we don't support you. That's what the message of the Liberal Government is, Mr. Speaker.

When we have home-grown doctors, whether they are from North Sydney or Weymouth, who have actually gone and gotten their medical degree and earn their license, some of them put up their hands and say I'd like to practise at home. They rightly expect that the Liberal Government will welcome them into their home communities with open

arms, considering that there are so many Nova Scotian families who don't have a doctor in those places and many others, but that's not what happens. Roadblock after roadblock is put in their way. In fact, if you got your medical degree outside the province and then want to come home, you are put at the back of the line. A doctor who wants to be in a rural area, who wants to stay there, who knows the area, who knows the people and wants to provide primary health care, is put at the back of the line.

We have brought this issue to this House many times and there has been no action, Mr. Speaker. Those doctors are told to go home and give up. You know what? Those families in Weymouth, in North Sydney, in Springhill, who show up at the town hall meetings, who register on the government's wait-list for doctors, who write letters to the editor, who cry out for help because they don't have a family doctor - they are basically told by this government to go home and give up too.

Where is the vision? I've got to say this, Mr. Speaker, in the time I have left, making the same promises over and over again is not a vision because sooner or later the people figure this out.

In the 2013 election, the Liberal Party promised a doctor for every Nova Scotian. They promised to extend the Film Tax Credit for five years, guaranteed, so the film industry could grow, among other promises. In 2017, where are we? Fewer families have doctors today than back then; 40,000 fewer by the most recent count, have a doctor today. The Film Tax Credit wasn't extended for five years, it was cut and we have an industry that is one-third the size today that it was then and those jobs are gone, Mr. Speaker.

Well you know it's clearly lost on this government in this Throne Speech but it is not the role of government to tell people to go home and give up. It is the role of government to inspire them, to show them that there is a brighter future, to show them that they have all it takes to stand on their own two feet, to show them that this province has all it takes to be successful, and to give them hope that tomorrow will be better, that family doctors are coming, that mental health will be there, that the jobs for your kids are under way as we speak, and that we can build a better province.

That is what elections are supposed to be about. That is what Throne Speeches are supposed to be about. What happened to those days, Mr. Speaker? In this Throne Speech, Nova Scotians are wondering, where's the vision? The big answer that they got from this government was, there is none. Go home and give up.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MACLELLAN: With the unanimous consent of the House, I request that we revert to the order of business, Introduction of Bills.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

**[INTRODUCTION OF BILLS]**

**Bill No. 3 - Entitled an Act to Repeal Chapter 34 of the Acts of 2015. The Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act. (Ms. Tammy Martin)**

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

**[GOVERNMENT BUSINESS]**

**[GOVERNMENT MOTIONS]**

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

HON. GARY BURRILL: Once in the late 1970s, my wife and I were camping in the southwestern United States. This was at the time of the great gas shortage that was taking place around those years. It was quite a sharp situation, and the President, Jimmy Carter, was going to address the nation on this gas shortage.

Where we were camping, there was only one family that had a radio that was strong enough to bring in the President's address. This was an extended family from rural west Texas who were camping near to us, and they invited us to come over and join their family circle to hear the President's address. The President gave the speech, and then there was quite a silence as everybody turned to an older gentleman who was plainly the opinion-maker in that extended clan. After a few seconds' silence, the older gentleman said, that there were the sorriest dang speech I ever heard.

I was reminded of this proclamation yesterday, as we heard the words of this Liberal Administration expressed by the Lieutenant Governor in the Speech from the Throne, which was as sorry a piece of obfuscatory fluff as any of us is apt to be exposed to. (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Leader of the NDP has the floor.

MR. BURRILL: This sorriness of which I speak has a number of dimensions. I would like to begin by speaking to the dimension of the Throne Speech's sorriness, which is comprised of its empty self-congratulatory tone. A kind of tone which indicates a government, in my view, short both on insight and on self awareness and, thus, unfittingly puffed up and pleased about itself. What could be less appropriate?

Certainly there isn't anything in the record of the government's first term that calls for a great deal of self congratulation. The morale and motivation of the most qualified group of teachers in the history of our province has been undermined by the imposition of

a contract. Over 100,000 people in our province are without a doctor. Emergency rooms are overrun or closed, and hospitals are plugged with patients waiting for non-existent spaces in nursing homes. The film and television business has been thrown into disruptive chaos, leading to the forced exodus of some of the most creative and project-minded, project-capable people in the province.

There's nothing in this administration's May 30<sup>th</sup> election result that calls for a great deal of chest-thumping on their part, either: the loss of seven seats, the support of a total of 21 per cent of eligible voters, parlayed by the absurd vagaries of the first-past-the-post system into a skin-of-your-eyeballs bare majority. It's a moment for something better than triumphalist self-glorification.

It's worth noting that successful organizations, successful companies, and successful governments are all marked by the way they take moments of this kind and make them into moments of renewal and recalibration and reflection. What might that kind of renewal or recalibration look like? It could easily take the form of a new dedication to listening, the form of admitting to past imperfections, or the form of seeking to improve oneself in the spirit of humility and learning. But we look in vain here, in the Speech from the Throne, for this kind of insight.

Rather, for me, this Liberal administration brings to mind the last federal administration of Stephen Harper, for whom the achievement of a majority in the election of 2011 seemed to unleash a streak of authoritarian dogmatism. This Liberal Government is like an oil furnace that has seen better days. You get up in the morning and the house is freezing, and you go down to hit the "reset" button, but when you hit the button, nothing happens. There is a reset failure, and when you have a reset failure, that's when you know you're dealing with a troubled piece of gear.

A wise, prudent government, under wise and prudent leadership, would have taken the moment offered by the renewal of its mandate to reach out and adjust and to freshly reconsider the nature of its path, particularly in light of the terrible setback in our schools that has resulted from the contract imposed earlier this year.

What has been the principal path forged by the current administration since the May 30<sup>th</sup> election? The principal path is the proclamation of Bill No. 148 on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, by which the government took the authoritarian pedal they'd already had to the mat, in the case of teachers, and drove it through the floorboards for the rest of Nova Scotia's public sector. There were, as we all know, two sets of speeches here at the people's House yesterday. There was the Speech from the Throne and there were what perhaps we could call the speeches from the steps, as hundreds of nurses, personal care workers, nursing home workers, and others gathered to demonstrate their dismay at the law that imposes a two-year wage freeze and ends previously-bargained retirement severance payments.

The speeches from the steps were far more edifying than what was on offer here inside this House yesterday, I must tell you. For those members who may have missed my own few comments - which I was very grateful to have amplified through the windows of the Chamber while the House awaited the Lieutenant Governor - I will offer this short summary. The very institutions of democracy, which we uplift and venerate around the Throne Speech, are institutions that have been trampled and diminished - I think it is not an exaggeration to say "spat upon" - by this particular piece of legislation.

[11:45 a.m.]

All across Nova Scotia, in a few short weeks, the people from our communities are going to go and assemble at cenotaphs, and at the heart of those assemblies, they're going to be remembering sacrifices made in wartime for democracy. Part of that democracy is the right to live in a society where the right to freely and fairly bargain is protected. At the same time, it is unfair and, in my judgment, less than moral for a government to say to - let's say - workers in housekeeping departments of nursing homes making \$14.50 an hour that they are not worth the right to bargain a cost-of-living increase, even while the same government declares a budget surplus of \$150 million. To wit is the case that Bill No. 148 is nothing less than an attack on the women of Nova Scotia, who make up 64 per cent of the public sector whose incomes will be frozen by this legislation. The matter was, in the words of my rural west Texas friend years ago, the sorriest dang speech because of many things but also because of its defining absences and its omissions.

Every speech takes its meaning from its context, but what was the context of this Speech from the Throne? Its context is a September in which we've learned that Nova Scotia is nowhere near the middle of the pack when it comes to the area of child poverty, that rather child poverty in Nova Scotia is the worst across the country. The context of this Speech from the Throne is a September in which we have learned that Nova Scotia is nowhere near the national average in terms of the financial accessibility of post-secondary education but that, in fact, we have the single fastest-rising tuition anywhere in Canada. The context of this Speech from the Throne is a summer just past in which we learned that personal insolvencies have increased dramatically in Nova Scotia this year and that 7,500 full-time jobs have been lost in the province alone just in this season which has just concluded.

All this struggle for so many people, all this difficulty to open up doors of opportunity, as we hold this present to our minds, a question can't help but arise for us. What have the newly elected Liberals brought forward to address the suffering of the economic crisis that is before us? The answer is that, since their re-election, the main economic fiscal initiative of this government has been to declare a budget surplus of \$150 million, thereby in my judgment, demonstrating clearly that for them the value of an accumulated budget surplus is something that looms larger than the people's unanswered needs and pain.

I'm reminded of the current situation in the United Kingdom politically, where the Conservative Party, in the June election, was much diminished despite managing to hang on to power but where their downward trajectory is plain and where this has not seemed to bring about a great deal of reflection on the limits of their emphasis on achieving a balanced budget at any cost. This prompted one recent commentator to say that there's all the world of difference between a political Party which is inclined - the word he used - in the direction of a fiscally conservative approach and a political Party, on the other hand, which becomes fixated on, obsessed with, balanced budgets.

That fixation, rather, he wrote, is a sign of a waning political formation, grasping about dogmatically as it declines. What we have before us in Nova Scotia is a government that has moved from an inclination in a fiscally conservative direction to a fixation on, obsession with, budget surpluses. The effect of which is that the business of our province is being conducted by a government which has its earplugs in when it comes to the cries and the needs and the financially founded suffering of the people of the province.

If I may formulate this in the language of my own tradition, the biblical tradition, I am reminded of a place in the New Testament where Jesus is speaking about the essential responsiveness of the Creator to people's needs. He says, "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?" This is exactly the posture of the present government. The people of Nova Scotia are asking for the bread, the fish, the social investments that will make it possible to pay the rent, to find a family doctor, to be able to improve your picture in the future by affordably going to school beyond Grade 12, to be able to find a job that pays you enough for an apartment, not just a room. What have our people received? The stones, the snakes, the cold comfort of a greater accumulated surplus in the provincial budget.

Now this Speech from the Throne is the sorriest dang speech because of all the needed investments in people's lives that are not being made and which the speech leaves hidden and fogged out from our view. What is any sorrier than a discourse which is empty because it grasps no better future, because it is absent of the element of vision?

For quite a number of years I was part of a group of parents in the upper part of the Musquodoboit Valley who every couple of years would gather up all the 12-year-olds, 13-year-olds and 14-year-olds in our community and take them on a trip to Ottawa where they could experience first-hand the institutions of parliamentary democracy. One of the things we were always at pains to see that all of the kids who made this trip were made aware of, was when they went up in the elevator in the Peace Tower at the House of Commons, they would be made aware of the place where it is carved in the stonework of our Parliament's Peace Tower these words, "Where there is no vision the people perish."

The Speech from the Throne that is before us speaks, in my view, of a government which is perishing in just this sense, a government which is something like what the author

Ernst Bloch was talking about once when he said that sometimes there are institutions that might just as well run up a flag that says, hurray, we've run out of ideas.

What an irony that this should be the case on the week when Allan J. MacEachen is laid to rest, when all of Nova Scotia is standing with respect before the breadth of economic grasp and social vision that there was about his life's work. When the Guaranteed Income Supplement was being instituted do you not think there were many, many voices that said, oh, that might be a good thing, that supplement for older people's incomes but we can't afford it, can we? And when Medicare was being brought forward, do you not think there were voices that said, oh, that would be a wonderful thing but it can't be done because they haven't got the money. Of course, there were such voices.

What a sad thing it is to look out across a government here today that is such a washed-out, ossified, mini-shadow even of its own Liberal tradition, that its vision of a future is limited to hand-wringing talk about budget surpluses, budgets being balanced, about a fiscal plan. It's the sorriest dang speech because at every level it speaks the language of its authors, which is the discourse of disappointment.

I want to register, Mr. Speaker, the truth that this is not the only language that is being spoken here in this Assembly, that I and our caucus in the New Democratic Party believe there are doors that it is within the capacity of our people to open, doors which open to better futures, futures with communities that are re-enlivened, futures with people taking hold of the steering wheels of their lives and moving them in directions that are more promising and engaging, futures where people's lives are circumscribed less by the great power of grim necessity and characterized instead more by interest and inclusion and may I even say, perhaps, by hope.

What, after all, was it that made it possible for our grandparents and our great grandparents coming out of the Depression and the war, to open up the doors represented by pensions, the baby bonus, unemployment insurance? Did they have some magical capacities that we're lacking? What was it about our parents and grandparents' generations right in the midst of the years when the western world was awash with babies? What was it that made it possible for them to open up doors represented by Medicare? Did they have some ability to press things forward that has since gone missing? I don't think so. What they did not have to contend with, however, is the weight that sits on us, the weight of having heard from so many different angles of the compass: give up, this is as good as it's going to get. You're booked into the no-future hotel; hunker down, and try to have a few not-too-unpleasant days, for nothing else is possible because we can't afford it.

Let me say something as sensible as it is obvious. Of course, we can afford it. Of course, we can afford to build a Nova Scotia where not one person lays awake at night and worries about how they're going to possibly get a doctor to attend to their multiple medications. Of course, we can afford to build a Nova Scotia where no young couple is

unable to see their way forward to starting a family because all of their mental space is occupied by their crushing educational debt.

Of course, we can afford to craft a Nova Scotia where no child grows up in a home where the home is so constrained by the absence of enough, that the lights of engagement and the lights of delight begin to go out in the child before they even ever get a decent chance to start. I know this is true and we know that this is true. (Applause) We know this is true because we have seen it in the amazing resilience of our people that is evident every day all around us.

My own family comes from Raynardton and Kempt and Pleasant Lake and Tusket and Milton, all in Yarmouth County, where they operated sawmills and farmed and worked on the floor of the cotton mill. I've certainly seen it there and I've certainly seen it in all of them. I was myself brought up in Berwick and Spryfield, where the courage and the tenacity of everyday life has always been in great supply.

I served two decades as the community United Church minister in Upper Musquodoboit, where despite the fact there were no such organizations in Nova Scotia at the time, the people built the first funeral co-op in the province, which now serves 30 communities in central Nova Scotia and has over 3,000 members. I served until becoming Leader of this Party, a new church in downtown Sydney comprised of Baptist and United congregations, a type of union which has not been accomplished anywhere in Canada in this form but which stands as a beacon of strength today against the forces of decline of civil society that are in ample supply in industrial Cape Breton.

We are in Nova Scotia a little bit like the Hants County poet, the late Alden Nowlan who was himself a very big man and who had several poet colleagues who were also very large and thick shouldered. He was asked once, why are the Nova Scotia poets all so big and Nowlan said, oh, that's easy: because the small ones all get killed off. If we were not the determined, flexible, multifaceted, co-operative, independent, and tenacious people that we in Nova Scotia are, a century and a half of marginalization and neglect within Confederation would have had us folded up a long, long time ago, but we are still here. It is an offence to all the struggles by which we've gotten to where we are to suggest that we don't have the capacity, because we do, to open up the doors to something so much fairer, kinder, more decent, and better.

I want to ask you to come with me in your imaginations - as I bring these reflections towards a conclusion - I want to ask you to come with me in your imaginations down a road. The road in question is the Sydney-Glace Bay highway.

AN HON. MEMBER: Should we close our eyes?

MR. BURRILL: No, you can do it with your eyes open. (Laughter) I want you to come with me heading east out the Sydney-Glace Bay highway, and when you get to the



Tim's in Reserve on your left, I want you to make the right with me that goes down in the Passchendaele direction.

[12:00 noon]

As we go down and make that direction we don't go very far, I want to invite you to come with me and make a left. The left you make off that road is going to take us into Greenwood cemetery. We're going to drive in Greenwood cemetery a little way and then we're going to circle to the right and there we're going to see the headstone of the greatest Nova Scotian, James Bryson McLachlan, the leader and defender of the miners of Cape Breton. I want to invite you in our imaginations to just get out, once we come there, and perhaps we might want to put a rose beside the headstone. Then I want to invite you to step back and to look at the headstone and to take in the words that are inscribed there. They are from the biblical Book of Proverbs, "open your mouth . . . and plead the cause of the poor and needy".

This Throne Speech and this government fails to follow this instruction and we in the New Democratic Party will not be making this same mistake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. The House will meet again on Monday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Following the daily routine, we will move to the order of business, Address in Reply.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is to meet again on Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> of September, 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

We stand adjourned.

[The House rose at 12:02 p.m.]