



House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS**

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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

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

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**First Session**

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2017**

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House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2017**

**Sixty-third General Assembly**

**First Session**

**1:00 P.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, in the west gallery this afternoon we have a friend joining us. I know that many members of the House of course know Joyce Nickerson. She is celebrating her 85<sup>th</sup> birthday today, so Happy Birthday to Joyce Nickerson. (Standing Ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: We'll begin 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 Education and Early Childhood Development.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, on Monday of this week I had the good fortune to visit Hillside Park Elementary School in Lower Sackville, and I'd like to thank the MLA from that area for joining us. While there, I joined a pre-Primary class to announce that by the end of this week all 50 pre-Primary classes the province has committed to will open on time.



The government had an ambitious timeline to meet, and we could not have done it without the hard work and dedication of staff from across the education system who worked days, evenings, and weekends during the last several months to make sure that our children have this opportunity this year, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, today I thank those individuals and groups that made this possible, from the Early Years branch at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. I thank Janet Lynn Huntington, Denise Stone, Anne-Marie Smith, and Jill Piers. I also thank the school boards, a thank you to the superintendents, principals, human resource staff, program directors, the school board communication staff, the new pre-Primary managers and early childhood educators and the many people and staff who helped to register the children, connect with the families, and have these classrooms set up and ready to go so that 818 members of the Class of 2031 have access to this program which can be life-changing for them. Thank you so much.

### **GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 248**

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

Whereas today, September 27<sup>th</sup>, is World Tourism Day, a day dedicated by the United Nations to fostering awareness of tourism and its social, cultural, political, and economic value; and

Whereas Tourism Nova Scotia continues to work with industry to grow tourism revenues and maximize the value of tourism to our economy while promoting social, cultural, and environmental best practice; and

Whereas visitation in Nova Scotia increased by 8 per cent in 2016, and 2017 is shaping up to be another banner year for tourism in this beautiful province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature recognize and congratulate Nova Scotians around this province who make our tourism industry so exceptional.

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.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 249**

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, if I could preface my motion by acknowledging the bag of books that was on your desk, that is what this refers to. I'd also like to thank the member for Pictou Centre for his support of this initiative.

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

Whereas the Adopt-a-Library Literacy Program, established and operated by RCMP Constable John Kennedy, in partnership with the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library, provides donations of books to schools, libraries, and family resource centres; and

Whereas the Adopt-a-Library program, through its recognition of the links between low rates of literacy, poverty, and crime, functions as both an educational initiative and a crime-prevention program; and

Whereas on this day, September 27<sup>th</sup>, the Adopt-a-Library program will donate a bag of books to every member of this House to distribute to families within their constituency;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly express their appreciation for the donations provided by the Adopt-a-Library Literacy Program and commend Constable John Kennedy and the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library for their dedication to crime prevention and to promotion of literacy in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

#### **Bill No. 7 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 10 of the Acts of 1994-95. The Workers' Compensation Act. (Hon. Labi Kousoulis)**

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

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition on an introduction.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I introduce my motion, I'd like to make a number of introductions to the House.

Joining us in your gallery are the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Prince Edward Island, Jamie Fox; the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of New Brunswick, Blaine Higgs; their chiefs of staff, Ernie Hudson and Dominic Cardy; the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency Critic for the Conservative Party of Canada, Rob Moore; and the boss of all of us, Janet Fryday Dorey, who is a key organizer for PCs and Conservatives in Atlantic Canada. (Applause)

### **NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 250**

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

Whereas proposed small business tax increases by the federal government will have a devastating impact on Nova Scotia by jeopardizing jobs and driving doctors out of the province;

Therefore be it resolved:

(1) That there is hereby established a special committee to develop a strategy to deal with the crippling impact of these tax hikes;

(2) That the special committee of this House is composed of three members of the government, two members of the Official Opposition, and one member of the NDP;

(3) That the membership in this special committee is ancillary to the member's duties and no additional compensation for the members, the chair, or vice-chair is payable; and

(4) That members of the special committee will report their findings by December 31, 2017.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'll table that.

[1:15 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The notice is tabled.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, with the unanimous consent of the House, would you please revert to the order of business, Introduction of Bills.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

#### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That's not the first time that Mrs. Nickerson has gotten me into trouble I assure you.

**Bill No. 8 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 44 of the Acts of 2005. The Pre-primary Education Act. (Hon. Zach Churchill)**

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

#### **STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

#### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: PICTOU CO. DIALYSIS UNITS - INCREASE**

HON. PAT DUNN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nova Scotia has the highest rates of dialysis in the country. Demand for dialysis services in Nova Scotia is increasing at a rate of 2 per cent to 3 per cent a year. It's a treatment that takes over your kidney functions if

those organs stop doing their job. Sixteen people from Pictou County are receiving dialysis with a wait-list of seven people . . .

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

MR. DUNN: . . . wishing to have this treatment at home. The seven patients on the waiting list must travel to Antigonish or Truro three times a week for their treatment. These patients continue to be concerned about work and travel implications associated with this schedule. Today, I'm asking the Minister of Health and Wellness to increase the number of dialysis units for the County of Pictou.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

### **PHOENIX YOUTH PROGS. - ANNIV. (30<sup>th</sup>)**

HON. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, Phoenix Youth Programs celebrated 30 years of providing individualized supports and services for young people aged 11 to 24, their families, and communities. Phoenix estimates that since its 1987 founding it has touched the lives of over 10,000 youth and family members through the programs and services of the organization. Programs and services include advocacy, youth and family therapy, housing support, money management, and much more. This includes the Phoenix Centre for Youth which is located in the constituency of Halifax Chebucto. I want to congratulate Phoenix youth programs on their 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and look forward to the next 30 years of the contributions of this exceptional organization.

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

### **YANG, RYAN - MUSICAL ACHIEVEMENTS**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Ryan Yang of Beechville. For the past seven years, Ryan has achieved the highest marks in the province for his remarkable piano playing at every grade level from Grade 1 through to Grade 8. This year, Ryan won the Musical Medal Award for the eighth time at the Celebration of Talent Concert held June 17<sup>th</sup>. Ryan gives credit and thanks to his piano teacher, Barbara Myers of Hubley for her dedication to music and her students. I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Ryan on his outstanding achievements to date and wish him all the very best in the future. Thank you.

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

**CLARK'S HBR. PEEWEE AA FOGGIES BASEBALL TEAM  
- CHAMPIONSHIP**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to congratulate the Clark's Harbour Peewee AA Foggies baseball team on their recent championship win in Conception Bay, Newfoundland. The small-town team never thought they'd go far representing Nova Scotia as the provincial champs winning the 13 Under AA Atlantics on September 18<sup>th</sup>. They defeated New Brunswick - sorry, Blaine - 10-0 in the championship game. The Foggies have a season record of 32 wins, seven losses, and a tie. The team had worked extremely hard and has accomplished outstanding results. I am pleased to extend congratulations to the Clark's Harbour Foggies and wish them many more wins in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: It is worth noting that the Clark's Harbour Foggies beat my son's AA peewee team en route to that title so congratulations to the Foggies.

The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**MEDWAY COMMUN. FOREST CO-OPERATIVE - MGT. PLAN**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, again remembering National Forest Week, I am going to highlight an organization that sees the forest - with its recreational, ecological, and economic values - for the trees.

The Medway Community Forest Co-operative manages 15,000 hectares in Annapolis County. It is governed by a board of directors, some of whom come with a primarily social agenda, some environmental, and some economic. All together they manage the forest for the community's values. I have been struck in my few months as Natural Resources spokesperson for the NDP caucus by how often this organization is mentioned to me by people in all corners of the province. They're watching the experiment and how the government will support it. There are challenges - too short a lease and too small an area of land. Most crucially, Medway Community Forest needs an approved management plan even though it doesn't follow the status quo.

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

**GREY, ANNA - RCL CADET MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE**

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: I rise today to recognize Anna Grey, the Cadet Medal of Excellence winner.

Anna was chosen to represent Atlantic Canada in a Canadian delegation exchange to the United Kingdom last month. Through the International Sea Cadet Association, Anna was chosen to travel to London at the start of August for a three-week expedition, where

she took part in a wide variety of cadet exercises and activities. Anna was able to share her own skills with other cadets from all over the world, as well as learn new techniques from them.

To be awarded the Royal Canadian Legion Cadet Medal of Excellence is an extreme honour, especially to someone as young as Anna, who is a student at Halifax West High School. This award is given to members who demonstrate greatness in society outside of the cadet program. To be qualified for this award, Anna had to meet all the training requirements of her squadron, participate in multiple community service events, and display qualities that better the cadet's squadron. It's clear, through receiving this award, that Anna is regarded as a role model to her fellow peers and advisers.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the members of this House of Assembly to join me in recognizing Anna on her recent accomplishments and wish her all the best in the future.

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

#### **CHAPMAN-GOREY, MIKE & ADRIANNE - MUSICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

MR. KEITH BAIN: The talent in our province is astonishing and recognized worldwide. Michael Gorey and Adrienne Chapman-Gorey, a married couple better known as the Cape North Duo, are quickly establishing a name for themselves throughout Cape Breton and beyond.

Mike and Adrienne recently released their third CD, entitled The Family Album. The album features their exceptional talent both in singing, musical instrumentation, and original songwriting - a blend of Celtic and folk music drawn from their Cape Breton roots. The duo is getting radio coverage and they're performing for the second consecutive year in the Celtic Colours International Festival.

I rise today to ask all members of this Legislature to join me in congratulating Mike and Adrienne and wishing them many years of success, and to thank them both for sharing their gift of music.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

#### **WATSON, SHANNON ROSE: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: I rise today to honour the life and mark the passing of a brave young woman and resident of Dartmouth South, Shannon Rose Watson.

Shannon was an artist, teacher, mother, and entrepreneur whose activities touched many lives, including my own. Shannon's release from the body that had rapidly been failing her came Monday after a lengthy and remarkably brave battle with cancer, a battle

- although she might have described it as a dance - that was waged on her very own terms. Although she spent her earlier life in Western Canada, Dartmouth was very much her chosen home and one to which she contributed immensely.

She leaves behind her devoted husband, Ryan, and two young daughters - Katarina, age 9; and Tomika, age 5. In her final days, she was able to accompany them to their first day of school at the Shambala School, where she was formerly the art teacher, which brought her tremendous joy. Her presence and spirit will be missed by all who knew her.

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

**BILLARD, ALLAN: BOOK PUBLICATION - CONGRATS.**

MR. BILL HORNE: I rise today to ask all members of the House of Assembly to please join me in congratulating my friend and constituent, Allan Billard, on the publication of his latest book, *Port of Call: Tall Ships Visit the Maritimes*. This book could not have come at a better time, tourism being at an all-time high and this summer being Rendez-Vous 2017, with over 30 tall ships visiting Maritime ports.

Allan is the author of two books on Nova Scotia waterfalls, as well as *Beaches of Nova Scotia*, and *Lighthouses of Nova Scotia*. Once again he has successfully shown the beauty of Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**HOVELL, DAVID: 4-H CAN. CHAIR - APPT.**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate David Hovell of Port Williams on becoming the Chair of 4-H Canada. David operates North America's only winery tourism destination experience aboard a traditional British double-decker bus. He holds a variety of business interests and he is a former Executive Director of the Wolfville Business Development Corp. His 4-H history dates back to 1978 as a member of the Cornwallis Project 4-H Club. David has volunteered with 4-H in Nova Scotia since 1988. In 2006, he was elected a trustee of the Canadian 4-H Foundation, later serving as its Chair.

David's proudest moment in his 4-H career was when his daughter, Taylor, joined Cornwallis Project 4-H Club. Now he's a 4-H dad.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in congratulating David Hovell on this prestigious appointment.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.



**IKEA: OPENING - RECOGNIZE**

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize that today marks the official opening of Ikea's new metro location in Dartmouth North. This is the first time in over 30 years that Ikea has operated in Nova Scotia, employing 250 people in a store the size of four football fields. This is also the first LEED-certified Ikea in Canada and the store will feature a live wall with green and yellow plants and use solar energy to reduce its electric heating needs.

I was at the grand opening this morning and it is a beautiful store. Unfortunately, the lineups were too long at the cafeteria and I didn't get a chance to sample the world-famous meatballs.

I would like to welcome Ikea to our community and hope for a long-term and mutually beneficial relationship between its business and local customers.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**EAST & NORTH PRESTON ET AL: LAND TITLE DISPUTE  
- PRO BONO LAWYERS**

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, today was an historic day for the people of East and North Preston, Cherry Brook, Lincolnville, and Sunnyville as government moved forward with a clear plan to settle a 54-year-old land title dispute.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to recognize the 12 pro bono lawyers who worked for two years on behalf of the communities, the Preston Land Titles Initiative. In particular, I'd like to single out Matthew Moir, single partner at Weldon McInnis and Theresa Graham, a lawyer from Wickwire Holm. Both Theresa and Matthew, whom I proudly call sister and brother-in-law, did what they always do, which is when they see an injustice they do everything in their power to correct it. I am proud to call you both family and congratulations to everyone involved on the historic day.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**CUMB. CO. BUSINESSES: COBEQUID PASS TOLLS - IMPACT**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw members' attention to the impact the tolls on the Cobequid Pass have on Cumberland County businesses. On average, it costs a Cumberland County business that ships wood to other areas of the province over \$7,400 more per year than businesses that don't use the toll highway. This government condemned businesses to more years of higher costs when they extended the date before the debt will be paid in full.

Mr. Speaker, this tax is unfair to businesses in Cumberland County. The tolls need to be removed as soon as possible for all businesses and citizens of Nova Scotia. It is only fair.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**MACPHEE CTR. FOR CREATIVE LEARNING - RECOGNIZE**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning on Queen Street in Dartmouth who held their community session last night. The centre serves youth between the ages of 12 and 19 with free after-school programs. It is a welcoming haven for youth who don't quite fit into the box at school. They are mentored in music, drawing, and performance but also have the opportunity to learn about journalism, gender identity, and anything that tickles their fancy. Learning about the arts on their own terms re-engages youth in school and helps them realize their potential.

MacPhee recognizes that youth are an asset, not a liability. It is a place where youth can show up as they are and know they will be accepted. Every year it is the youth who decide how best to run the centre and help themselves get what they need from it and it is working. One parent said she couldn't be happier when she sees her daughter with friends at MacPhee. Her daughter can't wait to get there after school and doesn't want to leave in the evening. It's a safe space, said one student.

Please join me in thanking the MacPhee Centre for being a beacon for youth in Dartmouth and beyond.

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

**ST. MARGARETS BAY AREA RAILS TO TRAILS ASSOC.:  
TRAIL IMPROVEMENT - CONGRATS.**

MR. HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the St. Margaret's Bay Area Rails to Trails Association on their successful submission to the Connect2 Grant Program earlier this summer. St. Margaret's Bay residents are now better connected to the Hammonds Plains Road with support from the province's Connect2 Sustainable Transportation Grant Program which provided a \$20,000 grant to resurface a section of the St. Margaret's Bay trail. The renewed and flatter path between Round Lake Bridge and Hammonds Plains Road bridge will make it safer to walk, run, and cycle.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of the Legislature to join me in congratulating the St. Margaret's Bay Area Rails to Trails Association for their ongoing hard work to improve this trail, accessible to all.

[1:30 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**BELLIVEAU, CLAIRE: ACCOMPLISHMENTS - ACKNOWLEDGE**

MR. TIM HALMAN: I rise today to acknowledge Claire Belliveau. Claire is a grade 12 IB student in Dartmouth East. She is a long-time volunteer at Pier 21, and devotes much of her time to preserving and promoting Canada's military history. Claire travelled to Europe with Prince Andrew High School in April, 2017, to partake in the Vimy 100<sup>th</sup> ceremony. She is on the board of directors for the Canadian Youth Remembrance Society. She was one of the 15 students across Canada selected as the 2017 recipients of the Vimy Foundation's Beaverbrook Vimy Prize. That gave her the opportunity to travel to France for two weeks in August to study Canada's efforts and accomplishments during the First and Second World Wars. Claire is playing a key role in keeping the flame of remembrance alive and well. I ask all members to join me in commending her on her actions.

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

**BURTON, CATHY: COMMITMENT - THANK**

MR. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Cathy Burton of Hammonds Plains. Cathy began her career as a physical education teacher, went on to teach in the classroom and now she is a vice-principal.

During these years, she also coached many school teams and began coaching outside of the school. For disclosure, Ms. Burton taught me Grade 7 and was my track and volleyball coach. Cathy began coaching ringette at the club level and eventually became part of the coaching staff for the Canada Games girls ringette teams for both 2011 and 2013. This year, Cathy was involved with the girls soccer team at Canada Games as team manager. She brought a wealth of experience as a parent and a fan, as an athlete, and coach of previous games.

Cathy gave an inspiring speech at the rally held before the team left for the games. Cathy has given herself tirelessly to youth and sports. And even now as her own girls are off on their own or in university, she spends countless hours making a difference in the lives of youth.

I ask all members of the house to congratulate Cathy and thank her for her commitment.

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

**CHIGNECTO-CENTRAL REG. SCH. BD:  
STAND UP, SPEAK OUT CAMPAIGN - COMMEND**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: I would like to commend the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board for its annual Stand Up, Speak Out campaign against bullying and the expansion this year to include the five pillars of social justice: race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and abilities.

Curiosity was sparked in August with the placement of seven coloured doors in Elmsdale, Amherst, New Glasgow and Truro. Components of the open door, open Mind project include decoration of doors by students this Fall and a social justice art installation in the spring, and will be the springboard for important conversation. The school board recognizes that the message - not of tolerance, acceptance or embrace, but of equality - must be embedded in youth to have a lasting impact as adults.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**AMOS PEWTER - CRYSTAL TOURISM AWARD**

MS SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: I would like to congratulate Amos Pewter of Mahone Bay on receiving the Crystal Tourism Award for tourism business of the year during the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia's summit in Halifax.

Amos Pewter maintains time-honoured pewter practices to create high-quality giftware for locals and tourists alike. Creating designs that honour the nature and the coastlines that visitors travel to Nova Scotia to enjoy. The Amos Pewter store in Mahone Bay offers demonstrations and open workshop areas that enable visitors to share in the creation process. These unique experiences form a memorable experience with customers and create lasting memories for years to come.

Amos Pewter was established in 1974 and this well-established business continues to thrive providing giftware that reflects the beauty of our province.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask that you and members of this House of Assembly please join me in congratulating Amos Pewter on the Crystal Tourism Award and in wishing them well in the future economic endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**MCLEAN, LLOYD/HAUGHAN, ANDREA: RIDE FOR REESE - APPLAUD**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the very important event of Light the Night Walk in support of the Leukemia and Lymphoma

Society of Canada and to pay respect to Lloyd McLean and Andrea Haughan of Lyons Brook, on their journey for Ride for Reese.

This couple took on an exciting and inspiring adventure to bring awareness and to fundraise for Team Reese in the hopes of raising \$25,000. Lloyd and Andrea began their journey in early August, 2017, from Toronto Sick Kids Hospital and pedalled their bikes to the IWK in Halifax and then to the Pictou waterfront. They chose this routine in honour of tracing the footsteps of Reese, Andrea's goddaughter, while she was undergoing cancer treatment in 2012 for leukemia.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to applaud Lloyd and Andrea on a job well done and to pay tribute to Reese, the beautiful young girl who survived cancer.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

**BELLA ROSE ARTS CTR.: STAFF/BD. MEMBERS - RECOGNIZE**

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the staff and board members of the Bella Rose Arts Centre. The local theatre has been a hub for local talent for our community for many years. However, this year under the direction of newly-appointed board chair Doug MacDonald and theatre manager Missy Ryan, the centre will be launching a series of new programs.

Located inside Halifax West High School, the Bella Rose Arts Centre provides a space for school events such as assemblies and coffee houses, as well as an arena for drama students to showcase their talent.

As part of their new plan, the centre will be open for public non-profit organizations to rent the space for an affordable price. This, as well as many other programs, is an attempt to meet the goal of making the space an inclusive place to learn and admire the arts.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that members of this House of Assembly join me in recognizing the Bella Rose Arts Centre in their recent developments and wishing them the best in their future endeavours.

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

**CRAIG, JASON: SACKVILLE COMMUN. GARDEN - CONGRATS.**

MR. BRAD JOHNS: I rise today to congratulate project manager Jason Craig of the Sackville Community Garden. I'd like to recognize Jason for planting the seeds that led to the flourishing of the Sackville Community Garden. Mr. Craig had a dream of bringing fresh, organic vegetables to residents, along with the satisfaction that comes with growing food for your own family.

Mr. Craig's vision included those with mobility issues. In planning the garden he ensured that the paths were wide and the beds were raised so that even those with mobility issues would still be able to experience the joy that comes with planting your own garden.

I'd like to thank Mr. Craig for all his hard work.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**BUTLER, MICHAEL: THEATRICAL CAREER - CONGRATS.**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, if you have ever had the pleasure of attending the local theatre performance in the Valley recently, chances are good that you were entertained by Wolfville's Michael Butler. Within a span of seven years, Mr. Butler has acted in, directed or stage managed over 50 plays. His passion for community theatre and his love of entertaining are extraordinary. Whether it be through his work on the stage, his writing in a community newspaper or singing and dancing as he serves coffee at a local café, most residents know Mike. You might say he is centre stage in our community.

I invite all members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Mike on his prolific theatre career thus far and thank him for the seemingly boundless enthusiasm and creativity he shares with his community and this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**INVERNESS CONS. MEM. HOSP. AUX. - FUNDRAISING**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Many hands working with continuous generosity, this is the story of the Inverness Consolidated Memorial Hospital Auxiliary. How many people have benefited from the services provided as a result of the thousands of dollars they have raised over the years.

Formed in February 1977, at the time of the opening of the new Inverness Hospital, this organization brought together the Inverness County Memorial Auxiliary and the Saint Mary's Ladies Aid. Their goal was to raise funds for the purchase of hospital equipment. Their work made it possible to have the equipment and services to offer the care people needed on western Cape Breton Island close to home.

Tea sales, spring flings and the hospital gift shop raised in excess of \$1 million over the past 40 years, small amounts raised continuously to make a big difference for local health care. Let us recognize the contributions of all Inverness Consolidated Memorial Hospital Auxiliary members past and present - thank you for caring.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

**TASTEE FREEZE - ANNIV. (50<sup>th</sup>)**

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to acknowledge a small business in my constituency that recently celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Tastee Freeze in Hebbville has been a family-owned and operated establishment since it opened its doors on July 12, 1967. First opened by Roy and Jean Corkum, they eventually passed the business on to their son Douglas and his wife JoAnne.

This seasonal takeout has diner-style food and some of the best ice cream you will find. Community members joked that we all know summer is just around the corner when the Tastee Freeze opens.

I would ask the members of the House of Assembly to please join me - and do take the opportunity to frequent the Tastee Freeze - in celebrating the Corkum family on this amazing milestone, and wishing them the best of luck for the next 50 years.

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

**MITTON, SARAH: CAN. GAMES MEDAL - CONGRATS.**

MS. KIM MASLAND: I rise today to congratulate Sarah Mitton of Brooklyn, Queens County, on her gold medal victory in shot put at the Canada Games in Winnipeg. Sarah threw a personal best of 15.61 metres on August 3<sup>rd</sup> to claim Nova Scotia's first gold medal of the games. Sarah then travelled to Taiwan, where she advanced to the finals and finished 10<sup>th</sup> overall at the World University Games, throwing a new personal best of 16.32 metres.

It is a true honour to be able to congratulate this dedicated young athlete and acknowledge her achievements.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

**ZATZMAN, STEVE, QC: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

HON. KELLY REGAN: I would like to take a moment to tell you about a special Nova Scotian who was a friend to many here on this side of the House.

Steve Zatzman, Q.C., was a familiar face in legal circles here in Halifax. He practised for many years in Dartmouth with his best friend, Andrew Wolfson. Andrew says they never had an argument in all their decades of working together - imagine that.

Steve's wife, Arlene, died in her 30s. Steve stepped up to raise three bright accomplished children - Daniel, and twins Renee and Elana. They, along with his daughter-in-law Julia and grandson, Austin, were the delight of his life.

Steve was involved in many causes - Beth Israel Synagogue, Camp Kadimah, and the Liberal Party. Many of us here in this House of Assembly and others in the House of Commons were beneficiaries of his advice and support.

Steve died in May at age 65. At his recent memorial many people described him as a “*mensch*,” a person of integrity and honour - the word describes him perfectly.

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

### **HARBOUR VIEW HOSP.: DAY PROG. - RECOGNIZE**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: I rise today to recognize the Harbour View Hospital adult day program and its one-million-step program. Members of the program wore pedometers, and their numbers were recorded daily. The goal was to collectively reach one million steps. The competition between the 60 participants really got these seniors moving. There was a remarkable change in the mental and physical activity of all those involved.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in this program for the positive change it has produced.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

### **BARNHILL, WENDELL/RANDY: RETIREMENT - BEST WISHES**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, in June of 1921, Charles Homer Barnhill purchased what became known as Barnhill's Grocery Store in Debert. In 1961, his son Wendell bought the store, which still operated in the traditional style, where the customer brought the store owner a shopping list and the merchant filled it for them. In 1983, when Wendell decided to retire, his son Randy moved home with his family and took over the business. On August of this past year, 2017, after 96 years, this family business closed its doors. It will be greatly missed not only as a business but also as an information centre for the community, whether it's local news, when the power will be back on after a storm, what the Legion is serving for its weekly supper, or whether there are any apartments for rent.

Randy is hoping to spend more time with his 89-year-old father. I ask members of the House of Assembly to join me in wishing them both an enjoyable time together after their many years of dedication and service to their community.

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



**CONNOR, COL. SID: 12 WING SHEARWATER CO. - WELCOME**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: I rise with great pride that my constituency welcomes Colonel Sid Connor, the new commanding officer at 12 Wing Shearwater.

Colonel Connor joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1991. He earned his wings and became an air combat systems officer in 1993. Col. Connor holds a Bachelor of Military Arts and Science and a Master of Defence Studies, both from the Royal Military College of Canada, as well as Master of Strategic Studies from the United States Air University. The 12 Wing change of command ceremony was impressive and enlightening, and left a resonating sense of gratitude and we look forward to celebrating our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary next year.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to welcome Colonel Connor to Shearwater and our constituency, and we wish him well in his new posting.

[1:45 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

**ATL. INTL. AIR SHOW (2017): ORGANIZERS ET AL - COMMEND**

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I rise today to commend the efforts of the many organizations, volunteers, businesses, sponsors, spectators and, of course, the performers who made the 2017 Atlantic Canada International Air Show such a success.

On the final weekend of August, the skies were clear at 14 Wing Greenwood and across the Annapolis Valley, provided a clear and unobstructed view for a weekend filled with stunning aerial performances, including a spectacular showing of grace, speed, and precision from the Canadian Forces Snowbirds team. Snowbirds appeared to tie white ribbons across the sky as they displayed their capabilities, timing incredible pauses and performed manoeuvres to the delight of the crowd. By all accounts, the 2017 Atlantic Canada International Air Show was a very successful and memorable event.

I would like to extend many thanks and congratulations to all who helped make the show a success, with specific reference to Colin Stephenson, the executive director of Air Show Atlantic, and former 14 Wing Commanders Colonel Gerry Morey and Colonel Patrick Thauberger, for their leadership and support.

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

**MACARTHUR, MIKE/FORGERON, NICOLE:  
CALEB'S COURAGE - RECOGNIZE**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise here today to recognize Mike MacArthur and Nicole Forgeron of Sydney River. Mike and Nicole have created a legacy fund in memory of their three-year-old son, Caleb MacArthur, who died from cancer. The fund is called Caleb's Courage.

Recently, Caleb's Courage captured the grand prize of \$75,000 through the Aviva Insurance Community Fund online contest. All the money has gone to help improve pediatric palliative care at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital. Mike and Nicole created this fund to make hospital life better for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families.

I am humbled today, Mr. Speaker, to thank Mike MacArthur and Nicole Forgeron for their amazing strength and to acknowledge how Caleb's Courage will help make life a little easier for other children and their families when in need.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**DELOREY, WILLIAM - BIRTHDAY WISHES**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I just wanted to take a moment to let you know that it's my son's birthday today. Unfortunately, I'm not able to be there with him to celebrate or wish him a happy birthday in person, so I suppose having it recorded as part of the public record will have to do. So through you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish William a happy birthday. (Applause)

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

**SMITH, RODGER: COMMUN. SERV. - CONGRATS.**

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Mr. Rodger Smith of North Preston, on his service to the Black Business Initiative in his role as Regional Business Development Manager. Rodger has 37 years' experience with the Royal Bank Financial Group as branch manager for Gottingen Street and Lady Hammond Road, as well as senior account manager and account manager.

Rodger has served on many boards and committees, such as the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children, Metro United Way, and the East Preston Baptist Church Prison Ministry, to just name a few. Rodger is a positive role model for young people in the communities of East and North Preston.

I would ask members of this House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Mr. Rodger Smith on his many years of service to his community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

**LANDRY, EMMA: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS - CONGRATS.**

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program's mission is to develop knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world. The IB Diploma Program is recognized worldwide as a comprehensive and challenging high school curriculum designed to develop higher order cognitive skills. In lieu of national exams, this program is recognized as a credential for university admission.

Emma Landry from Elmsdale was a participant in the IB Diploma Program at the CEC, the Cobequid Education Centre in Truro. Emma spent part of this past summer in an all-expenses internship with Google at the Computer Science Summer Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Emma is attending Queen's University for computer science software design with a University Scholastic Excellence Scholarship, a \$14,500 Community Engagement Scholarship from CEC and the RBC's Student's Leading Change scholarship. Also, Emma was one in 15 in Canada awarded \$10,000 to further their studies.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask members of this House of Assembly to join me in congratulating this extraordinary young woman on her impressive academic achievements and wish her continued success.

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

**GRAN FONDO BAIE SAINTE-MARIE:  
HOST/FINALISTS - CONGRATS.**

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I would ask members of this House of Assembly to please join me in congratulating the Municipality of Clare, the host of Gran Fondo Baie Sainte-Marie and the finalists nominated to the 2017 Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance Prestige Awards, as these awards celebrate the people, places and events that make the Canadian sport tourism industry so dynamic.

It was only three years ago that the municipality considered hosting this cycling activity through its communities. Very quickly the organizers were reassured that the people would be interested in participating in this Fondo. Over 400 cyclists - including the member for Argyle-Barrington - registered for the inaugural Gran Fondo, doubling to over 800 in 2016. Much of the success of this event can be attributed to the hundreds of

volunteers who get up early every Saturday and Sunday to ensure that the cyclists have the time of their lives. The 2018 Gran Fondo, expected to be bigger and better than ever, saw over 900 participants.

Bon travail accompli par tous. Merci beaucoup à toutes les personnes qui ont participé. Merci beaucoup Monsieur le Speaker.

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

**HORTON, LARRY: COMMUN. DEDICATION - THANK**

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a long-time resident of Sheet Harbour, Mr. Larry Horton. Larry has been an invaluable volunteer since moving to the area. He has a passion for the growing technology of Internet access and he has been the driving force behind the establishment of the Bridge to Bridge Internet Society which provided Internet access to area residents.

Larry is also past-president of the Sheet Harbour Lions Club and currently is still involved with their many committees and events. He also volunteers with the local Ground Search and Rescue community and health board at Capital Health in Sheet Harbour. Larry is the type of person who when he sees a job that needs to be done, he rolls up his sleeves and gets it done in a quiet, unassuming manner.

Mr. Speaker, I ask members of the House of Assembly to join me in thanking Larry for his unrelenting dedication to his community and for continuing to make a difference each day. It is volunteers like him who continue to make our communities and province so remarkable.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

**PIKE, BARBARA: CNSOPB REP. - CONGRATS.**

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate my constituent Barbara Pike on her appointment as federal representative to the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board. Barbara is the founding CEO of the Maritimes Energy Association, the former vice-president of the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies (AIMS), and former public information and environmental coordinator for the Offshore Petroleum Board.

She spent more than two decades as a journalist, subsequently transitioning into the field of public relations. Barbara sits on the boards of three renewable energy companies, volunteers as vice-chair for the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia, is a strong advocate and supporter of the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron and sports in Nova Scotia, served on the board of Sail Canada, and is former Chair of Sport Nova Scotia.

I ask all members of the House of Assembly to congratulate Barbara on her newest appointment and wish her the best.

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

**KELLY, RITA: VOL. EFFORTS - APPRECIATION**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Rita Kelly of Timberlea. At 78 years of age, Rita is still a very active volunteer and has been for her entire adult life. She has given over five years to volunteering with the Breakfast Club, giving kids a healthy start to the day. She has given over 15 years to volunteering with Reading Recovery in local schools and over 15 years to volunteering as a fundraising canvasser with the Cancer Society, Heart and Stroke Society, and the Diabetic Society.

Rita also volunteers with her church's Women's Committee and youth group, as well as being a volunteer dog walker and school playground supervisor. On top of the volunteering, Rita often donates her paintings for food to fundraising events.

I would like the members of the House to join me in showing Rita our deep appreciation for all she does for others and wish her all the very best in the future.

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

**HFX. SOMALI YOUTH ATHLETIC ASSOC.: SUCCESS - CONGRATS.**

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Halifax Somali Youth Athletic Association and their commitment to the surrounding community. Last month the Somali youth in our community who had recently graduated high school were recognized by parents, peers, and mentors at an annual event held at Saint Andrew's Recreation Centre.

I was fortunate enough to be invited to this event and was able to congratulate and present them with certificates. During the event, I heard about the future plans of these recent high school graduates, and it further strengthened my belief that the young people in our communities are bright, strong leaders. Although many have faced adversity, most of us could not even imagine they have continued to grow and achieve countless triumphs. As always, after attending these events, I was left with an overwhelming sense of awe at how accomplished these young people are and how supported they are by their community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of the House of Assembly to join me in recognizing the success of the young people of the Halifax Somali Youth Athletic Association and wish them the best in the next chapter of their lives.

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

**BIG TANCOOK ISLAND - LT.-GOV.'S COMMUN. SPIRIT AWARD**

MR. HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the accomplishments of the people of Big Tancook Island for winning the Lieutenant Governor's 2017 Community Spirit Award. Big Tancook Island is a very close-knit community where the residents look out and look after one another. You will remember that the community recently rallied to keep its one-room school open and improve its vital ferry service. Volunteers in the community regularly organize and host many engaging community events. They help and support their senior citizens, welcome many island visitors, and maintain both a medical first-response agency and a defensive fire service.

I was pleased to attend the event with His Honour the Lieutenant Governor Arthur J. LeBlanc and his wife, Her Honour Mrs. Patsy LeBlanc, as well as the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage and Mayor Bolivar-Getson of the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg.

I ask the members of the Legislature to join me in congratulating Hillary Dionne, who sent in the application, as well as all residents of Big Tancook Island.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**ARSENAULT, JAKE:  
N.S. SANDBOXES INNOVATION BOOT CAMP - CONGRATS.**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: I would like to congratulate Jake Arsenault of Mahone Bay and his company, Creative Urban Timber, on receiving second place in this summer's Nova Scotia Sandboxes Innovation Bootcamp.

The Innovation Bootcamp is aimed at individuals who have a business idea and are in the early stages of developing a product. The most promising teams receive prize money. Jake received \$20,000 as his prize to use toward his growing business, Creative Urban Timber.

Creative Urban Timber is a manufacturer of quality hand-crafted, custom-made live-edge tables and home accessories made from reclaimed and repurposed wood. They focus on customizing pieces to suit their clients' needs. All their materials are sourced from Nova Scotia, bringing beautiful handmade creations with ties to Canadian heritage.

I ask that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jake Arsenault on his second-place at the Innovation Bootcamp and wish him nothing but success with his business, Creative Urban Timber.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

**WELSH, NICK: ACADEMIC/ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS - CONGRATS.**

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Nick Welsh, an accomplished hockey player who grew up in Clayton Park. Nick is going into his last season of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League with the Moncton Wildcats. Through his four years of playing in the league, Nick has perfected his leadership skills and has thus been selected as captain of the team.

Nick is an outstanding student and athlete who deserves his new title. I ask that the members of this House of Assembly please join me in congratulating Nick Welsh in being named captain of the Moncton Wildcats and wishing him and his team the best of luck in the upcoming season.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**MUNRO, PERRY:  
NATL. RECREATIONAL FISHERIES AWARD - CONGRATS.**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the fact that Perry Munro of Black River recently received a National Recreational Fisheries Award. This prestigious award is presented by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to individuals and organizations who have made an outstanding contribution to the conservation, restoration, and enhancement of Canada's recreational fisheries and their habitat.

Perry is a Nova Scotia master guide, a prolific outdoor writer and artist, an avid outdoorsman, and a committed conservationist. He has dedicated much of his life to the wise use and enjoyment of our natural resources, and he is a very deserving recipient of this honour.

Please join me in congratulating Perry on this award and in thanking him for all he has done to benefit recreational fisheries in our province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

**COCHRANE, JOSH - PRINCE'S YOUTH SERV. AWARD**

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I'd like to take a moment to recognize Yarmouth's Josh Cochrane. Josh is 11 years old and will be the youngest person, and one of only four Canadians, to receive this year's Prince's Youth Service Award, an initiative through WE. The event is taking place at the Air Canada Centre in Toronto. Josh is being honoured for spreading awareness of autism throughout the world.

Josh is a bit of a celebrity in our community, thanks to his extensive volunteer activities for many causes, including fundraising for and raising awareness of autism. He has travelled to three World Autism Festivals.

I'd like to congratulate Josh on this esteemed honour and thank him for the time, effort, and dedication he has committed to raising autism awareness.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. We have just a few seconds left before the start of Question Period, so we will pause and reflect on those wonderful members' statements.

[2:00 p.m.]

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS**

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

### **PREM. - N.S. SMALL BUS.: TAX INCREASES - ACTION**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Nova Scotia's economy and health care system face a looming new threat, and that is the massive tax increase that the federal government is considering imposing on the small businesses of Nova Scotia. Now 40 small business organizations have come together and formed the Nova Scotia Coalition for Small Business Fairness and have written to the Premier asking him to defend them - they asked him specifically to stand up for Nova Scotia's small businesses and insist that the federal Finance Minister take these proposals off the table. I will table that letter, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the Premier: What is he doing to stand up for Nova Scotia's small businesses and take those proposals off the table?

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

As the honourable member would know, I met with the honourable Minister of Finance last week and expressed to him the many challenges associated with the tax changes that could impact the Province of Nova Scotia. He assured me that he's out listening to Canadians today and continuing to do so. I encourage the honourable member and all members of this House to voice their opinion to the federal Finance Minister as he is going out listening to Canadians to ensure that their views are being heard by him, as well as the views that I articulated to him on behalf of not just health care providers but also small business owners across this province who require capital to be left in the



corporation whether it's to deal with a downturn in the particular sector they're in or, quite frankly, to allow them to invest in the start-up community in our province.

MR. BAILLIE: Quite frankly, that is not good enough; passing on their concerns is not enough. The federal government has a website to allow people to pass on their concerns.

The small businesses of Nova Scotia have asked the Premier to actively oppose these changes and stop them in their tracks. They're not the only ones, Mr. Speaker. Hundreds of doctors came together in Halifax this past weekend to oppose these changes. They released a survey - 451 doctors will consider leaving Nova Scotia if these tax increases go through, and 375 more doctors will consider reducing their hours of work if these tax increases go through. They don't want a Premier to merely pass on their concerns; they want a Premier and a government to stand up and publicly oppose them.

I will ask the Premier on behalf of the doctors and their patients, and small businesses and their employees, does he personally, and his government, oppose these changes, and will he communicate his opposition to the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister in Ottawa?

THE PREMIER: I want to tell the honourable member I have communicated the concerns that Nova Scotians have, and the concerns that our government has, directly to the federal government.

MR. BAILLIE: Today on the Health Authority website, there are 150 vacant positions - the Health Authority looking for doctors to fill these vacancies across the province. I'll table the list of vacancies. This is not a matter where we just pass on the concerns that small businesses and doctors have. Our health care system is at risk; our small business sector is at risk.

Will the Premier do more than pass on their concerns and stand in his place and tell the people of Nova Scotia publicly that he is against these changes, and he'll do what he can to stop them?

THE PREMIER: Again, I want to tell the honourable member that I've heard from Nova Scotians. We continue to make sure that the federal government understands the impact of these changes on the economy of our province, whether it's attracting and retaining health care providers or investment in small business across the province. What I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, what it isn't and what the honourable members in this House shouldn't do at every opportunity, is just fearmonger across our province looking for a microphone to stand up at to express their displeasure, always looking for a political angle to every issue that's inside of our province (Interruptions)

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

THE PREMIER: I want to remind the honourable member that the election is over and perhaps they might want to start working for Nova Scotians.

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

**PREM.: TUITION RELIEF PROG. - SUCCESS ENSURE**

HON. GARY BURRILL: In the 2013 provincial election, the Liberals promised to provide up to \$120,000 in tuition relief to 25 new doctors per year, for four years, in exchange for a five-year commitment to practise in underserved communities. As of December 2015, only 12 doctors had enrolled in the program, and there has been no further information on uptake of the program since.

Yesterday, the Finance Minister tabled a budget that extended this tuition relief scheme, so I would like to ask the Premier, why does he think this program is going to be successful now when it wasn't in the past?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. It is one way for the province to be able to ensure that health care providers see an opportunity to work across the province, a chance for us to reduce the cost of medical school and the costs associated with the extensive education that is required for a medical degree. It's part of the many options as you would know. There's a rural residency program which also provides an opportunity for people to be out in rural communities. We broadened the scope in and around that program. The honourable member may know at the very beginning that that was dedicated to certain targeted areas, and many of them were rural communities. That is also now an urban issue that that same program will be available, too, and we look forward to continuing to work with our health care providers.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, the matter of the rural residency program is in fact germane to the point that I'm trying to drive across. While I'm sure the Premier is excited about the initiative announced yesterday to welcome new medical residents to the province, with all due respect, our citizens need doctors now, not in the year or two that such a program envisages.

Family practice doctors generally begin their residencies in July but they interview for those positions usually as early as October, and this means that this plan stands to not yield any family medicine residents in the province until 2019. So, I want to ask the Premier, does he think that people currently without a doctor can really wait for two years?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank the honourable member for the question and continue to ensure that we provide many options for health care providers to work in this province. The flexibility that they've asked for we're providing that. At the same time, there's a tuition relief program that is made available to some physicians who want to take advantage of that opportunity. We're happy that some have. We're looking

forward as we broaden the context, where it can be those in the urban centre that can also do that that there will be a greater pickup on that program. The issue of the rural residency program is a positive one that we're seeing some positive results.

As he would know, the issue that he refers to is not unique to Nova Scotia, it's across the country. Perhaps if the former government of the New Democratic Party had actually had a forward-thinking, long-term view of how we deliver health services to the people of Nova Scotia, we would be in very different circumstances.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, further to the same line of difficulties, in the summer of 2016, the Minister of Health and Wellness announced a new locum program to address the doctor shortage and this was a program to specifically target rural communities. The program would send physicians on a year-long tour of the province, doing short-term stints in underserved areas, and the idea was, of course, that physicians would ultimately decide, some of them, to stay and practise in rural communities. But by May of this year, 11 months after that initial announcement, only two people had signed on to this program which had had eight spaces available and needed four in order to be able to operate. So, I think it is fair in this respect to ask the Premier, in his view, has this program been a success as far as addressing this great crisis of recruiting and retraining doctors?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I would say that those communities that are receiving the services from those physicians who joined the program would think it was a success. It's one of the many ways that we continue to work with our health care providers, to provide initiatives to keep them in this province to continue to work. If we were to follow the logic of the Leader of the New Democratic Party, we would be absolutely paralyzed in this province just like they were when they were in government and then we would do nothing. In actual fact, we're out there working with communities to provide many alternatives and many options to attract people and retain them in our communities.

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

#### **PREM.: FED. TAX INCREASES - OPPOSING STANCE**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business recently surveyed its 3,000 members, and 52 per cent of them said the biggest issue they have is the high taxes and the high regulatory costs that they face trying to employ their fellow Nova Scotians, that these taxes and regulations hold us back. Maybe the Premier thinks that the 3,000 members of the CFIB are being too negative, but they are the ones that employ 70 per cent of our fellow Nova Scotians and they want a Premier that takes a stand against the massive tax increases that are coming their way from Ottawa. So, I will ask the Premier, why won't he take a public stance in opposition as the small businesses of Nova Scotia are calling on him to do?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for his question again. I want to remind the honourable member that we took their concerns and we've taken their concerns to Ottawa. We will continue to do so. I also want to remind the honourable member, in the budget that was just introduced, there was a \$14 million tax cut for small businesses across the province. I also want to remind the honourable member that the CFIB recognized this province two years in a row as leading the country in reducing red tape. That is exactly why we are seeing the private sector lead and grow this economy.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I wish that we had a Premier that knew that our economy is the slowest growing in the country, that our small businesses are speaking up that they can't handle more higher taxes. He forgot to remind everybody that they are about to face a cap and trade carbon tax increase that is also coming their way, and now he will not stand up for them and oppose the small business tax increase that is coming from Ottawa and the job losses that will go with it.

I would like to know if the Premier knows how many jobs are going to be lost. Has his government studied the impact in job losses that those tax increases are going to have and if so, will he release that study so Nova Scotians can see for themselves?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member said the proposed increases. We are continuing to make sure that Nova Scotia's small business owners, health care providers are being heard when the public consultation takes place. Once its finished, the federal government has a full understanding of the impact this will have on this province.

What I can tell you is what is real is the fact that \$14 million of tax reductions for small business in Nova Scotia is in this current budget. What is real is that CFIB has recognized this province in the entire federation is leading in the reduction of red tape. That's what I can tell you. Those are factual, not some kind of make-believe hypothetical position that the honourable member wants to strike fear across our province.

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

#### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - C.B. MUN.: NSHA FUNDS WITHHELD**

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: On September 15<sup>th</sup>, Cape Breton Regional Municipality Mayor Cecil Clarke wrote to Minister Delorey regarding an outstanding receivable of more than \$2 million. In the letter, Mayor Clarke knows that the amount owed represents 11 per cent of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality's outstanding taxes. As I am sure the minister is aware, having previously served as the Finance and Treasury Board Minister for several years, municipalities need and depend on those revenues to ensure that their citizens have adequate standard of service.

Does the Health and Wellness Minister think its acceptable that the Nova Scotia Health Authority has withheld these funds from the Cape Breton Regional Municipality?

MR. SPEAKER: I just would like to remind the honourable member not to refer to other members of this House by their proper name.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for raising this question. As noted and tabled, the correspondence just came in over a week ago from the mayor, raising some concerns with respect to a billing dispute between NSHA and the municipality. My understanding from the information provided is that this is a longstanding situation that predates the amalgamation of the health authorities, back to the former Cape Breton Health Authority. The situation, I am working with these organizations to help come to a resolution and I am quite confident that we will do so.

MS. MARTIN: This question is directed to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Mr. Speaker. It seems to me this is an issue particular to Cape Breton. If the Health Authority has failed to remit payments to other municipalities, I am sure that we will be hearing about it. In this letter to the Health and Wellness Minister, in which the Minister of Municipal Affairs was also copied, Mr. Clarke noted that Halifax received similar payments which are charged to the NSHA based by powers granted from Sections 79 and 80 of the Municipal Government Act.

I would like to ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs if he thinks that it is appropriate that the Health Authority meet its financial obligation to other municipalities, but not to Cape Breton.

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I would like to thank the honourable member for the question. As well, we received that copy of the correspondence approximately a week ago. We are gathering information in our office. I relayed that information to the Minister of Health and Wellness and I am confident, as is the Minister of Health and Wellness, that we can work through this process and we will continue to work with the Department of Health and Wellness to come to a solution.

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

**PREM. - FED. TAX INCREASES: FARMERS - OPPOSITE STANCE**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: The Premier referred to the federal tax increases as hypothetical, but the threat to this province in health care and to our small business is very real and that's why they are speaking up.

The Ottawa Liberals are even going after our farmers. It is becoming clear that if these changes go through, it would be more expensive to pass on your family farm to your son or daughter than to a multinational corporation. Well that is simply wrong. So we are

very clear: we are opposed to the changes and we will do everything that we can to stop them. What is hypothetical is, does the Premier oppose them or not?

So I would like to ask the Premier, for the farmers of Nova Scotia, will he take a strong stand in opposition to the federal tax increases? Yes or no?

[2:15 p.m.]

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I continue each and every day to stand with the farmers that I represent in this House and across our province. I'm grateful for the continued work they do providing opportunity and employment for young citizens in my constituency and across this province. We will continue to make sure that the policies of our government are fair to all sectors across the province. At the same time, we will ensure that the views and values of the business people in this community are understood by the federal government when it comes to any changes they may have into the future, and the impact they will have on our economy and our sectors.

MR. BAILLIE: The only group that the Premier is clearly standing with is the Liberal Party in Ottawa - not the farmers, not the small businesses, not the doctors. They're all wondering where he stands. He has passed on their concerns, and I think they all know how that went. He passed on their concerns but said, don't worry, I won't say anything publicly to embarrass fellow Liberals. That's the problem, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier has a choice to make. He can stand with the farmers, he can stand with the small businesses, and he can stand with the doctors and tell them he will publicly oppose those changes. Or he can stand with the Liberal Party of Ottawa. Which is it, Premier?

THE PREMIER: Again, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I continue to encourage him to make his views known, continue to pass those on. I can tell you that we will continue to make sure that the federal government fully understands the impact of these changes and what we believe they will be on the economy of the province, making sure that the Minister of Finance, as he's travelling across the country listening to Canadians - he said he is still listening. We believe there's an opportunity to continue to shape those changes as they come out, and we're going to continue to make sure that the views and values of the hard-working men and women of Nova Scotia are understood by the federal government and the impact that we believe these changes will have on them.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**EECD: PRE-PRIMARY - COSTS CONFIRM**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. In April of this year, this government announced that pre-Primary was going to cost \$3.7 million in the first year. In July, media reports tagged the cost at \$4.1 million. On Monday, the cost was reported as \$6.5 million. Then yesterday, the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board said the cost was \$4.45 million.

My question for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is a multiple-choice question. Can he tell this House which of these figures accurately reflects the cost in the first year?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: The highest one. The reason for that and why that number has moved is because there's more demand for this program than we thought. We're proud to invest in our kids, unlike the member opposite who said on the public record today that he and his Tory government would scrap this program. I'll remind that member, out of the 818 children who are now registered, there's 250 in every single riding of that Conservative caucus. I wonder if he's actually going to stand with our kids or this ridiculous political position.

MR. HOUSTON: Speaking of ridiculous, Mr. Speaker, we have a government that launched a program completely unprepared to launch, didn't have people to staff it and didn't have space. They're still rolling out a couple of days at a time - not ready to roll it out (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. HOUSTON: The minister can't say that this government could deliver that service better. The minister can't say that this government could deliver that service more cost-effectively. Yet it doesn't matter - rush, rush, rush. No plan, just drive it through. That's what we see from this government all the time. Can the minister tell us if the \$6 million, which I believe is the higher one, is for 10 months for 52 classes, or are you changing all of those numbers at the same time?

MR. CHURCHILL: The member is correct. We were ambitious with the delivery of this program because we wanted 818 kids, four-year-olds, whom we know will be supported by this program, we wanted those families who will receive this program for free, to have access to this. If we had listened to the calls of the Opposition to delay, those kids would not have had this opportunity, and to me, that is unacceptable.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**EECD - PRE-PRIMARY: TAXPAYER VALUE - EXPLAIN**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, the question is, of the 818, would they all have not had it? I asked that question this morning because some of them were already in a registered program. It's unreal, the lack of information they have.

Today at the Public Accounts Committee, I asked staff from the department a very simple question. I asked if they could provide the cost per student per day for the pre-Primary versus what is happening in the private sector. They did come back with an answer eventually: they said \$32 per day in pre-Primary, versus \$33 per day in the private sector. Now this sounds close, doesn't it, Mr. Speaker, but it's not, because the pre-Primary is for much fewer hours in the course of a day, it's not nearly the same.

Can the minister explain how the current plan for pre-Primary offers any value to the taxpayers of this province?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the member for making the position of every single Progressive Conservative in this House clear - they are against a universally-accessible, free pre-Primary program for our kids and our families. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

MR. CHURCHILL: Here's the difference - right now we have 384 private, not-for-profit subsidized providers giving this service. There is only the capacity to take on approximately 25 per cent of our pre-school-age children; that includes four-year olds.

Mr. Speaker, we don't believe that's acceptable. We know this program will have a life-changing impact on the lives of many. We know it's important for the budgets of our families and we do not think that one out of every four kids accessing this is enough - we want 100 per cent accessibility from one end of the province to the other.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I can tell you what we're against, we're against the bumbling of every single project that this government tries to take on.

If we want to talk about accessible, let's talk about busing - how do we get the kids there? Let's talk about people having to leave their jobs to pick up their kids in the middle of the afternoon, so they can take them to an after-school program and then go back to work? Let's have a real discussion about accessibility because using the department's own figures of \$33 a day at 195 school days, we would be saving families roughly \$6,400. But on April 27<sup>th</sup> the then-Finance and Treasury Board Minister said it would save families \$10,000. (Interruptions)



MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, the question is, can the minister tell this House where they came up with the savings of \$10,000 a family. It's not even near close. I'd love to hear the minister say where he got that number.

MR. CHURCHILL: Here's what we know, only one-quarter of our children are accessing these programs in our province. There's only the capacity in the regulated sector for one-quarter of our children to access these programs. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. CHURCHILL: When families access these programs through the regulated child care sector, it also is at a high cost to them, Mr. Speaker, which is another barrier, a financial barrier on top of the geographical barrier that our families have. These are very real barriers that our families have - costs and geographical accessibility.

That is not acceptable to this government. We are going to forge ahead, as we have thoughtfully and execute effectively as we had, to continue this program so that every single one of our families who choose has access to a pre-Primary program which we know based on evidence, on research, on science, will have a positive impact on the lives of every one of those, particularly those in need.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

### **EECD: TEACHER SHORTAGE - MIN. CONCERNS**

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

Shifting the focus to teachers, Mr. Speaker, earlier this month the Halifax Regional School Board sent out an email explaining that despite many efforts, including national advertising and increased screening opportunities, the board still had unfilled French immersion and core French positions for this school year.

This week families at Cole Harbour High School received a voice mail message asking parents to help in recruitment efforts to find a drama and a band teacher. Maybe the government will set up a hotline for students who don't have teachers, so they can add their names to a waiting list - an approach that hasn't worked so well with family doctors.

Mr. Speaker, we're already a month into the school year - is the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development concerned about the shortage of teachers in this province?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: To be specific, there's one board - the CSAP - that has had a challenge recruiting French-speaking teachers. We are working with them. There's an ability through the Education Act for them to reach out to folks who don't necessarily have a B.Ed. to fill those positions for the time being. It's an issue that is specific to that one board and we are working with them to help them address it.

I had a wonderful call earlier this year from the chairman of our school board who said this is the first time since I've been around that while enrolment is going down, we are actually hiring more teachers in our education system. That is because of the increased investment that this Premier and the former Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development have made, year after year, to hire more teachers.

MS. CHENDER: For clarification, I don't think drum and band are the CSAP issues we are talking about, but moving on, perhaps this government thought that legislating a contract on teachers would make all their problems go away. A recent OECD report points out that enforced pay freezes and cuts have a shockingly obvious negative impact on teacher supply and morale - something that anyone who has spoken to a teacher in the past six months would know. I'll table that report.

Will the minister admit that his government's refusal to listen and negotiate a fair contract with teachers is responsible for the current shortage?

MR. CHURCHILL: We are the first government in 20 years that have actually hired more teachers into the system during periods of enrolment decline. That is because education has always been a focus for us. I remember when the NDP was in government and slashing \$65 million out of the system to pay for labour peace in this province.

Do you know what I heard from teachers then? Enough is enough. We finally have a government that's moving forward with them and we are going to keep achieving all we can for our kids.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**FIN. & TREASURY BD.: MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION  
- CONSULTATION TIME FRAME**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, in June the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board told media that it's time for Nova Scotians to have their say on how the province should handle the legalization of marijuana, and I'll table that. However, she wasn't able to say if the consultation would be through meetings or, like Newfoundland and Labrador through online surveys, which I would definitely disagree with.

Also in June, the minister told reporters she hoped the consultation would start in late summer or early Fall. Is the minister any closer than she was three months ago to letting

Nova Scotians know how and when they can have their say? If so, can she state the dates and locations?

HON. KAREN CASEY: To the member opposite, what she is saying is true - I was invited to go to meet with the Ministers of Finance in June. At that time they were talking about the steps that would have to be taken. Part of those steps included consultation. I came back and indicated that this province would be engaged in consultation. The lead on this file is the Minister of Justice. I'll ask him to finish the conversation.

HON. MARK FUREY: I thank my colleague for the question. The whole issue of legalization of cannabis is a very complex issue. We've had a number of discussions and we have expended significant resources into the work required. I look forward to public consultation in the very near future.

MS. MACFARLANE: I appreciate the answers. However, this is a huge social, justice, and moral issue in our society and there are a lot of decisions yet to be made - public education, what age, retail locations, prevention and harm reduction, how much money investment will go into that, enforcement. These are all issues that must be addressed. The reality is that all of the other provinces are ahead of us. Even yesterday we had the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board indicate we want to be ready by 2018, but it wasn't very convincing that we would be.

I want to know if either of the ministers can assure Nova Scotians that they will have confidence that these issues around retailing and public safety will be addressed by this government when there is little action to be taken on this important issue to date.

MR. FUREY: I want to reiterate and concur with my colleague as to how important this issue is. This government, like we have with past legislation, will take the time to ensure that it's done right. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The honourable Minister of Justice.

MR. FUREY: We have expended significant resources on this subject, engaging other provinces. This is not a race with other provinces. This is about informed decision-making. There are criteria laid out by the federal government. We as a province are working towards those objectives and at the first opportunity in the very near future, we will start our public consultation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member for Pictou East.

[2:30 p.m.]

### **JUSTICE: MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION - ATL. CAN. MODEL**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Justice. I guess we've found the one issue that this government wants to take their time on and try to get right.

I'm glad this is the issue, because the Premier has said that the governments wants to have a uniform approach and an Atlantic Canada model when it comes to the legalization of marijuana. That's a nice sentiment, but the months are moving by and we've seen almost nothing from this government on regulation distribution, enforcement, even consultation. We've heard the minister say, maybe we'll get the consultation soon.

There is a deadline of July 1, 2018, Mr. Speaker. Meanwhile, New Brunswick has established a Crown Corporation; PEI has indicated that stand-alone stores will be the likely distribution style. I'd like to ask the minister, can the minister explain what happened to the Atlantic Canada model, and why is this government content to lead from behind?

HON. MARK FUREY: I would like to thank my colleague for the question. One of the objectives of this government is public safety. Public safety is important, Mr. Speaker, for our youth and our adult population. What other provinces have done may not necessarily be in the best interest of public safety. We will take our time to get this right. We will be informed by the work of other provinces. The fact that other provinces are already out the door does not reflect that Nova Scotia is behind. We are making informed decisions, they will be based on the evidence that we have available and they will be in the best interests of Nova Scotians.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it might be interesting for the House to hear which provinces the minister thinks have it wrong in what they're trying to do. At least we have some information, but there are a number of provinces that have asked the federal government for an extension on the July 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. We know July 1<sup>st</sup> is not that far away and we heard yesterday there was nothing in this budget that was tabled for training of law enforcement officers. If it's not before March, I presume it will be in May or June and guess what? We're legalized on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

There is a clock that's ticking. Some provinces are asking for an extension and there is an opportunity for this government as well to ask something of Ottawa on behalf of its people. I would like to ask the minister, will he commit to asking the federal government for an extension of the July 1<sup>st</sup> deadline?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker: I want to inform the honourable member that when Canada's Premiers met in the summer, there were five questions that were sent to Ottawa around this whole issue of legalization of marijuana. We're waiting to have the answers

back to those important pieces - the responsibility, we believe, falls with the federal government.

I want to clarify something for the honourable member, it was the entire federation that has talked to the federal government about the implementation date of July 1<sup>st</sup>. While he might like to look at this and try to divide on the issue, this is a very serious issue that's coming and a product that is coming out into this country. We're going to make sure that when the regulations are put up for this province, we'll make sure that they are the appropriate ones for Nova Scotia. At the same time we'll work with our colleagues across the country who are also experiencing the same challenges that we are.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: PHYSICIAN RECRUITMENT  
- NSHA ASSISTANCE**

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Doctor shortages is a norm in this province and especially in Cape Breton. For example, the Victoria County Memorial Hospital in Baddeck recently lost a wonderful doctor with the retirement of Dr. Carlyle Chow. The recruitment committee is trying their very best to attract a doctor to the area. The Municipality of Victoria County is doing their part and has invested funds in the two hospitals in the county to make them more attractive for recruitment.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, what is being done by the Department of Health and Wellness and the Nova Scotia Health Authority to assist in this search?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. As we all know, the needs of the people of Nova Scotia and indeed a need across the country, provinces across the country, to have access to primary care services is changing, the challenges before them.

As far as the recruitment, earlier today the Leader of the Official Opposition tabled a list of postings for positions across the province which is part of the recruitment process. Many of those postings, to let the member and all the members of the House know, are not just for current vacancies but rather part of the planning process for upcoming vacancies. This is part of the planning and recruitment in advance so that we have positions filled before they become vacant.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, one of the roles of the Health Department and the Health Authority should be to assist in all possible ways to ensure the areas recruit a doctor. Buchanan Memorial Hospital in Neil's Harbour have recently lost a doctor due to her

moving to another area. They're left with one full-time doctor and two 50 per cent doctors, who both could retire.

Letters from the friends of Buchanan Memorial and myself requesting help have been sent to the minister, and the needs of the communities served by Buchanan still exist. My question to the minister is, what is the timeline for providing a full complement of doctors to ensure that they'll be in place in both Baddeck and Neil's Harbour hospitals immediately?

MR. DELOREY: I thank the member for the question. The process of recruiting - the NSHA and the work that they're doing - they heard from physicians across the province that the approach they were taking, where they were trying to identify those communities that had the most acute needs for family practitioners, was not an acceptable means or approach to recruiting or finding physicians for communities. The physicians themselves - and indeed, communities and people across the province - agreed that providing some flexibility for physicians to identify where they want to practise - so it's a little challenging to point to a particular community and say when a particular vacancy is going to be filled. We do rely on physicians to identify those communities to go participate in.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

#### **EECD - BUDGET: CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE - OMISSION**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, this question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. When it comes to early childhood education, I absolutely support significant investment in a high-quality universal child care system. It's one of the priorities we over here were all very proud to campaign on.

The minister has frequently quoted the statistic that only 25 per cent of children in Nova Scotia utilize or have access to regulated child care programs. That's 25 per cent of all children from birth to age five. When we asked this morning, the department wasn't sure how many four-year-olds, specifically, were without access to child care.

Does the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development find it acceptable that this budget offers nothing to those families struggling to find care for children from infancy to age three?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, the number we had provided was for all preschool-age children who can access child care supports in the province. The capacity for that is 25 per cent of all those children. When you extrapolate the numbers, four-year-olds in full-time care, the number is reduced to 19 per cent, and when you include part-time care, that number is still consistent with 25 per cent. That is the capacity issue that this government is committed to dealing with so that all children in our province have access to these programs, which we know will have a life-changing effect on many of them.

MS. CHENDER: Just for clarification, only four-year-olds will have access to these programs. There are thousands of children in this province who are under four years old. There are thousands of parents whose child care needs don't end at 2:30 p.m. - myself included, way after 2:30 p.m. There are many parents who have their names on wait-lists for infant care before their children are born. The status quo is unacceptable, as we've all realized.

Is the minister satisfied with a budget that continues down the path of a lack of appropriate regulated child care spaces and a patchwork of grants?

MR. CHURCHILL: We recognize the capacity issue in the regulated child care sector. We have a vested interest in their success, as not-for-profits and as businesses. We invest in that sector to the tune of \$255 million per year.

Part of our negotiations with the federal government and the dollars that we plan to receive from them is going to be to increase capacity in that sector. We want all of our children, of all ages of preschool, to have access to the best early child care possible in this province. Pre-Primary is absolutely key to that.

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

**HEALTH & WELLNESS:  
C.B. PSYCHOLOGIST SHORTAGE - EXPLANATION**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. In August the Health Authority took great pride in announcing that there were 16 new doctors coming to Cape Breton, to family practice and specialists. Then two weeks later they had to announce that it was only 13, and write an apology in the Letters to the Editor that got hidden away in the paper.

Today we know that two of those 13 doctors are not going to come. They're both psychologists, Mr. Doctor - Mr. Speaker. (Interruptions) Everybody is hoping that there's a doctor available somewhere.

What does the Minister of Health and Wellness have to say to the people of Cape Breton about the fact that now we are two more psychologists short in an area that is in desperate need of help, after all the pride he took in announcing that we were going to get them?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to correct the member opposite. I didn't make an announcement with respect to the recruitment back in August. I believe there was a release that went out by the Nova Scotia Health Authority with respect to the situation of the two psychiatrists whom we recently found out had accepted positions and changed their mind. When I looked into the information they provided to the Health

Authority, they said personal circumstances in their lives is the reason for choosing not to follow through with those positions.

I was in Cape Breton and met with the head psychiatrist at the facility. They are doing great work and we're going to continue to work to fill those vacancies, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, Doctors Nova Scotia say that we are at least three psychiatrists short in Cape Breton Island. Yesterday in a phone conversation I talked to a Mum whose son needed psychiatric help; she took him to the regional hospital at five minutes after seven o'clock and was told that psychiatric services were not available after seven o'clock in the evening. This is the kind of Health Authority that is being run.

That minister is responsible for the operation of the Health Authority. My question through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister is, when is he going to take serious steps to address the shortage of mental health services on Cape Breton Island?

MR. DELOREY: I thank the member for the question. This is obviously a very important area that we've been talking about, mental health, Mr. Speaker. Yes, for his constituents and for the people of Cape Breton Island.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to stress the fact that my interest and concern about improving mental health services is for all Nova Scotians, from Cape Breton Island down to Yarmouth, and (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness has the floor.

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, the interests and the concerns we have is for providing mental health services of all Nova Scotians, and that's why in this budget we are providing over \$6 million in additional funding for mental health and addiction services. That includes an additional \$2.6 million from the budget that was tabled in April - additional funds, additional commitments, additional professionals to provide these services to people across the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - PICTOU CO.:**  
**EXTRA DIALYSIS UNITS - UPDATE**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Sixteen residents from Pictou County are currently receiving dialysis treatment. Approximately 50 per cent of these residents received treatment at the Sutherland Harris Memorial Hospital in Pictou. There's currently a wait-list of seven or eight people needing this treatment at home. They must travel to Antigonish or Truro.



In 2015, I asked the former minister to commit to increasing dialysis units in Pictou County. Yesterday's budget included new dialysis units in Bridgewater, Kentville, Digby, and Glace Bay, but none for Pictou County.

My question for the minister is, will the minister provide this House an update on any additional dialysis chairs for Pictou County?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. As his colleague raised similar questions about his community in Argyle-Barrington yesterday, the same situation applies here. As he noted in his preamble in the question, we have committed to expand dialysis services in communities in this province.

If you look closely at these situations in those areas where we've committed the funds, those residents are actually travelling much further than the residents, particularly in Pictou, the distance from Pictou to Antigonish. While certainly the preference would be to have services as close to home as possible, there are parts of the province where the services are much further apart and those are the areas that we prioritize the investments.

[2:45 p.m.]

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, it is terribly inconvenient for residents having to travel outside Pictou County for this required treatment. Again, we talk about roads. If you are heading west you are looking to Mount Thom, Kempton and, of course, heading east, Barneys River. We know what those roads are like in the winter and they have to go, storming or not, Mr. Speaker, for that treatment. So, we have the safety concerns, road conditions, making three trips a week, approximately one and one-half to two hours on the highway, a five-hour session at the hospital, residents missing time from work, problems finding someone to travel with them so they have a safe trip back home.

My question to the minister is, will the minister commit today to increasing the number of dialysis chairs in Pictou County?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, again, as I mentioned in the first question, of course dialysis is a treatment that requires a significant amount of time receiving that treatment. For most Nova Scotians needing the service, it takes place in a hospital and the additional time of travel commuting is an additional burden. Again, as a province, this government has committed to increasing investments to reduce the travel time. The approach that we've taken is to identify those communities with the furthest distance and try to bring those down. That's where our focus has been, our priority. With respect to the highway and the travel time between Pictou and Antigonish, I'm very proud of this government's commitment to twin that highway so that we improve that service going forward.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**BUS. - DSME: BUYER SEARCH - UPDATE**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Business. DSME was placed in receivership in February 2016, and since that time PricewaterhouseCoopers has received close to \$1 million dollars in fees and time is marching by. I just wonder, can the minister update the House on the status of finding a buyer for that asset?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I do thank the member for the question. It's an important one for New Glasgow, for Pictou, and for all Nova Scotians with respect to economic development - and what I'm about to say isn't a partisan shot, it's a management of government shot.

When the NDP were in power, they placed \$60 million into this facility and it was a business plan that had no market. So, anyone who would understand the complexities of that industry, the wind turbine industry, would know they were destined to fail. So, \$60 million later we've got a state-of-the-art facility with state-of-the-art tradespeople, great management, good teams all around with nothing to do with that facility.

So, our challenge becomes do we liquidate the assets or do we find a buyer. I want to assure the member, and the members from Pictou, I'm doing everything I can. We're holding this off as long as we possibly can and I truly am confident that we'll find a buyer to revitalize and retrofit that plant and provide employment for the people in Pictou County.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**CCH - CELA FUNDING: BUDGET INCLUSION - CONFIRM**

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, as of November 2017, Nova Scotians living outside of Halifax will no longer have access to reading materials in alternative formats designed for people with print disabilities and vision loss. While the Halifax Public Libraries have secured access for their patrons, libraries outside of the capital have not. In the budget tabled on Tuesday, this government froze funding for libraries.

I would like to ask the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage, does the budget tabled yesterday contain funding to reinstate access to CELA for all Nova Scotians in need?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, until today, I was missing Question Period.  
(Laughter)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

MR. GLAVINE: I would like to inform the member opposite and all the House, and all Nova Scotians, that as of October 1<sup>st</sup> this service of CELA will be restored to the province.

MS. LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for this news and I will relate it to the many people who have been contacting me with concerns about this service.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

### **BRIGHTSTAR CAN.: REPORT - DELIVERY TIME FRAME**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, it has been almost a year since this government contracted Brightstar Canada to develop a long-term strategy for fixing rural Internet but their report, which was supposed to have been delivered in the Spring, has not been delivered.

My question is for the Minister of Business. When will we see that report of Brightstar Canada delivered?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, a very important question for the member and for all the members here in the House with respect to the Internet access and broadband for all Nova Scotians - certainly in the rural areas that are underserved. The work being done by Brightstar is partially complete. There is another component that they're working on now ...

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

We'll now move to Opposition Members' Business.

### **OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Motions Other Than Government Motions?

### **MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Resolution No. 160, which is condemning proposed federal tax changes?

Resolution 160, Proposed Federal Tax Changes - Condemn - notice given September 25, 2017 - (Hon. J. Baillie)

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: It is a great honour to be able to speak to this resolution today. It's a very, very important one. One of the biggest threats to our economy and our health care system right now is the federal tax increases that are coming at Nova Scotia's small businesses, including three-quarters of the doctors of Nova Scotia, who will also be getting a massive tax increase if these changes go through.

Many people have said, well this is a national change. What business does the Legislature of Nova Scotia have dealing with it? Let me deal with that right off the top, Mr. Speaker. Although it is a national increase, the people of Nova Scotia are going to feel its effects the worst. We are on the front lines. We are the ones who will be the most deeply negatively impacted by these tax changes. There are several reasons why.

First of all, when the federal government proposes to increase the taxes on small businesses, they are targeting three-quarters of the workforce of Nova Scotia. Three-quarters of Nova Scotians work for a small business.

Those small business owners have put their homes on the line. They have set aside regular paycheques to put their income and their earnings at risk. They have drawn their families, their children, and their spouses into their businesses to finance them. They have gone beyond their immediate family in many cases, to friends, to help them get a business off the ground. They have taken great risk to build a new product, to provide a new service, to increase the private economy, and hopefully to someday reach the point where they can employ a few of their fellow Nova Scotia neighbours. In fact, this is how our economy works and grows and creates the wealth that government taxes to pay for the important things like health care and education that all Nova Scotians enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, to put in place a tax increase on the people who are willing to invest in the future growth of this province is not only perverse economics; it's wrong and unfair. To tell a Nova Scotian, you're willing to take all these risks, and we're going to raise your taxes, is to tell the very people we need more of that they are not only unappreciated, but that they're just seen as a source to tap when the federal government spends all the money, as the current federal Liberal Government has certainly done, spend all the money. Now they're looking for new sources of tax income, and they've turned on our small businesses.

Nova Scotians are more reliant on small businesses for their jobs than any other province in Canada. We are on the front lines of this attack on the small businesses of the country. That's why this Legislature needs to stand up and speak out as one voice in opposition to what's going on.

Among those small businesses are the farms of Nova Scotia. That's why the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture has spoken out against these tax changes. Many of our farms are incorporated and for good reason. Farms are a family enterprise. Often everybody in the family is involved in the farm, in the work, in the financing, in the ongoing production of our food supply. For decades, farms have organized themselves as a small business, using the small business laws of the country to do so - all legally and all perfectly valid, by the way.

It's bizarre that we have a Prime Minister and federal Minister of Finance who label our family farms as tax cheats. That's crazy. They are making them feel like they've done something wrong because they've organized themselves as a Canadian small business.

It's even more hurtful that the federal government sees the family farm as a place to turn to, to raise their taxes, to pay for the spending that's going on in Ottawa, but that's what's happening.

In this Legislature, we have a responsibility to protect the farmers of Nova Scotia from these kinds of attacks, to encourage them to grow their farm, to grow their production. We spend a lot of time talking about buying local, including in our grocery stores, making sure local blueberries, local maple syrup, local produce, local dairy is available to the consumers of Nova Scotia, and they're actually looking more to local than ever before. That's what we want, Mr. Speaker, but in Ottawa they see the small family-business farm as a source of new tax revenue by raising their taxes and they see them as tax cheats. That's just not fair.

The Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, our provincial Federation of Agriculture, has stood up and said we're against, who is with us? Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that the Progressive Conservative Party stands with the farmers of Nova Scotia, stands with the small business of Nova Scotia. We're with them in opposing these tax changes.

Every day in this House I have asked the Premier, the Leader of the government, where they stand. Do they stand with the farmers? Do they stand with the small businesses? Will they oppose these changes? We have yet to get a clear answer, Mr. Speaker.

It seems like the Premier feels that his main job is to be a courier service, to pass on people's comments between Halifax and Nova Scotia, and Ottawa. Well we already have plenty of ways of passing the message along. What we don't have right now is leadership from the Liberal Government here taking a stand, opposing these tax changes, standing with the farmer, standing with the small businesses, that's what's missing.

We can fix that, Mr. Speaker. This resolution expresses the clear desire of this House to oppose the federal tax increase, to protect our farmers, to protect our small businesses, and every Party here has a chance to speak in favour of the resolution and send

a strong, all-Party message to Ottawa that we are not going to sit back while they attack the small businesses of this province.

Mr. Speaker, one of the more bizarre tax changes that's proposed and is on the way is farms are taxed when they're passed on to the next generation. Now what could we be more in favour of than making sure that our family farming businesses are able to be passed on to the next generation so that they are maintained? Nova Scotians are already worried enough that our farmers are aging. Even the member for Kings North is aging, it happens. Our farmers are aging and they are looking to their sons and daughters to take on the family business. Some will, some won't.

We actually should be looking at ways to incent and encourage that next generation of farmer to take over, not make it harder. But bizarrely, Mr. Speaker, if these federal tax increases go through on our family farms, then we will actually have a government in Ottawa with the silent, complicit agreement of the provincial government to go ahead and tax them higher if they sell their farm to their sons and daughters than if they sell it to a multinational corporation.

Mr. Speaker, there are many parts of this world where farms are being taken out of the hands of the family farmer and the owner-operator and placed into corporate hands. I do not want Nova Scotia to be one of those places. We value our family farms, we want them to be owned by the actual family that's on that farm and is producing our food on that farm. We want them to be owner-operated, not corporate-operated. But the tax laws of Canada are going to push them the other way, going to punish them for passing that farm on to their own sons and daughters, going to encourage them to sell out to a multinational corporation.

[3:00 p.m.]

This is wrong. It is perverse. We have a chance today, with this resolution, to actually send a strong, united message to Ottawa on behalf of the family farmers and particularly on behalf of the next, young, generation of farmers that's coming up. That's what this resolution is all about. And what I say for the family farm is true, really, for all small businesses.

In almost all cases, when someone forms a small business, they quit their steady paycheque, they mortgage their house, they take out a bank loan, they borrow from family and friends to get going. That is a family decision, it is a family activity. If the business owner's house is on the line, so is the business owner's husband or wife. So, to say that there should be no recognition of them in our tax laws, is cruel. But that's what's about to happen. That the whole family takes the risk, the whole family makes the sacrifice, but if they participate in the profits of the business or work for the business or lend their own money to the business to get it going, they are exempted from the usual tax incentives that we rightly provide to our small businesses to help them get off the ground.

To the extent that the traditional idea of a male business owner and a female supporter, or the reverse, is how businesses are run. These changes are sexist by saying that the spouse cannot participate in the profits of a business that he or she has equally sacrificed to get off the ground. But that's what we are facing here. That's why it's so important that we stand up against them, all of us, on both sides of this House, because this is wrong. It is sexist. It is against the family farm. It is against the small businesses that we want to see succeed. That's what this resolution allows us to express today.

I haven't even turned to the doctors of this province, but hundreds of them showed up at a rally here in Halifax, a few days ago, on the weekend, to express their outrage that they are being targeted for a massive tax increase by the Liberal Government in Ottawa, for no other reason than they have actually formed businesses under the very valid and very legal income tax provisions of this country. That, after decades, really, in our medical schools and in residency, after incurring hundreds of thousands of dollars of debt, after finally getting their medical licence and going out into the province to practise, they are now going to get hit with an extra tax bill.

Nova Scotia is on the front lines of this issue because we have a crisis in coverage of family doctors, and specialists, and wait-lists. The last thing we need now is another barrier to starting to fill that gap. But that's what we're faced with. That's why doctors and small businesses and farmers are speaking up and saying, we can't take this anymore, we can't afford another tax increase. We're trying our best to look after Nova Scotians, with their medical needs, or to grow the economy, and employ our neighbours. These are the very people we need to encourage, not to send away.

Make no mistake, our doctors who are here now, they are being called by recruiters from across the country, from the United States, every day, because they know that Nova Scotia has become, in the last few years, a place that's been reported to be unfriendly to the practice of medicine. We need to turn that around. We can send that signal to our doctors today, that we'll stand with them and oppose these changes, so that they can practise here and prosper here and raise their families here. That's what this resolution is all about.

At this time, when our economy and our health care system are under threat, it is not enough to merely say, we'll pass on your concerns. The people of Nova Scotia, all of them, are invested in this because they either work for a small business or they hope to have a family doctor in the future. This affects everybody and they need to know that all the political Parties here are uniting in a common voice to oppose these changes. That's why we put this resolution before the House today, that's why I hope every Party stands up and speaks in favour of the resolution and against the attack on our health care system and on our small business economy.

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

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to stand here today. I'm going to surprise the Opposition first off just by thanking them.

Discussion around issues that go on in our communities are important and any time that they're brought here to the floor of the Legislature I think it adds value. We're in the midst of hearing a lot of different opinions, and just to start off I'd like to pass on the experiences that I've had.

Certainly, from my area I want to let a few people understand that the riding I represent and the area that I have actually has the lowest per capita of government jobs in the province - the resource sector, the fishing industry, the mink industry, the small business owners are the heart of what drives our economy. Those entrepreneurs, those hard-working people we have out there who keep us going each and every day are the ones I listen to, and I just want to pass on some of the things that I have heard.

This is concerning; there's no doubt it is. The Premier has made that very clear and he's passed that comment on to Minister Morneau and also our Minister of Finance and Treasury Board. What I do as an MLA, which all of us do - and I've heard it from our colleagues, we've had conversations around this - is we listen and we relay in conversations with our Members of Parliament, and understanding of the situation is probably key.

I know we talked a lot about it impacting doctors, but let's make it clear, this is more than about money, this is about our ability to recruit, our ability to retain, our ability to grow as a community. Just framing it directly around money is not, I think, what it's about. It's about us moving forward as Nova Scotians.

I also want to broaden the discussion. I always like to have the chance to mention all the sectors that really drive our economy - and I know we didn't mention other industries in other areas that I've had conversations around this - and that would be the mink industry for example, the lobster fishermen. This affects a broad spectrum of people and I'm actually quite pleased that the conversations we've had with our federal counterparts have been listened to, they've been positive conversations - we've been assured that.

The conversations that I've had with my federal MP - and we've heard other MPs in Atlantic Canada speak out about this - that is what our democratic process is and that's what we're here to do. We're here to debate issues, we're here to bring up things that we feel are right. Nobody brings anything to the table that they think is wrong. But through these conversations we grow and we make changes. I think we're all hopeful that there will be changes.

This is a consultation stage. Sometimes it's framed as a decision that's been made and it's done and over with and the doom and gloom comes out. But let's be serious, these are simply consultation phases and we encourage anybody who is impacted by this to bring this forward through the proper recourses and make their voices heard. That's what we do.



We take a lead in this, we've been very clear from the outset that we listen and we pass on every single concern that we've heard.

I think it's equally important for us to understand that as representatives of government, it's important for us to get the facts, understanding the full implications. I listened very carefully as the Leader of the Official Opposition spoke and, unfortunately, I never heard once a clear, direct number of what the impact actually is. That is a very difficult question to answer, it is extremely hard. It is a broad topic, it affects a lot of people in different ways. It would be very hard for us to understand that full impact. But these are some of the questions that I have put to my federal counterpart, especially for my area, which is again an area that has a high representation of individuals that would be impacted by this.

To say that simply it is going to affect doctors - lawyers is another area. We never heard lawyers mentioned, but certainly there is another group that I have had good conversation with. The interesting conversation with lawyers is lawyers so often come with answers to the problem also. I think what they are presenting and have given the federal government is some good avenues on how this can possibly be implemented with a lower amount of impact, which is important.

We all want to grow the economy and we all - I mean this is a taxation issue. I think probably a lot of people are kind of curious as to why a forest technician is up here talking about taxation. This is about growing our economy and growing what we have in the province, and I just want to reflect on a couple of things.

We are quite proud of what we have done in the taxation world, and again I wouldn't criticize the Opposition for not mentioning what we have done in taxation areas. It is never something that we do to congratulate others. Just for one minute everybody please realize that our focus has been on reducing taxes in the Province of Nova Scotia. We have looked at small business, for example. It was interesting to sit and listen in Question Period today. I mean we are debating it here again, but certainly in Question Period, questions were asked and a lot of reflection went back and forth on what this means, and I just wanted to reiterate some of the things that were said there.

Reduction in the threshold for our small businesses, \$14 million in impact to small businesses in Nova Scotia. Let us not lose sight of that. The moving of the threshold from \$350,000 to \$500,000 is going to directly impact 1,800 small businesses in this province, something that I am extremely proud of and I have had very positive feedback about that. We are on the topic of the taxation. Low-income, middle-income families - low income especially - moving the basic personal exemption amount, affecting 60,000 more - not just 60,000, but 60,000 more Nova Scotians - who are going to pay lower taxes in this province (Interruption) Or no tax, exactly. Let us not lose sight of what we are doing as a government and it's nice sometimes to have that recognized.

I recognize good things that are brought up by the Opposition; please don't lose sight of that. We are very proud of what we are doing in that area. I would also like to talk about red tape reduction. Again, we are talking about impacts to small businesses, entrepreneurs, and people who pay taxes. One of the biggest complaints that we have heard going in in 2013 was, what kind of a world do we have to navigate out there to get our business done? The hiring of Fred Crooks, the moving of that individual to focus solely on red tape reduction, is paying dividends in this province. I commend our government again for doing this. Let us not solely look at just what is going on in the federal world, let us try to focus a little more on what we have done here also, which are positive things.

[3:15 p.m.]

Youth employment - the Graduate to Opportunity program in this province, alone, just that, has taken 200 Nova Scotia employers, 350 new graduates since it was inception in 2015 will add \$1.7 million, bringing our total investment to \$4.9 million, introducing a program to more Nova Scotia employers that is going to have the potential to support 1,200 new jobs in this province. We know, and we have echoed our concerns to our federal counterparts about this broad, complex, sweeping issue that's hitting not just Nova Scotia but every province.

We have heard that the Premier and his group of Premiers collectively have brought five individual points that they would like to see addressed. We know that people are concerned out there. We know that there's a lot of information that is being spread around that needs to be clarified. There is not a colleague in my caucus or on the opposite side who - no, we have concerns. Does that mean that we circumvent the consultation phase, simply eliminate it, and say no? We need to let that process take its course.

It's important for each and every person who gets an opportunity here today, and I look forward to hearing members on the other side of the floor get up and speak. When you do speak, don't just echo on the impact. Echo on ways that that can be changed. Don't just bring the problem to the floor. Try and bring a solution. (Applause)

From my perspective, again, as a person who represents a rural riding in Nova Scotia who has concerns about this, I'm very impressed when I speak with the lawyers, and I'm very impressed when I speak with the people in the mink industry who understand it and see ways that it can be implemented without a direct impact on them, yet achieving the same kind of outcomes that I think they're trying to achieve.

Down the road for us, this is an example also of confusion we always see out in our rural ridings about responsibilities of the three levels of government - I should say four, First Nations. But also we all have our own responsibilities. I know that I always look for input from my federal counterpart and my municipal counterpart whenever I am bringing something forward. I do that in a respectful way.

As you heard me talk about in the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne: credibility and relationships. When we speak, we want to make sure that we're on solid ground about information here. I'm not going to be one to stand up here - I think most of you know me - and call out some of the comments that have been made. I think we get judged in the general public, when the final bell chimes, on what's accurate and what isn't. I think there's a responsibility for all of us to ensure that we do this in a respectful way and in a way that has impact.

I would encourage everybody, when they get up to speak, to please bring a solution to the problem. Don't just bring the problem. Don't overexaggerate it to more than it is. Make it real, and you will get listened to when that happens.

I do believe also that it's important to reflect on the fact that we as provincial representatives, again, bear a responsibility in our own communities in the world that we live in to do what we can do within our legislative mandate. I'm so proud, again, to reflect on what we have done for small businesses, what we have done for low-income earners, what we have done for the youth in this province, what we have done in all of those sectors - reducing red tape, every single thing that small businesses have asked us for, entrepreneurs have asked us for, people in need who are feeling a tax burden have asked us for. We're going to continue to do that work also, and we're going to continue to do it in a way that doesn't negatively impact the future of this province and moves us forward, and at the same time keeping our ears open and our relationship with the federal government one that's strong.

Thank you for the time to stand here today. I really do look forward to maybe some rebuttals of some things that I've said, or just maybe the same old following along of creating an issue around what the problem is and not looking at what solutions are. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North on an introduction.

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Monsieur le Président, j'aimerais souhaiter la bienvenue à mes beaux-parents, Louise Poisson et Augustin LeBel, venus de Gatineau, Québec, qui visitent pour la première fois notre Assemblée législative de la Nouvelle-Écosse.

I would like to welcome my in-laws Augustin LeBel and Louise Poisson who are visiting us from Quebec. It's their first time visiting our House of Assembly here in Nova Scotia. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We welcome all our guests this afternoon who are with us.

The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I too want to welcome our guests. Bienvenue en Nouvelle-Écosse.

I want to begin by saying over the last 14 years or so there haven't been too many occasions where the debate of the House is focused on an issue that is brought to light from another level of government, especially the federal government. But we have over the last number of years felt it necessary to bring forward an issue that I think will impact our province and most definitely impact the work of the government and the importance especially - I'll get into it in a few minutes - around some of the services that the provincial government provides. It shows that even though we are on a provincial level, no matter what level of government you are the changes and the proposals and the laws you bring forward have an impact on other levels of government.

It would be interesting to see in a few years if we would be maybe not seeing this issue come forward on a provincial level if the current federal government lives up to the commitment for electoral reform. I say that because obviously proportional representation is something that our Party has been very vocal on, knowing that to have publicly elected officials represent the wishes of those who vote for them is important. One of the reasons I believe we have this situation in front of us today is that we know with the more recent federal election that all the members of Parliament who represent Nova Scotia are in the governing Party.

With that, I think, is associated a less forceful way of ensuring the federal government is doing things that don't have a negative impact on our residents here in Nova Scotia. I think the onus is not only on the Progressive Conservatives but also the NDP to ensure that even though it's a federal issue, we'll stand up to represent Nova Scotians no matter what level of government we're talking about. This issue of tax reform that we've seen over the summer is the classic example of Liberals proposing to take action on an issue, we believe, without doing the necessary consultation.

Since announcing this proposal in July, I know members of our caucus have heard from small business owners, from doctors, from farmers, the list goes on and on, and all these people are concerned about these tax changes and what they mean for them - and rightfully so. Whenever a public policy is changed and has an impact on you or your neighbour or your community, you want to do everything you can to make sure that you limit the negative impact that may cause.

The basic structure of the existing tax system has been in place since 1982 and the current changes being proposed are ones that are complex and require, I believe, consultation and communication with all those who stand to be affected by it. However, the Liberals decided to first announce their intentions before taking what we believe is the time to do the necessary consultation - and I know there is some consultation happening now but this has led, the way they have announced it, to mass hysteria and confusion about

these tax changes and what they mean to individuals, what they mean to a profession, what they mean to communities not only here in Nova Scotia but across Canada.

The federal government now seems to be, I believe, in a public relations war with Canadians about the intent and the substance of these changes and this is not the right approach to public policy and public policy issues.

I think Minister Morneau made an error in judgment when he initially tried to make this about the privileged few versus Canadians - the rest of Canada and the rest of Canadians. Those who stand to be affected by these proposed changes, as I said earlier, are doctors who care for us and our loved ones; the small business owners who help drive our economy, especially in rural communities here in Nova Scotia; and farmers who put food on our table or food on our plate. To label these people as tax cheats is not helpful. There is enough division in our society so that we don't need a federal government to start off an announcement with those types of parameters or labels of why these changes were needed.

I think it's time the Liberal Government in Ottawa admits the error of their ways and commits to a substantial consultation process before making any decision around these proposed changes. Mr. Morneau recently had a quick visit to Halifax to meet with a selective group of people to talk about the proposed changes. It seems to have done more harm than good as those who were not allowed to attend the meeting are left feeling that this visit was more about lip service than true consultation process. We know just recently Doctors Nova Scotia put together a meeting to try to get their concerns voiced here in Nova Scotia. Now mind you, perhaps after four years of dealing with a Liberal Government here in Nova Scotia that has acted first and sometimes consulted later, people in this province are a little sour when it comes to the consultation process.

Now, we know there are people out there who think the current system should be changed and amended in the name of fairness, but do they want changes at the expense of their ability to find a doctor for example? We know that is a serious issue here in Nova Scotia and that's one that I think is driving the majority of the correspondence that I've heard from people and received. Do they want changes that negatively impact their neighbours who own a small business and are working to grow their business and create local jobs? Even a change of one of those businesses, especially in rural Nova Scotia, has a negative impact on that community and that area of the province. Do they want changes that risk farms, that risk taking farms out of the hands of local families and placing them in hands of multinational agri-companies? I don't believe that's the case and I know that the Liberal Government in Ottawa can't be so sure either.

I think they need to ensure that the concerns of not only Nova Scotians, but Canadians across the country are heard and I think the rhetoric around the launch of these changes, as I mentioned earlier, helped at no cost. That's why the need to hit the brakes on this tax change is truly something that I think is needed from the federal government.

I think that's maybe what's behind the Progressive Conservatives bringing this forward. I think the conversation with Canadians needs to happen and move forward only when those concerns of not only Nova Scotians but Canadians are heard across the country. There's a lot to do on this file and I would suggest that the Liberals in Ottawa get to work and I think the onus is on our government, no matter if they're Liberal or not, to ensure that they are ensuring Nova Scotians aren't impacted in a negative way with proposed changes on the federal side of tax reform.

[3:30 p.m.]

I hope that Mr. Morneau and the Prime Minister hear us in Nova Scotia that there are concerns. We're not saying that tax reform is not something that they should go forward with. What we're saying is when they impact people's lives like we heard from the doctors and from some of the farmers and others in our community, then in our opinion the government needs to put the brakes on, that they don't need to move so fast.

What we're calling for is making sure that the Premier here in Nova Scotia, the Liberal Government in Nova Scotia, ensures that the best interests of Nova Scotians are heard and that they represent them on the national level. Thank you for allowing me those few minutes for some comments.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to say a few words on this issue and this resolution. Obviously the changes the federal government have suggested that they are going to do, that they have recommended, have come as a shock to the business community, the farm community, and anyone with an incorporated company in the Province of Nova Scotia. There's a number of problems with these changes that have been suggested and I would like to go down through a few of these issues.

I know for the farm community that any time stuff happens during the summer, it's very difficult to get a farmer to go to a meeting during the summer. Normally in the farm community from about the first of May until the end of October we don't want to go - don't bother us with the meeting, don't call us to a meeting, we're working on the farm. Farmers, as a whole, are generally very reluctant to leave the farm during that time period because so much is happening.

These tax changes, the most substantive tax changes since 1982 - we were given a 75-day period to comment on and that was over the summer. So now, late in the day, the farm industry, the business community - professionals as the member for Clare-Digby mentioned, lawyers - any professional person who is incorporated is affected by these profound tax changes that the federal government has implemented.

I would suggest to you that the comment period has been far too short, that we would have liked to have had more time to comment on them. I think that is a huge problem with what we're dealing with right now. Obviously opposition to these changes is galvanizing, we see that today with the Leaders of the three provincial Progressive Conservative Parties of the Maritime Provinces being together here in this Assembly today, calling for the Government of Nova Scotia, our federal MPs - to call for this process to be delayed, halted, changed, amended.

There's a number of problems with what has been proposed and I would drill down into a couple of those problems. I will say that I am a farmer, not a tax accountant and as the member for Clare-Digby said, tax law is a complicated issue. It's not my forte.

One of the major changes is that income splitting will no longer be allowed with family members. I should say that I am in the unique position of having sold my farm to my two oldest boys. I never thought that would happen, it came as a surprise to me. I never made that my intent. I didn't put them in 4-H, I didn't demand or ask that they go to Agricultural College. I guess my goal was always if my business was interesting enough that they would come back to it, and that happened.

I am really pleased to have been able to do that young. My dad sold me the farm when he was approximately the same age now that I am. I was 25, my two oldest boys are 27 and 28. I've sold the farm to them. One boy bought a limited company, the other son bought the unincorporated - the actual farm. So I'm kind of in that category, we've dealt with it.

I can tell you that my wife and I did use the income-splitting provisions and she didn't work on the farm all that much. However, had we ever divorced, she would have gotten half of everything, so why couldn't she have split the income with me? (Interruption) Thankfully, we never got divorced.

When we went to get a line of credit at the bank, we both signed for that line of credit. Not only did we both sign for it, we both gave personal guarantees for that line of credit. How was she not a full partner in the business? She stood to lose just as much as I did if the business lost.

She didn't put the hours in on the farm. She never drove a tractor or had a hoe in her hand. She never cut a cabbage. But she was watching the accounts and the books all the time. At any given moment, she knew where I was, where the accounts stood. When we were worried about making payroll, she knew where we were. I knew where we were. We were both worried about making payroll and meeting all the obligations.

On a farm, cash flow becomes a thing you worry about the most. All of those great stresses and worries that any small business has, we had. I would suggest to you that she

was an equal partner in that. In fact, she had her own business. We worked together and used one business to strengthen the other.

The part of this federal tax change that is going to prevent this type of income splitting - I would suggest to the member for Clare-Digby, who asked for concrete suggestions, that this is misguided and wrong and not an accurate reflection of how all these small businesses across Canada operate. To suggest that that should not be the case is, I believe, a misguided suggestion.

Another part of these tax changes that I believe is misguided - there are mechanisms within the tax law to leave money in the business. It's sort of a tax-deferral mechanism that allows a company to keep money within the business. We did that. I understand that these mechanisms are going to be taxed. The reason I believe this is misguided is that in my business I couldn't really tell you how much money we were going to make from one year to the next. In farming, sometimes you have good years and sometimes you have bad years.

I think that's true for many businesses. If money was left in the business, it was there for the down years, so it added to the strength and resilience of the business - of our business - to leave money in there and not have it taxed, to leave profit in there. So I believe this is a serious mistake in the plan that the federal government is bringing forward.

Another mistake in the federal government's plan, which I can't exactly relate to - I understand these tax changes will penalize family members who invest in a start-up corporation of another family member. So if you have a son or daughter or relative who has a start-up business and you invest in it, your investment will be taxed at the highest rate, versus a more-than-arm's-length investor would be taxed at a lower rate. It's my understanding that many businesses that start up start out very small, and often family members are tapped to invest in those businesses. I believe it is a very serious mistake to change that, and will have a chilling effect on start-ups in our country. We've had some extremely successful, very small start-ups. BlackBerry was one, not that long ago. It's gone the full cycle - it became extremely profitable.

Every business starts out small. I've often said that a small business that works is better than a big business that doesn't work. These small start-ups are extremely important to our economy, and family members are often the ones to first put money in. To have them taxed at a higher rate for putting that money in, when they try to take that money out, is fundamentally unfair, I believe, and not realistic, and extremely misguided.

Another aspect of these tax changes, I understand, is that it will increase the cost of passing down your farm or your business to the next generation. My colleague for Cumberland South mentioned that: when you sell your business to your family, the tax rate on that will increase. I can tell you from personal experience that selling your business to your family could mean taking less for your business than you could get in the open market. That's the reality. If you sell your business to your sons or your daughters, and in fact the



new face of farming in our country is the female face, so often it is young ladies who are going into farming. That is a reality, that is a new face of farming.

In selling the business to my sons I could not get fair market value for it because they had to have it for an amount of money that they could realistically carry. In other words, they've got to make payments on this business. So then you look at not what the assets are worth but what will the business carry. So you often are selling your business, and especially in a business like farming where it is so asset-intense, like farmers are what you'd call land rich and cash poor, that's a typical thing. The land increases in value but there's never that much cash floating around.

When you sell your business to your sons or your daughters you have to sell it to them for an amount of money that they can afford to pay for it. Often that is not the same amount of money as the neighbour could afford to pay for it. The neighbour who has an operating farm, to add a bit more to it, they can pay fair market value - you have to accept something less. To have that transaction charged tax at a higher rate, I would suggest to you is inherently unfair.

Another issue I have with these tax changes and this is a very fundamental issue, is I do not appreciate the language that the federal government, that Bill Morneau, that the Trudeau Government has used to characterize small businesses like myself; I am a tax cheat and a tax dodge because I use some of these tax laws. We go through the books and figure that out and we never had very sophisticated tax advice but it was just there and I used it. I think it's extraordinarily unfortunate that such language of division was used, such pejorative language towards me personally.

I have an issue with Bill Morneau on that and I wasn't really looking for this information but a very short search on the Internet found that a year ago it came out in the news that the leaks from the Panama Paper, that Bill Morneau's company is registered in the Bahamas. I can tell you that my company was registered in Nova Scotia. There's an extraordinarily large number of companies registered in the Bahamas and I will table this document. It is news from September 21, 2016, *The Hamilton Spectator*, but you can find it in *The Huffington Post* from the same date, it's just there.

Why does it matter that somebody has their company registered in the Bahamas? Here's a statement, why are so many companies registered and here is the statement: Experts agree that even legal, offshore financial transactions have deprived national treasuries of billions of dollars and the Bahamas is the worst of the worst it says. They are an offshore centre, they haven't made any commitments for tax information to exchange with other countries and there may be one or two companies in the world where tax evasion is not an offence for money-laundering.

Unfortunately the Bahamas is one of the worst countries in the world for companies to be registered for tax evasion. In fact Morneau Shepell is one of the companies. Bill

Morneau was a director of a Bahamian subsidiary for his company. In fact when he became Finance Minister, apparently he resigned his directorship from that Bahamian registered company but after a year that resignation still hadn't shown up in the Bahamas.

I would suggest to you that Bill Morneau may well call me a tax cheat but looking at the record, Bill Morneau's company is registered in the Bahamas and in Delaware, another state which is in the document that is also noted for being a low-tax environment. So while Bill Morneau might be worth \$70 million or more, his own company and his own business which he is the owner of, is dodging Canadian taxes, I would suggest. I would suggest to Bill Morneau to prove it to me if that's not the case. Shame on you Bill Morneau for calling hard-working Canadians who put 70, 80 hours a week into their own small business tax cheats, when his company is doing that - registered in the Bahamas. Shame on you Bill Morneau.

[3:45 p.m.]

Not only that - before I run out of time - to add insult to injury, apparently the number one way to avoid these now, there is another mechanism to avoid tax for a limited company called retirement compensation arrangement, an RCA.

So rather than using income splitting or tax sprinkling or deferral mechanisms which are all reportedly going to get cut, I could maybe go if I was wealthy enough, if I still had that company and we made profits, I could go buy an RCA. It turns out that the number one company in the country selling RCAs is Morneau Shepell.

So his own company sells RCAs, is a major seller of that tax evasion product. But that one is not one that they have decided to catch in the tax evasion scheme. Shame on you on that fact, Bill Morneau, that you are allowing your company to go ahead in its method of tax evasion that you have allowed your company to register in the Bahamas in the past for tax evasion purposes, almost certainly, and you are taxing the plumber, the doctors, the farmers of this nation and I say shame on you, Bill Morneau.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: We just have four minutes to finish up and I can't let this opportunity go by without standing up and saying something. I had a call earlier this week from a physician in rural Nova Scotia. He explained what this is going to mean on the ground in Nova Scotia and this is why the government should be taking a more vocal stand on this issue - because it affects us all. The physician told me that she followed all the rules despite what Mr. Morneau is suggesting now.

My colleague did I think an excellent job of explaining how hypocritical it is for him to say the things he said and yet practise the business he has practised. So she has followed all the rules, she has been incorporated for 17 years, she now faces uncertainty.

There is no transition period. There are loans taken out in the incorporated structure. So great uncertainty for a person that we need in our province. Who is doing a good job for our province and Nova Scotians.

Another physician is thinking about leaving. Another physician is coming close to retirement, so in a small rural area this a perfect storm for disaster for this government. Why doesn't it matter to the members, Party lines aside? This is something that this government should be taking on with Ottawa.

I think about the comments of the member for Clare-Digby. He suggested that we should be putting recommendations forward. Absolutely. But we are not the ones causing the problem here. One of the solutions is to leave things the way that they are. I have just read a couple of examples today that I have seen. In a lot of cases I know members have spoken earlier today about how couples share the risk when you start a business.

So essentially what is permitted to happen now and probably one of the simple cases is that couples can split their income. Now this is a subject that has been debated recently. And eventually the decision to go ahead with it was stopped and does not exist but in this case income-splitting - I think of an example about today: pre-Primary. What if you have a couple that decides to split their income and one member of the family decides to stay home with the children? That is saving the province here, by Public Accounts Committee today, \$6,400 a year per child. If they have a couple of children that is over \$12,000 they are saving the province in money that the province does not need to collect in taxes. So that is cutting out an option for a couple.

I think that is just one very simple example why this relates to us back here in the province. And one of the solutions is to scrap this idea certainly as it is proposed. So I have another example here about a family member extending a loan to somebody in the family as a way to creatively finance a business start-up that is good for our economy.

The person is still taking a risk under the new rules. They will face bad consequences when it comes to paying tax.

I leave it at that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I thank all members for their input on Resolution No. 160.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 5.

**Bill No. 5 - Provincial Court Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, as always, it's an honour to rise in my place, and in particular to Bill No. 5 which does amend the Provincial Court Act. This bill is absolutely near and dear to my heart. It's a rather simple bill but definitely will have a big impact and I know that I will continue championing this bill if it shall not be passed in this session. I will continue to fight for the rights of victims of sexual assault. It's something that I take a lot of time to investigate and listen to people. It's something that I was involved with in my early 20s while I volunteered at a health and wellness centre in Portland, Maine.

This is a bill that if properly implemented will make a colossal difference for sexual assault victims of any gender and that's what's important here - any gender. It will increase confidence in our justice system and it will make sure that Nova Scotians who have been sexually assaulted are treated fairly when they are brave enough to come forward, and as so many of us know, so many are not brave enough to come forward. Either they don't have the network of support or the resources or the courage to come forward. It's a very, very delicate, complex issue.

This bill requires our Provincial Court judges to have comprehensive and ongoing training in sexual assault law. It also requires judges to provide written decisions in sexual assault cases, which is obvious why we would want that. The need for this bill became crystal clear last March when the glare of national and even international media shined on our province's justice system, and I'm sure many of us in this Chamber will recall these five words: "Clearly, a drunk can consent."

Consider the far-reaching impact those five little words had on our society, continues to have on our society, and will influence those of future sexual assault incidents, and here's a few that I can think of actually. Those words will make anyone who is sexually assaulted after drinking think twice about going public or telling anyone. Those five words will make the shame that too often comes along with sexual assault much worse. Those words will make victims who were drunk at the time of the assault believe Nova Scotia's justice system will not protect them. We all know that is just wrong.

For me, “Clearly, a drunk can consent”, that’s not too far away from: look at what she’s wearing, she was asking for it, what was she thinking wearing that, why did she walk down the alley by herself, especially at nighttime? Those are old-fashioned, really antiquated, hurtful ways of thinking how to blame the victim and not the offender.

Mr. Speaker, it’s been a quarter of a century since the “no means no” law was passed, and I know standing here today we can do better. We must do better. We have evolved and it’s decades of different generations now. This “no means no” law could still be worthy but we have to come into 2017 and realize that we need to implement further laws.

In Nova Scotia, we want a justice system where the victim’s character or personal history is never held against them. We want a justice system where anyone involved in a sexual assault case will be treated with respect and compassion, a system where a victim of crime is guaranteed their dignity.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear. This isn’t a criticism of our system. It’s an initiative that will ensure that judges are armed with all the tools they need to stay current on sexual assault laws. This bill is not connected in any way to assuming the guilt of someone who has been charged. They are innocent until proven guilty.

Bill No. 5 is based on a piece of federal legislation called the JUST Act. That bill passed in the House of Commons this past March unanimously, with support from all sides. Federal MPs from all Parties got behind a bill that will help give victims of sexual assault more confidence in the justice system and ensure everyone who is involved with these horrific cases is treated fairly and compassionately. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, this bill radiates goodness, compassion, strength, worthiness, and most importantly, trust. Today, I urge all member of this Legislature to follow the lead of our federal cousins, to take an example from them. I ask all members to support a bill that will mean fewer sexual assault survivors will feel afraid to bring their case to the justice system.

This bill will help ensure that the trauma of the original crime is not compounded by the actions of the justice system. Just maybe, the bill will mean that more people who are sexually assaulted in our province will come forward to seek justice. And it will increase transparency by requiring written decisions in these cases, as I have mentioned earlier, for obvious reasons.

We have many fine judges in Nova Scotia. I know that, and I know everyone in here knows that. But I believe extra training will make them better. We all can be better, and it certainly wouldn’t hurt to have this extra training.

Statistics show that one in three women will experience some form of sexual violence in her lifetime. That means that definitely a woman or women in this Chamber have been sexually assaulted. That is staggering, Mr. Speaker. Think about women in our

lives. Think about our mothers, sisters, aunts, daughters, and friends. We've all heard stories, but think of the stories that have been untold because of fear - fear of judgment and fear of being in a spotlight where you have to expose details of something that is so traumatic and embarrassing. When we think about them and think that statistics show that one in three of them will be sexually assaulted, I think we can agree that Bill No. 5 is a small but powerful gesture to ensure that the justice system will treat them fairly and with compassion and trust.

Over the past few decades, I have witnessed a disturbing number of sexual assault cases that have shaken and weakened the public's confidence in our justice system. These are cases in which those whom the justice system was supposed to serve, especially women, but not always women - as mentioned earlier, all genders - but victims of sexual assault were harmed by comments, attitudes or the application simply of the law.

Too often, those involved in these cases came away with a feeling that they have experienced not just a judgment on their case, but a judgment of their very own character. We all know in this Chamber what it is like to have our character or our integrity judged incorrectly. We all know that we pretty well live that day to day. It can mentally take a toll on us, on our well-being and at times many find themselves self-medicating.

[4:00 p.m.]

I know that the complexities of sexual assault is very delicate. In the early 1990s I volunteered at a women's sexual health centre and I was young, I was naïve, it was something I was trying to be involved in the community at the time. I was working in Portland, Maine for the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture. I volunteered mostly on Saturday or Sunday morning, probably the worst time to volunteer at a women's sexual assault centre, but I have no regrets because the stories I heard, I realized how grateful, how blessed I am for the life I have. If I began to tell you some of these horrific assault stories, I know tears would be flowing here because I stand here as a 48-year-old woman but at the time I was in my early 20s and I was seeing young women, 16, coming in with their babies or a 20-year-old coming in with her 5-year-old. Sadly, the report wasn't to say that they were sexually assaulted, but their child was sexually assaulted. It just totally invades any trust in anyone.

I feel that everyone in this Chamber no doubt knows someone, has either had an experience, could share a story. I really hope they will give all consideration to this bill that can simply do no harm, it can only do good. I hope everyone will reflect with friends and family and seriously take a look at what is needed in our justice system to ensure that sexual assault victims will come forward. We know that the stats are extremely high in this province for not coming forward. We know that we've had a lot of national attention on us because of some incidents in the last couple of years.

We can change that, we can change that. I truly look forward to all the comments from my colleagues, I look forward to continuing the dialogue. If perhaps there is something in the bill that could be changed, enhanced or taken away, let's just make it happen. I'm open to that. I know that all my colleagues are open to that as well. This is just one bill that I hope we can surely come to terms on agreeing with and I urge members to support Bill No. 5 as it is a bill that impacts so many lives, which I truly believe should have a bipartisan approach. Thank you so very much.

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

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the member opposite for bringing forward this bill and I'm happy to have a few minutes to speak on this issue.

I met a girl when I was in university and we became friends and she disclosed to me, part way through our friendship, that she had been raped by her boyfriend. She had never told anybody, had never said anything, had never reported it. I remember thinking, what do you mean? This is so black and white to me - we've been taught from school, no means no. There's never a right time, we were taught all the things the honourable member mentioned, that was our generation. It doesn't matter what you're wearing and it doesn't matter where you are. We don't blame people for being violated in any particular way, particularly with sexual violence. So I couldn't fathom how this woman wouldn't have reported this. I was clearly very naïve.

As the years have gone on and as my experience has grown I have seen and heard time and time again either through my experience as a high school teacher, as a high school guidance counsellor, as a woman who has female friends and has female colleagues, time and time again, this story, this conversation comes up and it's the same narrative no matter how many years pass, no matter how many provisions we put in place, no matter how much education we get out there, no matter how much we can say - and I know all the members in this House agree - that this is an unacceptable reality for individuals.

The shame and the fear in reporting, to having to admit to yourself, let alone to others, this horrible thing has happened to you is enough on its own. We can work to try and change that, we can work to give confidences and to build relationships. But then we're faced with another statistic that those who report - this is possibly not accurate, but I believe it is something like, of only the 10 per cent that are reported in our province, 30 per cent actually make it to trial for whatever reason, a variety of reasons. So, what do you do with that? How do you fix that?

I know that one of the pieces that we've tried to look at is our Sexual Violence Strategy. I know I've talked with the member opposite a number of times on that. Our former Minister of Community Services and our former minister responsible for the Status of Women, she oversaw that Sexual Violence Strategy for three years. I'm very pleased

that after our three-year project, we've now invested \$1.1 million to continue that work and to move forward.

I don't like to say a "victim" - that's the wrong word - but people who have experienced sexual assault, people who have experienced instances of sexual violence. To say victim, even though that is our go-to, implies that it has defeated them or that maybe they could have done something to prevent it, when in actuality everybody I've ever come across who has experienced this - they are probably among some of the strongest people I've ever met. There isn't anything that's defeated about them, especially if they have the courage to speak and to advocate.

I know all the members of this House see this and agree. I am sorry - I didn't think I was going to get overly emotional on this, but it's a very emotional topic. I am pleased with what we've done as a government. As the member opposite stated, this is not a criticism and I don't see this bill as a criticism. I don't see this bill as a criticism of our judiciary or our government. I think that as she has presented it, it's presented to be an add-on and where we can continue to grow.

I want to reassure the member that we are working, and continuing to work, through the Sexual Violence Strategy through our Department of Justice to take steps to make sure that this is addressed. I agree with her - the instances that have happened in this province are horrific. Whether we were on a national or international stage doesn't matter. It's equally as horrific when they don't make national or international media.

I want to highlight that we've hired two special prosecutors in the province who will deal directly with sexual violence. I want to import how dedicated they will be in working with our judges, with our system, and with our stakeholders. We need to get people to the courts, we need to get them to disclose, we need to get individuals to stand up and say - so that it's a total partnership. I feel really strongly that they're going to be met with some very willing and eager participants - particularly our newest appointed Judge, Diane Lynn McGrath, who actually is a domestic violence educator. She's a co-trainer with the Public Prosecution Service and she was involved in the development and implementation of the Domestic Violence Court in Sydney. She is going to add a lens, and add to, contribute to, a body that is already keen to learn and to grow.

We were talking about this recently. The judiciary themselves are completely focused on problem-solving in this particular issue, and they're coming together and they're asking for suggestions and asking to collaborate. That to me is fantastic, because again, we're not criticizing. We're moving forward and we're trying to learn and we're trying to enhance and we're trying to make things better, make impossible situations a little bit more bearable.

Oh! Did I thank you? I've spoken for a long time and I don't think that I have thanked the member for Pictou West for bringing this forward again and thanking her for



her dedication towards this. (Applause) I think that, you know, sometimes we feel like what we say here, nobody's paying attention and we're just kind of all going through motions and maybe that's life. No matter what our careers are, we all feel like that's kind of the case. But I'm so happy to be able to hear her thoughts, I'm so happy to be able to hear as many people who would like to talk on this, continue this conversation, continue to move forward and see how we can be supportive of each other. To see how we can fix this, see what we can do to really fix what is a small piece to a very large problem and chip away at it.

I have another story. Unfortunately, I have gone from being a very naïve 17-year-old girl to being older than that and experiencing a lot more. One instance, in particular, was an individual who did report. Through no fault of the criminal justice system, through no fault of prosecutors, through nobody's fault, really, that case didn't move forward because she was unable to move forward. The retelling, the reliving - she got to a point where it was just easier to not do it anymore and to move on with her life. Thankfully - you know, this story could have ended in so many other ways, but thankfully she's still around and she's living her life. She's moved forward in her life and she has figured out how to move on with this being a part of her but not defining her. And she was able to move on without needing what we would want of justice being served, of accountability.

I think the honourable member is right. There are lots of people out there walking amongst us, who have been failed, and we don't know. They don't wear little placards that say, hi, my name is, and this is what's happened. We have a duty and we have an obligation to reinforce paths, to work within our system, to support our systems and make sure that they're working at their best capacity. I think that that's something that has to change constantly - I don't think that you're ever going to get something that's perfect. A perfect system is already imperfect. You need to keep on growing, you need to keep on learning, and you need to keep on moving.

[4:15 p.m.]

I do want to look at a few things federally. I'm going to take homework back on this particular bill. I want to look at where we stand federally, what resources are there. I know that there is already training for our judges. I know that there is time and money allotted for our judges to be trained. I'm not sure if that is targeted at all, what it is. We can discuss that. I do want to look into that.

I want to take the last few minutes to say to those out there who have felt failed by our system that we hear you, that we are with you, and that we will work to make this better.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill No. 5, put forth by the Progressive Conservative caucus. I want to thank the member for Pictou West for championing this bill and for speaking on this issue for so long. It is an important response to the concerns of many Nova Scotians about the fair treatment of sexual assault victims in our justice system. We have now heard a lot from these two members, so I will try not to say all those same things again. But I do have a few words to say.

In trying to respond to these tragic crimes once they do come to trial, we as elected officials must attempt to balance the independence of the judiciary with the need to ensure public confidence in our judicial system. As I read it, this bill attempts to strike that balance by ensuring that judges receive education and training in sexual assault issues prior to ruling.

As someone who has undergone legal training and, more particularly, has worked in professional development for lawyers - this is the first time that has ever been a valuable career thing outside of that particular job, so here I am - I know the value of professional development. So I'm very happy to see this bill come forward. Of course, with colleagues still working in the profession, I know others are as well.

I want to say quickly that, as we just heard, our justice system is not particularly kind to victims. It goes without saying that victims of sexual violence are often doubly impacted.

We know, Mr. Speaker, that sexual violence is a persistent issue in Nova Scotia, one that needs addressing from many angles, including funding for transition houses and women's centres and all kinds of other areas where we are still waiting for more action. But putting that aside for a moment, I just want to remind the members that that is not what this bill is talking about. What this bill is talking about is education for the judiciary. I would just urge us to keep focused on that.

Clause 1 of this bill requires judges to take comprehensive education training in sexual assault law. I think this is a good first step. I think moving forward, the bill would require some consultation with the legal profession, particularly those who specialize in sexual assault law, just to ensure that this training is comprehensive, that it's reflective of our laws, and that it exists. I'm not sure about what is actually out there. I think that that's something that I would want to have more information about.

I think requiring judges to understand the history of sexual assault law and associated precedence prior to sitting behind the bench could increase public confidence that judges have the necessary perspective when deciding sexual assault cases. As I heard many times in law school, in order for justice to be done, justice must appear to be done. That's the issue that we are dealing with here.

Having judges complete continuing education on sexual assault law over time, as required in Clause 2, is a reasonable approach, as laws do evolve over time. This continuing education would also send a signal to the public that it's not just about doing a course to qualify to sit on the bench but about keeping up to date on the evolution of this important area of the law.

Clause 3 requires a written decision when the proceeding is for a sexual offence pursuant to the Criminal Code. I think that this would be a necessary and welcome improvement to the current status quo. It goes without saying, but I will say it. The case which sparked all of this controversy only came to light because a journalist - and we know that journalists are in somewhat more short supply than they once were - happened to be in the courtroom and caught the decision. This would take that issue firmly out of the realm of speculation and we would know when these cases came down and we would know what the findings are, which I think is particularly important.

Clause 4 requires the Chief Judge to consider the time required by a judge to attend and complete continuing education relating to sexual assault when assigning duties. While it is, I think, appropriate the Chief Judge consider this, I would hope that it's not the only consideration the Chief Judge would make. As we just heard from the member for Fairview-Clayton Park, the very newest judge appointed has very specialized training and background, and she's not the only one on the bench. I think we need to make sure there's enough nuance to consider the training that judges had, what their career was prior because there are many who are going to know more than they're ever going to know with any course. I think we do need to be respectful of the judiciary and how they come to the bench.

Saying that, I note that I suspect this clause does push a little bit the limits of balancing the desire to take action with the independence of the judiciary, but I am confident that balance can be struck in the implementation phase with constructive dialogue.

To conclude, I think that increasing the diversity of judicial appointments has gone a long way to broaden the perspective behind the bench. That being said, we have to ensure that there is public confidence in our legal system. The recent debate around sexual assault cases shows that we can, and must, improve upon this. Ensuring that judges have the necessary education and training in the area of sexual assault prior to taking the bench is a positive step in the right direction. Acknowledging the problem is part of the path forward and this is something we heard from the member across the aisle. But again, I want to just clarify that we live in a very rapidly changing time and so I think you would be hard-pressed to have anyone tell you, at least in polite company, that they don't think that sexual assault or sexual violence is a problem.

That being said, that in no way means they know how to deal with it, so it's good that our judiciary in general is eager to tackle this problem, that they're in dialogue about it - I don't think it alleviates the need for specialized training.

I want to thank the member again for raising this bill and, with that, I will conclude.

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

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I'm extremely pleased to rise in my place today and speak about this very important bill. I would first like to thank the member for Pictou West for her perseverance in doing this, and I would also like to thank the member for Fairview-Clayton Park and the member for Dartmouth South.

I want to acknowledge the fact that the honourable members for the women's caucus got together before the Legislature started and we sat around two tables and we talked about how excited we were that there were so many women sitting in the Legislature. (Applause) We talked about how we wanted to put aside Party colours to get things done, and I am praying with all my heart that this is the start of that.

Sexual assault is a serious issue and while we must work even harder to prevent it, we must understand when it happens that those impacted must be better protected. The professionals involved in prosecuting these cases wear this on their heart but they must be better educated on the very delicate nature about dealing with the victims and communicating with them as well. We want to ensure the proper resources are available to them to make sure that happens.

Last Spring, we saw a very unexpected verdict come out on one of these provincial court cases. We understand the specific instance is under review but it brought to light our concerns that perhaps not all the members of the legal system are as well educated on these matters as they could be. We need our justice system to remain independent, but we also need to be responsive to the needs of those alleging assault - not every victim who alleges assault or is a survivor of this crime has the same story or has the same experience.

Mr. Speaker, we know and I know, as the Critic for the Status of Women, that over 600 sexual assaults occur every year in Nova Scotia and that is only the amount that gets talked about. We know there is a staggeringly low statistic on when one reports and it's only 12 per cent, meaning that 88 per cent are suffering in silence with no help or support - and worse, the perpetrators go unpunished, often to reoffend.

Often the events have caused these survivors so much unwarranted shame that they cannot bring themselves to come forward. The stigma is still simply too great. It is both heartbreaking and unfortunate that as hard as we all work to raise awareness and educate more people to prevent sexual assault, it is still happening every single day. It is often repeatedly happening to the same person day after day, year after year, by the same perpetrator. Much like the stigma associated with the mental health survivors of sexual assault, they feel so much shame and they are apprehensive about going through the legal system.

As a health professional for the past 35 years, I have taken the medical history of hundreds of thousands of women and I could tell you 100,000 stories of over one-third of all women who have been sexually abused who told me in confidence what they had been through. The negative impacts and the consequences of these assaults on their physical, mental, and social health are staggering. I know there are many lawyers whom I personally know, who will admit that the trials when they have to cover them are an issue that is both emotionally and challenging for them and they wouldn't mind having greater help to get them through this system.

If we can add more support through our legal system by providing the survivors and the judges and lawyers with greater resources, we hope to see more appropriate and more sensitive handling of these cases.

Not everyone who is charged with a crime, especially a sexual crime, is guilty, but in cases like these it is always important to be honest and sensitive with the survivors. I am sad to say that Rehtaeh Parsons, who was from my own constituency, is one of those people who suffered through this system. I am thinking of her and her family and all those involved in that case today.

This bill is not meant to unfairly assume the guilt of anyone charged or to criticize the judicial system, but I am certainly glad that the member for Dartmouth South, who has such personal experience with the judicial system, was able to speak about it and speak in favour of it.

This bill is meant to educate, not criticize those adjudicating these cases in a manner that remains fair while recognizing the sensitivity of the subject matter. We've already spoken about the shame that many survivors feel, but that shame can quickly turn into depression and other mental and physical illnesses. It is important that we can reassure both the men and women who are affected that their justice system will respect their needs and that we understand the difficulty of facing their accusers. Sadly, I know many who have attempted suicide to escape the grief and unwarranted shame because they were raped or molested, and unfortunately, I know too many who have survived that attempt, as well as those who lost their lives.

The more respect we can show towards the men and women alleging sexual assault, the better we will all be. So, by providing more education and resources for all Nova Scotians, we hope we can convict the guilty and prevent future crimes of sexual violence. The recidivism of sexual assault is only accounted for based on the small number of individuals charged. When you consider that over 88 per cent of these rapes and assaults go unreported, there is a possibility that those who are getting away with it is even higher. If we can help remove the stigma we may actually convict more of those who are guilty, get them off the streets, and hopefully never have to deal with them and their violent natures again.

[4:30 p.m.]

The awareness surrounding mental illness has grown in this province and some of it is related to this particular tragedy. Those who have suffered sexual abuse or assault, given the stigma and silence they feel they must obey, often continue to struggle with it and develop severe depression due to the shame that they feel and the anxiety they feel in social interactions of any sort.

Many never get help at the time of their abuse, often because they were too young, or they were discouraged from bringing the issue forward, or they simply didn't realize at the time the lifelong impact it was going to have on their health.

In fact, last year there were over 72 children raped and sexually assaulted. I have three granddaughters, ages three, six, and nine. If that were one of them, I would be looking at every person in this room and saying, "How could you possibly not vote in favour of this?" I would expect your constituents to say the same thing if you vote no on this bill.

What we end up with is sexual assault survivors seeking and receiving care months, if not decades, later. I know it because they came to me looking for help with chronic pain, with headaches, with inability to sleep, with failing social relationships, and I know that that treatment is 10, 20, or 50 years after they needed it.

We believe that this bill is a step forward to standing up for those who are impacted by sexual violence and assault. We cannot continue to shame victims - or survivors; I like that much better. They're survivors, who are the strongest people I know, as was said across the aisle. We believe that this bill will help ensure a greater understanding about the complexities and sensitivities around sexual violence and assault for all Nova Scotians.

We have highlighted some of the shortcomings in our justice system. We just want to improve it for everyone. We hope that additional education will make it more likely, rather than less, that survivors will come forward and report the alleged assaults. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank all the interveners in these two discussions for their thoughtful interventions, and hopefully through some work with the Government House Leader we can find ways to move that on to the next sequence of debate on bills.

That concludes Opposition business for today, so I'll let the Government House Leader call business for the rest of the evening.

**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 member for Cape Breton Centre.

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: It is my great honour to stand here today and address this House. In 2015, after the retirement of Frank Corbett, I ran in the by-election and came very close, but obviously not close enough.

It was at that time that I finally realized what I wanted to be when I grew up, and just how badly I wanted to win the next time and represent the people of Cape Breton Centre. It truly is a dream come true, and one of the proudest moments of my life. I've had a few, namely my daughter, Baillie, who is 23. She's my only child, and a registered nurse at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital. She graduated from St. F.X. in May, and to see her success fills my heart with pride.

Actually, when election day was called for May 30<sup>th</sup>, that particular date gave me much hope, as it was my uncle's - more like my brother's - birthday. He was truly one of the most important people in my life. He subsequently passed away 13 days later, but I am sure he knows that I won. My daughter passed her NCLEX that day, as well, so it was a great day.

When I decided to throw my hat into the race in 2015, my daughter said, "Mom, I don't know anything about politics. I can't help. I just know about nursing." Now she's sending me texts and tweets - "Mom, did you see what the Liberals just said?"

I would be remiss if I didn't mention my partner, Paul; my parents, Cecilia and John; and my extended family and friends for playing such a huge role in my election success. My team of dedicated staff and volunteers gave me their strength, support, endless amounts of time, and tough love when I needed it. Dillon Hutchins, who was in the House last Thursday, along with my mom and daughter, walked with me every day, knocking on doors, driving me around, and keeping me in line for both the 2015 and the 2017 elections. He now serves as my CA and does a remarkable job.

Also, thanks so much to Gary, our new Leader, the NDP caucus, and the entire NDP staff. Thanks for putting up with me and my endless amounts of questions. It's my privilege to work with such an amazing team.

I'm a proud member of Cape Breton Centre and specifically the Town of New Waterford. Although I was born in Ontario, I moved home when I was only two. New Waterford is a community to be proud of. Its history of coal mining has provided the groundwork for a community built on solidarity and friendship. Cape Breton Centre is a place where we look out for one another and come together in celebration and in times of hardship.

This past summer, No. 12 Colliery was remembered for the mine explosion that took place 100 years ago. This explosion killed 65 miners.

In Cape Breton Centre, when there was a mine accident, the fire whistle blew in the community to alert the people that there had been an accident. My mother recalls the time when she was nine and a student at St. Agnes school when the fire whistle blew early in the morning. It was customary to then stand and pray for the miners. Sadly, this time she was standing to pray for her father, unbeknownst to her. My grandfather died in a mine accident leaving my grandmother home with 10 kids, the youngest of whom was six. To say she struggled would be an understatement.

That fire whistle still sounds in my community every evening at 8:30 p.m. At one time, it was to enforce a curfew. Now it's just part of our community. Some people use it as a good excuse to get the kids in and put them in the tub.

A lot of people choose to remain in Cape Breton Centre because of our camaraderie, the way we support each other, and of course our relaxed way of life. Some leave for work but count the days until they return to the home of their heart. Many from the Mainland tell us our high school graduations are celebrated better than most weddings.

To that end, when tragedy strikes, it strikes everyone. We come together financially and emotionally for those who need it. It is an awesome experience to see our communities pull together and fundraise for those who may be sick or whatever the need may be.

Most recently, St. Agnes school burned to the ground, and the community support was remarkable. Fire departments from all over Cape Breton came to support each other, and the community reached out to feed each other and to feed all of those volunteers. To see this gives me hope for our future.

For most, when they talk of Cape Breton, they speak to the talent that exudes from our island: the Men of the Deeps, Rita, Ashley, the Rankins, and of course the Barras, just to name a few. Although the talent is outstanding, it's just a mere drop in the bucket to



describe our lifestyle. While I was away doing some CUPE work out West, I was so thankful for YouTube to see the music from home.

For decades, we have been committed to our community and what it provides. The miners who risked their lives every day did so in part to help build our hospital. Many aren't aware, but those miners had a deduction that came off their pay to help pay for our hospital and our churches. We have a sense of ownership and accountability. Those miners risked their lives to help provide us with those needs. Mining is a part of our history, a part of history we must never forget, along with their struggles.

This is one of the reasons the New Waterford hospital is so vital to our community. We have lost many churches, and those in New Waterford make a connection of community between hospital and church. Without one, our community is lost.

Standing together for the community was something Bill Davis did. In 1925, he was murdered by the company police for fighting back for his community. The coal company was trying to break the union, and the union fought back and went on strike. In the end, the company police shut off the water and the power to all town residents so the miners had 100 per cent of the men picketing and marching through the town. They were charged by the company police force, and Davis was deliberately shot dead in the chest. To this day, we remember and celebrate Davis Day on June 11<sup>th</sup>. It is so important not to lose sight of the sacrifices that were made and one of the main reasons why we are such a strong union-proud community.

Our community is beautiful. For the most part, you travel throughout my constituency along the beautiful Atlantic Ocean. Coming from South Bar through to Victoria Mines, New Victoria, into New Waterford, you drive along the water. At any given time, the Newfoundland ferry or a cruise ship is sailing on by. From May to June, however, seeing the lobster boats in the water is absolutely breathtaking. Again, during a stint out West with CUPE, I was asked where do your people get your lobster? I said we go to the wharf. To that, she was floored. Continuing to Cape Breton Centre, you connect to Dominion, again along the water, then into the Gardiner Reserve and Reserve Mines and then the area of Grand Lake Road.

These communities have welcomed me with open arms. The volunteer fire department in Reserve Mines goes above and beyond for their community. The Grand Lake Road Fire Hall is a staple for their community, while the Hawks Club in Dominion is a club of a group of men that just want to do better for their community. They participate, they volunteer, they donate, they recognize citizens, and it was my honour to attend their volunteer recognition dinner on Saturday evening. It's a wonderful experience to go to these venues along with a few local pubs, restaurants and to be referred to as, hey Tammy, with owners and patrons alike commenting, you came back and it's not election time yet, glad to see you're still out and about, because this is what I think being an MLA is all about, not the shaking hands and kissing babies.

I have a few special constituents in Cape Breton Centre that I make a point to go back and visit with, one of which, a senior in a Dominion senior home, had a heated discussion with me during the election period and she said I'll never see you again. She said you're just saying the same thing that they all say. Sure enough, in June, Dylan and I went back and left with homemade cinnamon rolls. Another dear, old lady who is 100 and a half I stopped by just because she loves company. She lives on her own and was probably one of my biggest supporters. This is my job and I believe that.

In my other life, that was my job. Most recently, I was a national representative with CUPE which is not unlike politics as long as you're in it for right reasons, which I am. In my union life, it was my desire to improve the working conditions of my members, which was difficult with this government when they try and dictate collective agreements, but I digress. I wanted to do this job for the same reasons, to improve the lives of the people of Cape Breton Centre and the Province of Nova Scotia albeit quite the task.

Prior to my CUPE life, I was a health care worker and know first-hand the issues health care workers are dealing with daily. That's why I'm here, to make a difference. Some call me naïve, it's the system, and I should accept it, but I really believe I can and I will make a difference. I have bargained provincial health care agreements for the past 15 years and the funny thing is we actually bargained. Do both sides get everything they want? Absolutely not, but that's called bargaining. Free and fair collective bargaining allows both sides to go in with a Christmas wish book and hopefully to come out with a flyer. Never have I ever sat at a table where there is a predetermined list of what you can and cannot talk about, until now. That's dictating not bargaining. When I got involved in my union, it provided me with so much, continuing education, support, a sense of belonging.

I've heard in this House that there should be no lines drawn from Party to Party or side to side. I've not seen that. When I was running in the election, there were those who said you'll never make it in the old boys' club, but I already had. I was a union rep. My daughter then came to my defence and said, you don't know my mother. It was my honour, no, actually, it was I had goosebumps on Thursday to be part of the rally that took place outside the people's House, to stand with those workers who have had their rights taken away, regardless of any letter I may receive, was invigorating.

We need to remember that it's the people's House and although there may be a slim majority, the two Opposition Parties received more of the vote than the current government and I will continue to stand with, support and rally with the people of Nova Scotia regardless of what may or may not be deemed disrespectful.

I think it was disrespectful to strip 75,000 workers in Nova Scotia of their rights to free and fair collective bargaining. In fact, I'm having a town hall rally in New Waterford this summer to talk about our hospital - and I can't wait. I have invited the Minister of Health and Wellness and the deputy minister. I haven't heard back yet but I'm hoping they

can attend. Regardless, we will come together and gather our concerns and I will take those concerns forward to this House.

[4:45 p.m.]

Much to my disappointment, the budget did not adequately address the health care concerns of Cape Breton Centre or the province. Rural Nova Scotia lost its voice in health care following the creation of the Nova Scotia Health Authority. It was actually quite entertaining to hear during a debate I had during the election period that my predecessor was going to talk to the Premier about the dissolution of the NSHA so that we could have our autonomy back in Cape Breton. After the millions that were spent to take decision-making power away from each area, I doubt this was more than a way to try to avoid a very uncomfortable question. Regardless, the new NSHA - as a former employee, union rep, and resident - is not providing residents with the services they require.

Let me tell you a story. The Maple Hill Manor is in New Waterford and since the election I have asked the Minister of Health and Wellness more than several times to meet with me and/or at least discuss this facility. He was in town and didn't have the time, didn't even respond until the day before, regardless. I wonder if the minister knows that Maple Hill Manor needs to publicly fundraise to put lifts in place so their staff and their residents are not hurt. I think this is unacceptable. How can we live with ourselves to know that people are going to work, possibly going to get hurt and have had to go out on the street and beg for money for the equipment to do the work to look after our seniors?

Aside from that, most of the facility is a violation of occupational health and safety. I've seen the seniors in wheelchairs who cannot get into their own bathrooms, so maybe the next call is Work Safe Nova Scotia, Mr. Speaker.

Now let's talk about long-term care. Not only has this government not opened one long-term care bed, Mr. Speaker, they've also cut the budget to the funding. Yes, they put some back yesterday but they didn't put it all back. How can anyone as a human being take food out of the mouths of seniors?

During my door-knocking, Mr. Speaker, I met this beautiful elderly man who has many health issues at age 81. Days before the election, his wife was placed in a home in Tatamagouche, nearly four hours away. At 81, that is not a drive you make often. After spending their lives together, this government has added the hardship of distance. For me, those who came before us fought for the freedom we enjoy today and should receive the utmost respect and consideration. That is not happening.

Why do we have seniors in this province who cannot afford their medication? Sadly, most must choose between oil and medication, or food and medication, or maybe no medication at all. I have learned sadly - and people need to listen to this fact - I have learned in my riding of Cape Breton Centre that we have seniors who are selling their

prescribed medications so they can afford to buy food. Sadly, I must admit I didn't know that and I was disgusted when I heard that. Is that acceptable in this House? It certainly isn't to me.

Speaking of medication, why is Cape Breton Centre underfunded or Cape Breton specifically underfunded when it comes to addiction and treatment services? In health care why are we expected to accept less than that of HRM? Actually we heard a bit of that today in my question. The CBRM is the second largest municipality in the Province of Nova Scotia. We have the Ally Centre that is doing great work for those with addiction issues, just to name one of their services that per capita is underfunded compared to its counterpart in HRM. This is not acceptable.

The people of CBRM matter. I will be their voice and I will be a strong one. It's time Cape Breton is put back on the map and I have had the pleasure of attending some meetings put on by a group called A Town That Cares. It's a group of concerned citizens that came together to try to address the opioid and mental health crisis in Cape Breton. I have assured this group I will do everything possible to ensure their voices are heard. It's time we have a long-term treatment facility in Cape Breton. We have lost too many residents, youth particularly, to drug and mental health issues. Are the residents of Cape Breton not worth the facility to care for those in need? Why are we in Cape Breton subjected to substandard care?

I would like to thank my opponents in the most recent election - my predecessor Dave Wilton and Louis Piovesan - but Cape Breton Centre wanted a change. They wanted an elected representative that was available, albeit my staff tell me I'm too available, and someone who connects with the everyday person and that is me. On any given day I have constituents coming into my office, just thankful someone is there just to listen. We don't have all the answers but we will do our best to find them.

This is what government lacks. We are people too, the same as those we represent and we cannot forget that. As the old saying goes, don't forget where you came from. Cape Breton Centre is consistently faced with high unemployment, drug issues, health care issues and social service issues. Regardless of who you are or where you come from, it is my job - and one in which I'm very honoured to hold - to advocate for and to protect those in my riding and the Province of Nova Scotia. A position I do not take lightly.

Someone said to my mother, she must be crazy, her life will never be her own again. To that end my mother replied, she's lived this union life long enough and she's hell bent on making a difference. With that, I extend an invitation to all of you to come play on my island. Thanks so much. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start by introducing my husband who is here, John DiCostanzo, my wonderful and best mother-in-law anybody could ask for, Nina DiCostanzo and a very special CA that I waited for for two months and she gave her retirement notice so that she can come work for me. She's a colleague, we both worked in - I was her interpreter. Nargis was with Community Health and we worked together. We share a lot of ideas, are very similar. I am really excited to work with her for the next four years. (Applause) My sister-in-law who drove them here is on her way.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to me to rise in this House today and speak to this Assembly. I'm honoured to join with elected members from all three Parties in this Legislature. As a newly elected MLA, I am clearly aware of the traditions, long history that has gone before me. I wish to thank those members of the Legislature staff who have helped orient me to this place and to my new role.

Let me start by saying that the themes and promises of the government's Speech from the Throne are important. They resonate for me. The values expressed in the Speech from the Throne are one reason I ran for office under the Liberal banner and under the leadership of Premier Stephen McNeil. Those values are a respect for diversity and inclusiveness and a willingness to draw more newcomers to this great place. I am proud to say this is a hallmark of the Liberal Party, a willingness to make decisions that may be difficult but are important for the long term.

We are stronger because our McNeil Government did not shy away from tackling the issues. A desire to give family and children a good start and an emphasis on education, we are building strong families in a strong province. It was an honour to run in the last provincial election under the Liberal banner and it's an honour to take my place here today.

I would like to thank the people of Clayton Park West for electing me as their MLA. This great honour to serve my constituents in Clayton Park West is truly humbling and I would like to thank so many volunteers who worked tirelessly during the campaign.

The list is long but I would like to name a few - my co-chairmen Francis MacDonald and Vivian Baydar; my communication chairman Suzy Ketene, who did a fantastic job; Ralf Matheson and Kevin Cosgrove, who opened the office every day and organized the volunteers; Stephanie Duncan, who took time off work to help our campaign; Anna LeBlanc, who has not made it here yet, who helped to get the vote out; Diane Brown and Judy Foran for managing events and telephones; and my Young Liberal supporters and canvassers Cory Vincent, Derek Bellmore, and Josh MacIntyre.

A few more - Ruth McCulloch, Nargis Demolitor and so many more. Most of all, sincere thanks to my two amazing mentors, Diana Whalen and Geoff Regan, for their unwavering support coaching me and teaching me so much about our democratic political system.

Last but not least I would like to thank my family. Starting with my husband and best friend, John DiCostanzo. He is loved and respected by so many people. I have heard it so many times from his clients that he is a very special and caring lawyer. I am so lucky that I ended up marrying an Italian in Halifax. (Applause)

I would like to thank my two amazing Canadian daughters - unfortunately they could not be here because of university - Tara, who is 25, is finishing her second degree. She is in her final year at Dal pharmacy. I would like to thank her for knocking on so many doors during the campaign. It is amazing how many people remembered meeting her at the doors.

My second daughter, Nadia, who is 22, has just started her masters program at Dal in a unique program called Vision Science or Orthoptics. This small and very specialized program is taught at the IWK.

Nadia was not able to help me during my campaign as she had committed to helping promote health for indigenous children in Fort Providence, in the Northwest Territories. She travelled three hours by car to Yellowknife to cast her vote for her mother.

I also would like to thank wonderful and dear in-laws, Mr. Costantino DiCostanzo who is 91, and Mrs. Nina DiCostanzo who is 87, and who have been instrumental in helping us raise our daughters. They are loved - they are the best Nonna and Nonno in the world.

My story is unique but at the same time it is so Canadian. In sharing this with you, I know you will be thinking of all the other people who have immigrated to this country and to this wonderful province.

I would like to give you some background about where I grew up. I was born in Baghdad to two educated and loving parents and I am the second of four children - two boys and two girls. My parents taught us at a young age, the importance of education and how to strive for good marks at school, especially in science and math.

[5:00 p.m.]

We had to be good at math, as my father is from the north city of Mosul. According to my father, Mosul produced the best mathematicians and science teachers. I grew up in a very safe and fast developing city, Baghdad. I attended public, elementary school and walked to school, as children do here. Christians were a very small minority in Iraq. In most of my elementary classes, there was only one or two Christian students.

Growing up, I did not feel any discrimination, nor was I treated any differently, except in religion class. As a Christian, I did not have to participate, but I had to stay in class and listen. I learned a lot about the Koran and some of the great teachings of the Muslim faith.

This childhood experience helps me today in connecting with minorities. I know how the children may feel in our schools. My childhood helped me to always ask questions and strive to learn about the experience of others. In Canada, we are so blessed to have so many children from different cultures and different faiths. This teaches our children tolerance and understanding. I feel very fortunate that I still have great memories of my childhood. I never had to experience war, and what it did to the generations that came after me.

In 1978, while on holiday with my family in England, my parents planned to give my eldest brother Rihad, who had just finished high school, the opportunity to continue his studies in England. To my total surprise, I was given a choice, on the spot kind of thing, to continue my high school education at a boarding Catholic school just outside of North Hampton. For most Canadians, it is normal to give a daughter the same opportunity as the son. But, in the Arabic culture, to allow a 16-year-old daughter to live alone, in England, was truly unheard of. It was hard for me to adjust to living in a new country and to study in a different language. But I do consider this amazing opportunity that I was given at the age of 16, as the cornerstone of my strength as a woman.

This kindled my desire to advocate for the freedom and independence of all women, and especially for immigrant women in Canada. Growing up in Iraq, my parents taught their children that politics was not something we could discuss freely. We needed to be very careful, as any mistake could result in our being targeted. As minority Christians, we lived with the knowledge that our parents could be killed for speaking against the government of the day. As a child, I grew up with political propaganda. There was no political debate, no free speech and I had never heard of an opposition party! It was very simple. There was only one backed party.

I am fortunate that I did not witness what my parents witnessed during the coup in 1958, where Iraq's Prime Minister was killed and dragged behind a car to be paraded in the streets of Baghdad. Imagine how fortunate I feel to be standing here today, and be part of a democratic government. MLAs come to power because people voted for these amazing individuals who care and want to serve and do good for their province and country. I hope I can share a different perspective with my caucus and with all my political colleagues. I will remind you how fortunate we are to have this civil, three-party system. With dialogue, we can achieve so much good for the people of this province.

I lived and studied sciences in England for six years before immigrating to Canada in 1984. Soon after arriving in Nova Scotia, I felt I was home. With less than a year I knew that Canada was my home forever. I arrived in Nova Scotia alone on June 13, 1984. I was sponsored by the World Council of Churches and an amazing Canadian friend of my family, Miss Anne Wade, who is from Bridgetown, Nova Scotia. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Miss Anne Wade for the love and guidance she provided me especially during my first few years in Canada. (Applause)

We met Anne in Baghdad in 1967 while she was on her road trip from England to Singapore by car, travelling alone. She needed help to fix her car which broke down in Baghdad. She knocked on my father's office door because - he's an engineer - he had a sign in English and Arabic, so because she saw the English she stopped. My father took Miss Anne Wade to his mechanic. They fixed her car and then he invited her over for dinner at our home to meet my mom and the children. I was five years old, watching Mickey Mouse in Arabic. A long-lasting friendship developed that day in Baghdad.

I have the greatest respect and admiration for Miss Anne Wade. She is an important female mentor to me. When I arrived, Miss Anne Wade was a principal at Petite Rivière near Bridgewater. Miss Anne Wade spent her summers working on the family farm in Bridgetown. There was a lot of bridge when I came here. Every town had a bridge in it - Bridgewater and Bridgetown. (Laughter) So I spent my whole summer traveling between Bridgewater and Bridgetown with Anne Wade. She taught me that there was nothing a man can do that a woman can't do. I witnessed Miss Anne Wade on the roof of the farmhouse replacing shingles with her brothers. That was very different from how I and my mother was raised.

When Miss Wade retired she devoted a lot of her time to traveling around the world. She enjoyed meeting and learning about how people live in different countries. When she was home in Nova Scotia she always volunteered her time, helping so many new immigrant families, teaching them English and helping them settle in Nova Scotia.

I had the pleasure this July of taking Diana Whalen to visit Miss Anne Wade at her home in Bridgetown. Diana, Anne and I had a wonderful conversation over a meal that my 85-year-old dear Nova Scotian friend insisted on making for us.

Mr. Speaker, my interest in politics and the Liberal Party started in 2003 when our then Prime Minister, Jean Chretien stood up to the U.S. and refused to join the coalition in bombing Iraq. I felt the need to help the Liberal Party.

That year, I offered to help Geoff Regan's campaign. Soon after, I was introduced to Diana Whalen and for the next 13 years I volunteered in three campaigns for each of them. My favourite part was going door to door with these two admirable candidates. I enjoyed learning from their interaction with their constituents and I often came home to discuss with my husband many of the issues that I heard at the doors. He was my dictionary in every word that I didn't understand.

Diana went further, connecting me to the Nova Scotia Liberal Women's Commission. I immediately identified with their mandate and slogan, 'Add women, change politics'. (Applause) I was thrilled to join their board in order to help increase the number of women running for the Nova Scotia Liberal Party. It was not long before I was asked to take on the vice president position on their board. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this



opportunity to thank Bridget Newman, who was the president - I believe it was three years ago - for approaching me to join their board.

I would also like to thank the wonderful team of dedicated women with whom I enjoyed organizing many fundraising and educational events to help increase the number of women in politics. I am so proud to say that the commission was able to financially support all 12 nominated female Liberal candidates with a donation during this past campaign.

Mr. Speaker, I feel the work opportunities and the knowledge I have gathered in so many different fields in the past 30 years will help me be a better MLA and help me serve my constituents effectively. In 1988, I graduated from Mount Saint Vincent University with a degree in modern languages and business. For the next five years I worked at Central Guarantee Trust, a well-respected and trusted financial company. I met so many wonderful Nova Scotians who helped me grow my skills. I am still in touch with many of these people.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank two special people whom I worked with at Central Guarantee Trust 25 years ago and with whom I reconnected when I joined the Clayton Park West Liberal Association, the board for Diana Whalen. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Francis MacDonald and Norm Duncan for helping Diana in three of her campaigns and in my first campaign. They worked endless hours assembling and putting out signs in the right locations. Many people commented on the number of signs that we had for our campaign.

Mr. Speaker, after the acquisition of Central Guarantee Trust by the TD Bank, my head office position was eliminated. I will always understand how people feel when they lose their job. I went back to school for a year at CompuCollege to study travel and tourism. I started working in the industry hoping to use my five languages. Over the next 10 years I worked part-time to raise my two daughters while my husband focused on growing his law practice.

Working in the travel industry I learned a lot about the world and connected with many clients who are my constituents today. Many of them came out to help me in my campaign. Ten years ago, I was faced with a need to change careers again as the travel industry was hit hard by the Internet. That was very disappointing, Mr. Speaker, as I was really ready to open my own travel agency. However, I am lucky that my husband and I always believed that when one door closes, there will always be other doors that will open. We just need to be patient and look for those opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, in 2007 I had two doors open at the same time that kept me busy for the next five years. Firstly, I worked as a volunteer rescuing my beloved, not-for-profit organization, Cultural Health Interpreting and Integration Services. At the same time, I was establishing my own business as a North American distributor of a European product most

of you have seen or have used at the Nova Scotia Liquor Commission - the green basket with the wheels and the two handles. That was a product I imported from Spain.

This entrepreneurial adventure exposed me to many useful things that will help me understand and work to improve the lives of my business constituents. I learned about and worked with many of the wonderful university and government programs available to help people starting a new business. Some of these programs specifically help women, such as the Blueprint for Success at the Centre for Women in Business.

I would also like to thank BDC and Halifax Partnership for helping me. I learned about shipping, freight, duty, taxes, market strategies and how to compete with other similar products. Unfortunately, the biggest lesson I learned at the end of four years is that I could not compete once my product was copied in China and sold in Canada and the U.S. for less than my cost.

[5:15 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, while working hard in my business, I also volunteered many long hours as a vice-president and as a president for the not-for-profit organization I helped found in the early 1990s.

In 2007, Cultural Health Information and Interpreting Services was on the brink of closing its doors due to financial difficulties. I believe very strongly in the value of the service that our interpreters offer to new immigrants and to the government departments that serve the immigrants. What I learned in my business, I applied to managing and reviving this valuable organization. After two years, our finances were in the black and we started our expansion from health to many other government services, thus changing our name in 2010 to Nova Scotia Interpreting Services - NSIS. (Applause)

We have grown to over 70 members, offering interpreting services in 40 languages. I greatly value this experience of being president of a unique board made of exceptional, educated women and a few men. Our unique board has consisted of members from so many different countries: Iraq, China, Russia, French Canada, Jordan, Uruguay, Nepal, and Tanzania. Mr. Speaker, imagine what an incredible opportunity Canada has given me to be part of this mini United Nations working together for the good of our new immigrants and the good of our province. (Applause)

This is one of the main things that pushed me to run for MLA. I believe I can make a bigger difference by speaking to the issues that new immigrants face. I am hoping to help continue the remarkable work that our provincial Immigration Department has done in attracting and settling new immigrants to this province. I'd like to be the voice speaking for immigrant women and girls and show how they can have the same opportunities that I had to work and be valuable contributors to society. I am looking forward to my new role as the ministerial assistant to the Advisory Council on the Status of Women. I know I will

be able to bring forward the issues facing our new immigrant women and help advocate for their needs.

I am also excited to have the role of ministerial assistant to the Minister of Immigration. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding work of this department in the past few years. It is truly remarkable how Nova Scotia has brought forward so many successful new programs. I am so excited to be able to help by bringing the perspective and the voice of the immigrant and to communicate how our program can help newcomers integrate in Nova Scotia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Just before we move on and I recognize the next speaker, I want to remind all members gently once again that it is not appropriate to recognize members of this House by their given name, but by their constituency. It's a mistake that we have all made along the way at some point, I can assure you. I would just please ask you to be conscientious. It's a great opportunity to learn the rules of this House, as that is one of the easy ones.

The honourable member for Sackville-Beaver Bank.

MR. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, members of the Assembly, let me begin by expressing that it is with great pride and pleasure that I am able to rise here today during the 63<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly as a member of Her Majesty's Official Opposition in what is viewed, having met every year since 1819, as the longest-serving Legislature in Canada and the first site of responsible government in the British Empire.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to personally extend congratulations to all members regardless of political position and stripe from each side of this House on their election win. I thank members in advance for their patience and indulgence as I give my Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. As previous members have done, I too would like to thank the Honourable Arthur J. LeBlanc, Lieutenant Governor, for presenting the Speech from the Throne.

It is by no means lost on me the significant honour and responsibility that the residents of my constituency of Sackville and Beaver Bank have placed on me by allowing me to represent our community here at the Legislature. I want to affirm that it is not only an honour and privilege which I wholeheartedly accept, but that it is my sincere commitment to work diligently on the assignment they have allowed me to do. I will always strive to put the best interests of those constituents first regardless of anything else and I will never take for granted the faith they have placed in me.

As a history major I understand heritage, tradition, and historical importance of the role that we fill as MLAs in this wonderful province. It is more than an honour and privilege to be able to sit here in the same building where many famous political figures throughout history and days gone by from across this province have sat, debated, and helped to form

Nova Scotia into what it is today. I am privileged that I am now able to be one of those individuals.

While working on a history major in university one particular politician I had great interest in was the studies of the journalist, public servant, Premier, and third Lieutenant Governor of the province, the Honourable Joseph Howe. Through high school and university, I remember writing at least four or five different papers all regarding Howe as a public figure, politician, and publisher, so to be on-site here today in the same building is very emotional and has special significance for me.

Howe's very presence can be felt from the very moment you step through the iron fence surrounding Province House and see a statue which presides over at the courthouse outside commemorating his two-day, six-and-a-half-hour defence speech; in this Chamber, the giant portrait on the wall to the right of you, Mr. Speaker; or even his most famous quote, which incidentally has always guided my decision making through my political career, that is listed on the wall in the main foyer. It's a quote as relevant today in politics as it was 130 years ago when it was written. I was told the other day that at least once every year in this Legislature somebody quotes that quote that is downstairs.

I haven't heard it yet so I want to be the first. I quote, ". . .when I sit down in solitude to the labours of my profession, the only questions I ask myself are, What is right? What is just? What is for the public good?"

I bring Joe Howe up today, not because I wanted to present to members this long lesson about history, but it was because I did want to highlight one personal philosophy to which I personally subscribe and demonstrated throughout my life, and in my political career thus far that I share with Howe, and that is his passion for presenting the truth no matter the outcome. I too firmly believe in saying what you mean and meaning what you say and doing it in an honest and straightforward manner. I will tell you that although it is a philosophy that has treated me well and served me good over the last few years, it's also one that has caused me trouble sometimes too.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, Howe is often recognized as having established the fundamental basis for freedom of the press and having significant influences on our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom. Last year he was recognized as Nova Scotia's second Heritage Day honoree.

When I was told that I had to give a response in Reply to the Speech from the Throne and that it could not be any longer than 60 minutes, I initially thought, what, only an hour? That's nothing; Howe talked here for six. However, as I did sit down to start to write this speech it began to hit me, the significance, and my anxiety levels started to rise. I do want to assure members here today that although I may be long-winded, I promise not to speak for six hours.

However, I would like to take an opportunity now to touch on some of my personal family and personal history, just to provide members with insight of who I am, where I came from and some of the experiences that I've had. As a lifelong resident of Sackville, I am proud to be the third generation of my family to call Sackville community my home. My paternal grandparents, Hantford Harris Johns, from Port Wade, Annapolis County, served with the Royal Canadian Navy for 25 years and was commissioned on a total of 18 different vessels during World War II, as well as during the Korean War. He married Anna Mary McDaniel from Margaree Forks in Cape Breton and together had three children - James Harris, Erma Jean and Marlene Ann. After living in various parts of the municipality, they actually settled in Bedford in 1957.

My mother's parents, Mr. Speaker, Joseph Lewis Lyons and Helen Nina Dixon, were both born and raised here in Halifax. My grandfather was actually born at the Pavilion Barracks at the bottom of Citadel Hill. During Grade 1, he attended St. Patrick's School, which at the time was a Roman Catholic school. He was the only Anglican student in the entire school. He survived the Halifax Explosion in 1917 and as a young man worked in his father's store, the Empire Chain Store, which was located at 964 Barrington Street, which is almost at the very end of Barrington Street, up by the grain towers.

As my grandfather became older, he became employed at the HMC Dockyard as a carpenter and eventually became the President of the Dockyard Trade and Labour Council, where he served as president of that union for 12 years. It was through stories that my grandfather shared with me about Halifax in the 1920s that I became interested in history and politics and that spark was first lit.

Mr. Speaker, my grandmother was very special to me growing up. She was my confidant, my best friend and my protector for most of my adolescent life. My grandmother was 89 when she passed away on June 13, 2008. My grandfather died three months later to the day, at the age of 94.

In 1945 my grandparents built a home out in Sackville, way out in the countryside of Lower Sackville, which still stands and belongs to my family to this day. My grandparents had one child, my mother, Marjorie Elizabeth. My father and my mother, James and Marjorie, met while they were in high school and were married in 1967. Soon they had their first child, Bradley Harris Johns, in 1969. They subsequently had two more sons, Steven Lewis in 1972 and Michael James in 1974, both of whom still reside in Middle Sackville.

As I previously stated, Mr. Speaker, I am a lifelong resident of Sackville and as a youth I grew up on Fenerty Road in Middle Sackville. After attending Sackville Heights Junior High, I graduated from Sackville High in 1988 and went on to pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree in Canadian History from Mount Saint Vincent University. I would note that I believe that the honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid graduated from the same school in the same year.

While in university I started a successful disc jockey and wedding photography business, that eventually employed up to five people working part time. I also worked part time for the Halifax Regional School Board as a teachers' assistant with special needs students and two years with inner city youth. After university, I took a term librarian position at Harold T. Barrett Junior High in Beaver Bank, with a plan on entering the Bachelor of Education degree the following year to pursue my dream of being a teacher.

Never in a million years, Mr. Speaker, did I ever dream of entering politics. In fact I remember the very first time somebody actually suggested that I run for Halifax Regional Council. My response, what's council? However, after encouragement from my friends and family in 2000, I did run and I was successfully elected to the Halifax Regional Municipality Council, the largest municipality in the province, in a position which I held for 16 years.

[5:30 p.m.]

I've always enjoyed working closely with people in the Sackville and Beaver Bank community. During university, I became involved as a Scout Leader with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sackville Scout Troop. At 21, I was employed for four years as the camp director for Camp Lone Cloud, the summer youth camp located in Fall River. Later, my interest in the well-being of the community led me to volunteer with the Sackville Freemason Lodge No. 137, where I am a past master of that lodge, and Sackville Kinsmen, where I've won many awards, including rookie of the year. I'm also a life member of the Springfield Lake Rec Centre and a founder of the Sackville Heights Community Centre and Beaver Bank Kinsac Community Centre.

However, in October 2008, when I was 38, the most significant and important event in my entire life occurred, the birth of my first daughter, Jenna Helen. Only 15 months later, we were blessed with a second daughter, Maria Elizabeth, on February 21, 2010. As with many parents, my children have become my everything, and I consider myself very blessed to have two wonderful happy and healthy girls.

As I did mention, in 2000, I was elected councillor to the Halifax Regional Municipality. In my role as a Halifax councillor, I was presented with the opportunity to sit on a wide variety of community and HRM boards and committees. Some of these included HRM's Environment and Sustainability Committee, Halifax Regional Library Board, Halifax Grants Committee, Mobile Home Park Advisory Committee, Middle Sackville visioning, North West Transit Advisory, North West Planning Advisory, the Executive Standing Committee, and the Heritage Advisory Committee. I was also elected chair for North West Community Council. I served as chair for the Dangerous and Unightly Premises and Appeals Standing Committees, and the Special Events Advisory Committee.

I was the first elected official ever to chair the Halifax Regional Police commission, where I successfully re-established HRP's motorcycle traffic unit. I am also a past member of a variety of external boards and committees, including Destination Halifax, the Nova Scotia Library Association, World Trade and Convention Centre board, and the Neptune Theatre, where I had the honour to first meet the honourable member for - is it Chebucto North?

In 2009, I was provided with a very unique opportunity. I was elected the deputy mayor for Halifax Regional Municipality and filled that position for 12 months. While on council, I had many successes, highlighted by over \$40 million in new water and sewer infrastructure, renovations of the old Sackville Heights Elementary School, and a new community centre for the Sackville area. One particular project which I am most proud of is the construction of the \$7 million Beaver Bank Kinsac Community Centre, a project which I originally conceived and saw through to completion. That building, since the opening of its doors in 2004, has become the centre of the Beaver Bank Kinsac community, and I'm very proud to have done that.

There are two other projects that I would also like to mention today - the annual outdoor Weir Rockin' concert, which I cofounded along with Sackville residents Andy Conrad and Stacey Moore. With their assistance as well as many, many, many community volunteers, this concert saw some of the biggest classic rock bands of the 1970s and 1980s perform on a ball field in the middle of Upper Sackville for over 10 years, eight of which were sold out.

The other project that I'm actually very proud of is Tinsel the Talking Christmas Tree. This was a project that was led by the Sackville Kinsmen that I was glad to support. It's a 25-minute Christmas show that stars a radio-controlled 18-foot talking Christmas tree that sings and laughs and interacts with the children who come to visit. Although the show itself is free, public donations are taken, and we collect donations for the Beacon House Food Bank in Sackville. In just three years, Tinsel has raised over \$10,000 in sponsorship and over \$30,000 in donations to help people in need in the Sackville community, with many, many shows yet to come.

Mr. Speaker. I'd like to at this time . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Madam. Order.

MR. JOHNS: Madam Speaker, thank you. I would like at this time to acknowledge someone besides those in my immediate family, someone who had a significant impact on my life. Some of you may actually know this gentleman. It's my Grade 12 history teacher. He's an author. He eventually became a colleague of mine on council. He's a mentor and a friend. His name is Robert Paton Harvey. Mr. Speaker, do not ever underestimate - Madam Speaker, my apologies - Madam Speaker, do not ever underestimate the important roles that teachers have on youth and the difference that one good, caring teacher can make.

I think many of us remember that one special teacher in our past that influenced our lives for the better and changed the path that we were on. For me, that without a doubt was Bob.

Not only did Bob make me want to enter into the teaching profession but it was because of Bob that I went to university and took a Canadian history degree. As we all know though sometimes life is funny and for years after graduation Bob and I remained in touch. He and his wife Carolyn attended my wedding. I spoke at his retirement. I took pictures at his daughter's wedding and eventually became elected and was his colleague on Halifax Regional Council where Bob continued to teach and mentor me in just a different way and I want to thank him again here today for everything that he has done.

Madam Speaker - it's easy across the street, we just call you The Worship. So, Madam Speaker, during the election there were two main local issues that I heard time and time again on the doorstep and I did want to bring those up here today. The first is regarding the Cobequid Community Health Centre in Lower Sackville. Now, although this facility is not directly in the constituency of Sackville-Beaver Bank, it's in the honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid's constituency I figure since he actually resides in my constituency and I'm his official MLA I guess I could talk about this anyhow.

The issue is that that centre represents residents from Bedford, Sackville, Fall River, Waverley, Beaver Bank, Lucasville. There are almost 100,000 people within the catchment area of the Cobequid Community Health Centre. The facility is not open, has not been opened 24 hours a day. It has been promised numerous times through numerous different Parties over numerous different elections that it would be open. I just want to express here today that probably one of the number one issues I heard as I was knocking on doors were health-related issues and in particular around the fact that our Cobequid Community Health Centre closes every night at 11:00 p.m. or 12:00 midnight. It is one of my goals to see that facility open, and I realize that perhaps 24 hours a day, seven days a week is an unrealistic goal but even if we could see that facility open on weekends for 24 hours I think that would be great for the community and the surrounding people that utilize it.

The second issue that I heard time and time again was in regard to the old highway landfill in Upper Sackville. Although the landfill was originally closed in 1995, there is a loophole in the legislation that allows the Halifax Regional Municipality to apply to have it reopened under certain circumstances. I certainly recognize the honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect and paid close attention in the last session when he brought forward amendments that put some restrictions to the Otter Lake facility and I certainly commend that member for doing those things. It is my goal to do something very similar in regard to the old Sackville landfill. Residents feel closed means closed and they don't want to see any opportunities for anything else to come into that facility whether it be liquid or solid waste.

I've noticed something in my many years of politics, and I've heard it echoed a few times in this Chamber as well. Regardless of the Party or community, we all have



commonality in this room: being a politician. The reasons we entered this profession are varied. Some of the skills that we each possess, the ways we approach the job - we all have our variations. Regardless of this, we're all similar; we're all politicians. We care about our constituencies and the residents who live there. We want to do a good job representing those residents, and we all want to help this province move forward toward prosperity.

I've also noticed, both through my time on council and my short time here in this Chamber, through various members - what I've noticed is that many, many people, regardless of whether you're a politician or not, have faced personal challenges and hard times throughout their lives. Some of those were echoed in former speakers' Speeches to the Throne.

As some people know, and some people do not, about five and a half years ago I went through some personal challenges myself. I fought through three years of very severe depression. Looking back now, I realize it probably started because of some of the political demands that were placed on me. We all know that sometimes the public and the media can be relatively cruel, and it can take a toll on us if we let it. I did.

Despite significant weight losses and an obvious change to my personality, not wanting to be around people - which is pretty hard when you're a politician - it was not something I wanted to openly talk about. I didn't want to recognize it. I didn't want to talk about it, and like any illness, untreated, it got worse and worse.

Depression took a toll on my personal life and my marriage; it most certainly contributed to the ending of that relationship. It was funny - the adrenaline that once fuelled me as a politician and gave me the fire - suddenly it was anxiety, causing me not to want to be around people, not want to stand and talk. I did receive professional help because I arranged for it myself. The supports that I needed - I was ashamed. I didn't know who to talk to. I didn't know how to access those things, and when I did figure it out, they weren't there.

I'm here to tell you that with mental health issues there is no quick fix. Getting better, without a doubt, was one of the hardest things I've ever done. It took time and assistance. In my case, I saw a therapist twice weekly for over a year, and continued for another two years, once a week and then biweekly. Even as I was getting the skills to help myself deal with and face the things I'd never talked about openly - my depression - I never talked about it openly until this election.

The reason I rise here today is not because I really want to talk about my personal life. Ironically, I did everything I possibly could to not talk about this publicly at the time. But I do want every member in this House to realize that depression can happen to anyone, at any time, for any reason, and it will have a significant impact on you and your life. (Applause)

When I went through my depression, I was a grown man in my 40s, and even though I had 40 years of life experience to lean on - I had a loving and supportive family, two great children; I was on boards and committees and I was the deputy mayor - I didn't have the skills to be able to identify and deal with depression on my own.

My question that I put forward, that I really want people to think about here today, is this: if I, at 42, didn't have the skills to deal with depression and anxiety, with the experience and background that I have, how can we ever expect our children to have those skills? (Applause)

[5:45 p.m.]

The answer is that we can't. However, it is our responsibility to ensure that help for those suffering from mental health issues is available. For me, my personal cause is particularly around adolescent mental health. This means that we need more resources in schools and communities. Just earlier today we had the member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg talking about the crisis that they are facing currently in Cape Breton. And I want to tell you that we have had some issues in the constituency that I represent as well. I think that the honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid would certainly back up what I am saying. I am sure he knows the same exact people I know.

On another note, recently the government created what they call an independent commission. The Commission on Effective Electoral Representation of Acadians and African Nova Scotians, which I believe is going to be conducting 13 public engagement meetings around this province, with a report coming, I believe, by 2018.

I was amazed to discover that it was not until 1993, 174 years after the first sitting of the Legislature, that a person of African heritage, the Honourable Wayne Adams - I believe there is a picture of him - had the opportunity to sit in this Legislature. Since then, only four other people of African descent have sat within this Chamber - of course, the honourable member for Cole Harbour-Portland Valley being one of those.

I was even more surprised that there has never been an Aboriginal member. Particularly since the idea of having a dedicated Mi'kmaq seat was discussed in the late 1980s and that in 1992 the House of Assembly Act was actually amended to read, "The House hereby declares its intention to include as an additional member, a person who represents the Mi'kmaq people . . ." That's on Page 33.

For this reason, I feel somewhat disheartened that this commission was not expanded to also include discussions around Aboriginal representation and to see whether or not there was current support for this concept. In the last provincial election that just went by, there was a member from the Eskasoni First Nations, Trevor Sanipass, who ran for the NDP as a candidate in the constituency of Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank. So I would say that there may be interest today that may not have been here 25 years ago.

Regardless, considering that Province House will be turning 200 years old in 2019 - 200 years - and there has never been an Aboriginal member in this House, to me, that is not acceptable. Perhaps now would be a great time to begin discussions to ensure that this is addressed in the next provincial election.

As I wind down I sincerely wish to thank the more than 175 residents of the Sackville-Beaver Bank constituency who took time out of their personal lives on March 17<sup>th</sup> to attend and support me at my nomination meeting which was held at the Springfield Lake Recreation Centre in Middle Sackville. I would particularly like to thank Andy Conrad and Donna MacDonald, my mover and seconder, both of whom I consider good friends. I was truly humbled by the large number of residents who attended that meeting to support me.

I would also like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the residents who supported me in the provincial election in May. I truly enjoy working for the residents of Sackville-Beaver Bank, my community, and I am grateful to once again have the opportunity to continue to do so.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank my constituency executive: the past president Rob Strickland, president David Conrad, vice-president Rob Shea, my good friends Steven and Cheryl Taylor. We currently have one of the strongest associations in Sackville-Beaver Bank that they have had in years and it is because of the volunteers and the support they have shown through this process. I particularly want to thank our treasurer, who also acted as my official agent, Lisa Martingell, who did an absolutely wonderful job, and I'd like to welcome two of our new members: Carla Josey, for taking on the role of secretary, and Riley Hill-Pettipas, our youth representative. Thank you all.

I'd also like to recognize someone who, although I've known him for a long time - we attended school together and were in the same Primary class - has only become a really good friend of mine over the last few years: Regan Oliver and his wife Jen. Regan was a huge help to me on back-to-back elections, both in the municipal one in 2016 and this provincial one in May 2017. He is now continuing to help me as my constituency assistant, and what he brings is beyond - he has given me great advice, and I'm so glad that I have him. I do want to thank Regan for his commitment.

I also want to thank my parents, Jim and Marjorie Johns, for their continued support and encouragement through six different elections. I have to say that my parents are probably the best sign crew out there. I consider myself fortunate to have two wonderful, caring parents, and I love them both very much.

I also want to thank someone who has become very special and important in my life over the past five years: my girlfriend Deb MacKinnon. Her encouragement and support have been indescribable. I am very lucky to have found somebody who not only is my soulmate but also became my best friend. Deb and her children, Olivia and Jessie Huot,

have learned more over the past year about politics and elections than I think they ever wanted to, but I'm very grateful that they did.

In closing, I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the honourable member for Cumberland South for providing me the opportunity to be here and for reaching out to me, and to thank my caucus colleagues for everything they've done so far. I have to say, I have been on many teams over the years, and without a doubt, I really feel that this is one of the strongest, best teams I've ever been on. I sincerely look forward to working with all of you over the next years to come.

Most importantly, Madam Speaker, I want to thank God. I want to thank God for granting me this opportunity and for all the blessings I have in my life. When I lost my municipal seat in 2016, I figured that maybe that was the Lord's way of telling me that it was time to go and do something other than politics, but today I understand that it wasn't that at all. He just wanted me to come over here. Thank you very much. (Applause)

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

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Madam Speaker, I don't want to alarm you, but I have been writing this speech for the last 43 years. I started at the age of 12 when I volunteered at Janet Landry's YMCA program called Upward Bound in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. It was there that I first met children who were in wheelchairs, kids who had feeding tubes in their stomachs, kids with learning difficulties and speech deficits, kids who couldn't see or talk.

It was particularly striking to me because at the age of four, I lost the ability to walk. One day I simply couldn't get up from the basement. I ended up in hospital for weeks with a disorder called idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura. I remember those days because it was the first Halloween that I got to go to, and I spent it in a wheelchair. I don't think it's a coincidence that I've spent the rest of my life teaching other people how to walk, because I met those kids and they were never getting out of a wheelchair, but I did.

Madam Speaker, I have a message for you. As a matter of fact, I have 17,837 of them. My only regret is that I cannot share every single one of them with you, but I am going to tell you what I heard on almost every doorstep during the campaign and during my last 35 years as a health care professional, community member, and volunteer.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge all of the members who are here tonight and to thank them for their kindness throughout the days leading up to today. I want to thank them on both sides of the aisle and I want to thank all of their staff in the various departments and their caucus offices for a most gracious welcome and so many gestures of kindness. (Applause)

The constituency I represent is Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage but there are actually five communities: Cole Harbour, Cow Bay, Eastern Passage, Shearwater, and Woodside. I could tell you there are a lot of things about our community that I love, but they say to say what is most important at the very beginning of a speech, so here goes.

I have the only constituency in Nova Scotia that doesn't have a single family doctor. We don't have a library, we don't have a bank, a skating rink, a pool, and we don't have bus access between two of our communities, Eastern Passage and Cole Harbour. We can't get a bus to Rainbow Haven Beach, one of our most beautiful provincial treasures. We have a fantastic tourist and business area at Fishermen's Cove, but despite its name and the fact that we have fishermen fishing right off our wharves, we have no public place to dock a boat - although we do have three Tim Hortons, one liquor store, and a casino.

AN HON. MEMBER: There you go. What else do you need?

MS. ADAMS: Exactly.

We only have two government offices: my office and the unemployment office. Imagine the challenges and missed opportunities that missing out on all these things bring. My constituents deserve the same respect as the rest of the province, but we often feel like we have been left out of the provincial plan.

I need to start out with a tribute to my family who came here in 1745 to help build Citadel Hill and then they ended up moving down to Lunenburg to help build there - so you are welcome, Madam Speaker. I have a mother named Marjorie Hare, who is still with us today and she has been a volunteer for her whole life. My dad Jack Hare, who passed away from leukemia when I was 25 years old, started out working in the mail room and he ended up as the executive director of the Health Services and Insurance Commission for Nova Scotia in the Joseph Howe Building next door. We talked of this very day today, me being here, looking out his window when I was about 8 years old.

I have four sons, Mike and his wife Tina, and Ryan and Adam who sadly are out West with two of my beautiful granddaughters Ainsley and Michaela. I also have two grandchildren in Newfoundland and Labrador with their mother Colleen Adams - Aurora and Shane Parsons. My 28-year-old son John Lavoie is in the Canadian Armed Forces, the Air Force Division serving in Dundurn, Saskatchewan. Having kids away is a constant sorrow that I must accept.

My youngest son Christopher is here working on his Ph.D. in organic chemistry and he's already patented a chemical process that was sold and is bringing millions to Dalhousie University. (Applause) Please do not ask me to explain what it is because I still don't really get it. (Laughter) Christopher was the only one who was here during the campaign and he literally lived at the office or he was out on the campaign trail with me,

even after he tore his Achilles tendon. Oddly, we both did a radio spot for Seaside FM radio but apparently nobody recalls mine, only his.

I want to thank my campaign team starting with my campaign manager Robin Carter. I know that she and many of my other campaign team members and neighbours are watching tonight and I'd like to thank you all for being here tonight as well as throughout the month of the campaign. Robin was a friend who has served on three boards of directors with me at the same time - the VON, Serving Seniors Alliance, and CARP Nova Scotia. She took a month off work from her home with seniors who live in her building to walk the path to every doorstep with me.

Not only that, and maybe more importantly, she did my hair and makeup and she picked out my clothes. She did such a good job that nobody recognized me from my campaign posters. Robin also brought into my life an amazingly gifted helper who is now my constituency assistant, Lisa Rochon. She is the perfect complement to me, both calm and quiet.

My two aunts, Barbara MacKenzie and Shirley Hutchinson, my extended family of cousins, my friends and all the amazing people in my community who not only supported me during the campaign but carried me to those doorsteps so that I could carry on my dream of serving in the Legislature, a dream I'd had since I took part in Model Parliament in these very chambers. I also want to thank my political science teacher, Murray Angus, for predicting I would be here one day. He's a friend of my mother's to this day, and she blames him for my being here now.

[6:00 p.m.]

My campaign team was small but mighty. I would like to acknowledge the sacrifices and commitments of good friends and family: Sue Smith, Mary and Rod Perry, Margie and Frank Hartley, Pat and Rick Ansell, Mandy Raftus and her granddaughters Kelly-Anne and Stacey, Paul Rowe - my official agent and bean counter - Florence Pyne, Rhonda and Ronnie Vickers, Darlene and Perry Hiltz, Shirley Farrell, Rose Dalling, Brenda Anderson, Cathy Prevost, Ron and Karen Cross, Shelagh Leblanc, Debbie Hutchinson, Dona and Guy Estabrooks, Mike Hourihan, Claire and Ron Greenan, Thelma Austin, and finally, Gregg Yeadon, "the lawyer who makes house calls."

Of course, I could not have done this without the amazing PC Association Executive in my community: Larry Varin, Secretary Linda Forward, Treasurer Rhonda Power, Lewis MacKay, and several others. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank Jim David, who counselled me throughout the whole campaign, even from his hospital bed. I would like to thank Janet Fryday Dorey and Chad Bowie, who scared me a little then but not so much now. I would also like to thank our Leader and the entire caucus team for providing me with never-ending support, guidance, the courage to persevere, and the patience to wait for me to catch on to things. There are many more to thank, but in the

interest of time, I say thank you to all of you, because I could not have done this without you.

I would also like to thank those who didn't vote for me. My father always said he didn't want to be on a committee with people who agreed with him because he didn't learn anything. He learned most from those who disagreed. They voiced their concerns and ideas to me, and they weren't necessarily sure I was the best choice. I hope to earn their trust over the next four years.

I would also like to say a special thank you to four of the previous MLAs for the constituency of Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage, for I know them all and live in the same area that they do. I would like to thank the honourable Liberal MLA Joyce Treen, who lived on my street for many years, for all that she did for our community. (Applause) I can reassure her that there are many many people there who miss her and are glad to see her still in our community. There's also NDP MLA Becky Kent, whose children grew up with mine, and NDP MLA Kevin Deveaux, who I am not ashamed to say I campaigned for with my kids a long time ago. I would also like to thank our school board rep and former NDP candidate Nancy Jakeman, our current city councillors Lorelei Nichols and Bill Karsten, and of course, previous councillor Jackie Barkhouse.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank PC MLA David Nantes. He was the last PC MLA in my area, 25 years ago. He took me under his wing, walked the doorsteps, and called me daily, sometimes several times a day, to keep me on track. We all know each other, and we have all been tireless fighters for our constituencies. All these previous MLAs have been there helping me along the way and have promised to help me moving forward. For that I am incredibly grateful.

I do want to introduce our greatest natural resource. It isn't the lakes, it isn't the ocean, and it isn't our wharves. It is the people of my constituency, which was created in 1993 and amended in 2003 and 2013. Going on tradition of every 10 years, I'm going to expect boundary changes in 2023. We have five communities, but we are primarily a residential community with numerous subdivisions, schools, and churches. We have so many active non-profit organizations, social clubs, and business organizations that I could literally go to a fundraising event almost every day of the week.

My favourite is a fundraiser we started recently at my office to raise money for a tandem bike for visually or physically impaired adults. Kelly-Anne Raftus, who is only eight years old, has already done four events and raised \$400.

I learned from and worked with an active Cole Harbour and Area Business Association, along with the member for Cole Harbour-Portland Valley, and I strongly support the Eastern Passage and Area Business Association, which I started last year to help smaller businesses start, grow, and thrive. We also have our Fisherman's Cove Development Association, which manages our heritage centre and hosts dozens of special

events per year. We have quaint specialty stops that bring in many visitors every year, and we do have the best fish and chips in Nova Scotia. We have the Fisherman's Cove co-op, which supports the fishermen of our community as well. We are also home to 12 Wing Shearwater military base, with our new commander Sid Connor, which will be celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2018. We have many schools, and we will be getting a new high school next year, which I'll talk about later. We have beautiful lakes, Morris Lake, Bissett Lake, and Rainbow Haven Beach - and the car wash which is watched over by our moose.

Parts of our Cole Harbour-Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Provincial Park and the Shearwater Flyer Trail are very, very popular and used a great deal. We also have our First Nations communities which opened a casino on Caldwell Road. We have the Hartlen Point military golf course, and unfortunately the water hazards have several of my golf balls. We have the very active Cole Harbour Parks and Trails Association and a number of community centres including the South Woodside Community Centre and the Tallahassee Recreation Centre. We also have an amazing number of actors, singers, and musicians, and we are fortunate to have them in our community. We have had several movies filmed here as well. We have several sports teams, recreation programs, Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, and Cadets.

There are many service clubs and volunteer groups doing all that fundraising for the community. We've got the Cole Harbour Kiwanis Club, my Eastern Passage Cow Bay Lions Club, the Eastern Passage Legion, and our carnival committee, which works year-round to raise money for our wonderful week-long events in the summertime. We have our own theatre group, the Passage Players. I was so happy to play the huntsman in our last production, but I have no idea why they wrote in the script that I was to get knocked out every night. We have the Maritime Race Weekend, one of the best in Canada, which encourages pirates and the craziest costumes you can imagine. We also have the Benevolent Society and a local food bank to support those in need.

But, Mr. Speaker, as wonderful as everything is, I want to tell you about the concerns that were made apparent to me during the campaign. There are many issues that were already spoken about, but I'm hoping to touch on some that have not been mentioned yet. My speech was very simple. The provincial budget is \$10 billion, \$4 billion of which was for health care. Despite that, there are over 115,000 people without a family doctor.

In the previous government, only one of 51 MLAs had worked full-time in a hospital setting. That was the fellow physiotherapist sitting in front of me from North Sydney. I urged everyone that if they wanted better health care they needed health care professionals sitting in this Legislature. I'm delighted that there is an increased number of health professionals from all three Parties sitting here now because of the wealth of knowledge that we can bring about health care issues that you can only gain from the incredible amount of training and clinical experience and, in my case, the research and teaching experience as well.



I could tell you a million stories, because that's about how many patients I've seen over the last four decades. I have been listening not just during the campaign but for 40 years. I would like to tell you a few of them, but I want to talk about people not numbers - real people facing struggles that I know have practical solutions. Health professionals don't want to talk about the problem; we want to talk about the solution. If we as government can work together, then I would like to be known as the practical politician because I was known as the practical physio.

So who am I very briefly? I was born and raised in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. I'm the youngest of three. I had over 500 cousins, and I was the youngest of almost all of them, and they were all watching me, so I didn't get into any trouble because somebody would have squealed on me. My very first fundraiser was the Bill Lynch fair for Rainbow Haven Camp, which is out in Cow Bay. I attended Model Parliament in junior high and high school and the Model UN seminar in New Brunswick, and I was hooked. My first experience with the PC Party at Dalhousie University was Joe Clark's leadership review. I went to Dalhousie University in 1984, so you have some idea of how old I am now.

I worked with children who were dying from cystic fibrosis, little two-year olds who had terrible wounds from parents throwing boiling water on them, two-year olds born without legs, and stroke patients who were CEOs of major companies one day and needed to be bathed and fed the next. Those four years changed my life. It made me very grateful to be healthy once again. So I did crazy things like jump out of a plane. I learned to ride a motorcycle, and I've lived to talk about it.

In 1984, as soon as I graduated, I moved to Ontario with my first husband, who was in the military. I worked in a world-class hospital, so I know what it feels like. I became a supervisor, worked with MS research, and ran the ALS and MS clinic. We ran the best rehab training facility in the country to train caregivers in how to look after those who are taking family members with disabilities home.

I started a family there and then moved home to Eastern Passage in 1991, and I've been there ever since.

I worked at Camp Hill Hospital, and this is when the story goes a bit sad. I was one of over 600 people who got poisoned at Camp Hill Hospital. Like the honourable member to my right, I debated whether to talk about it, because it's not something that makes you feel warm and fuzzy or inspires a lot of confidence, sometimes, when you talk about challenges.

We got sick from being poisoned, through no fault of our own. My hair fell out, I had skin rashes everywhere, my eyes were burnt for years, my vision was blurry. I developed asthma, a bowel disease, autonomic dysregulation, chronic headaches, and terrible allergies to mould and all scents. I had diffuse muscle pain that has persisted to this day.

I ended up bedridden for a year and a half. My marriage broke down under the strain and I nearly lost my children - but I didn't. I had family and neighbours to look after me and my kids until I got back on my feet. There was no help back then, Mr. Speaker. I had to treat myself until the Arthritis Society stepped in.

They were the first ones to reach out and offer me a hand. They know that I will be a guest speaker for them every day until I die, because they were the first ones to bring me up.

It took four years to get into the Nova Scotia Environmental Health Centre for my own treatment because there were so many of us waiting. I began a very long and frustrating journey back to health. So while I was off, terrified that I would never be able to practise physiotherapy again, I did a Certificate in Business Management because I could do that lying down while my kids were asleep.

I ended up working at the Nova Scotia Environmental Health Centre because they were looking for a physiotherapist, and at that time I needed a clean building to work in. I ended up specializing in the same conditions that I had. I worked there as the sole physiotherapist for 10 years. I served on the accreditation team when CDHA and the Nova Scotia Environmental Health Centre amalgamated, and I know the frustrations and the challenges that hospital employees are afraid to talk about sometimes.

I was privileged to take functional capacity evaluation training programs, specializing in the management of chronic pain, so when we talk about the opioid crisis, I know what we're talking about. I did a number of clinical research studies and created Canada's first assessment and treatment guidelines for the same three conditions that I had.

After 18 years of working with Capital Health, I moved into private practice. I wasn't able to give the kind of care that I wanted, there were too many restrictions on our time, and I wanted to go back to what I had been trained to do. I willingly gave up six weeks' vacation, benefits, sick time, and a pension, and made half of what I made before, but I was happy and I felt fulfilled.

I took the chronic pain program that I developed and I went into the Atlantic Balance and Dizziness Centre in Dartmouth, specializing in seniors' care, vestibular disorders, and post-concussion care. On my own dime I went to Atlanta, Georgia, for the advanced vestibular rehabilitation training program.

A year later, because I wasn't busy enough, I took on the clinical director role of PhysioCare at Home, starting with six part-time physiotherapists, and I built it into the largest private home care, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy company in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, because I wasn't able to carry my voice loud enough, I joined eight different boards of directors and volunteer organizations, trying to raise the voices of those who were represented at these organizations, to try to fill in the gaps that were being left behind - the VON serving seniors, Community Links, Ocean View Manor Foundation, the Atlantic Pain Mentorship Network, and the Cole Harbour and Eastern Passage business associations, to name a few.

As I mentioned, I am the guest speaker for the Arthritis Society, the Alzheimer Society, the Scleroderma Society, Parkinson Canada, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and anybody else who wants a free talk. I have had my lectures and interviews aired on Eastlink TV and have been on Doc Talk with Dr. John Gillis.

[6:15 p.m.]

My latest efforts to plant a seed for a national health channel that every parent, senior, or caregiver can watch from home bore fruit last year when CARP Canada videotaped me doing a little series on caregivers, and just recently we taped a series with the Arthritis Society, who are doing a 13-week program. My episode is going to air around Christmastime.

The last thing I did in this area was fulfill a lifelong dream of creating an enduring training series for caregivers, family members, and health care providers who are currently collapsing under the burden of looking after disabled family members. If we want people to age in place, we have to teach family members and all caregivers how to help them keep safe, stay mobile, and do all the essential activities of daily living.

In partnership with Linda Bird and the Nova Scotia Alzheimer Society - and I want to be honourable and say that part of the ability to do this was a grant that the Liberal Government gave them to do it. I want to acknowledge that, because I don't believe it would have been done without you, so I want to thank you for that. (Applause)

So: in partnership with Linda Bird and the Nova Scotia Alzheimer Society, occupational therapist Catherine-Anne Murray, and Nicole Morley and Zachary MacNeil - two students from the School of Occupational Therapy - we created what we believe is Canada's first practical caregiver training series, which will be launched at the Alzheimer's Conference in October. It includes a number of resources: videos, handouts, and all sorts of checklists, including an equipment checklist for all levels of frailty, so that when people are told that your family member is frailty level 3, it's with: here is a checklist of all the things that are going to make your life easier when you take this person home."

I'm very proud of this project, but I'm most especially happy that my 88-year-old mother - who's going to hate me for telling her age on TV - who pretended to have a wrist fracture during my time at physiotherapy school, offered to be one of the actresses in this series. We will have an enduring legacy of her volunteer work even at this late day.

I want to mention that when I was at the Eastern Leadership Conference in Philadelphia this summer, I was speaking with honourable members from the U.S. Virgin Islands, Senators Marvin Blyden and Myron Jackson. I told them about this project and they asked if I would come down there to teach their caregivers and health professionals. I'm hoping that the hurricanes don't prevent that from coming true, because I'd love to go.

Because people kept asking me how I got better myself, over 18 years - it was not a quick thing - I wrote a 400-page book called *Fibromyalgia & Chronic Pain Owner's Manual*. It's available in the HRM public library system.

Another member alluded to the Maslow hierarchy of needs, and unfortunately, we are the leader in not meeting those needs in two areas. The number of children in Nova Scotia living below the poverty line went from 17 per cent four years ago to 22 per cent this year, and the number of Nova Scotians using food banks is now 23,840, an increase of 20 per cent from 2016 - and 37 per cent of them were children within HRM and around this province.

In HRM alone, the increase in food bank usage was 49 per cent. Combine that with housing costs, gasoline prices, property tax problems, personal income tax rates - we are still spending too much money on things when we can't afford to eat. We need to try to change that, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate that we're spending a billion dollars on our Community Services. I know they are working as hard as they can to spend those wisely, and I know there are exciting changes coming up, which I am absolutely thrilled about.

We still need to do some things differently, and I would like to talk about that. In our community we have challenges with working. We've got a lack of job opportunities, and of course we've heard about the federal tax changes that are going to be a threat to small and large businesses. We have challenges for the able-bodied, but we have even fewer opportunities for those who aren't or for those who are elderly. We have Ocean View Manor, which can't get staff because we do not have a bus from Cole Harbour to Eastern Passage.

We have people with chronic health conditions, intellectual disabilities, and mental health challenges who don't have enough opportunities to work, certainly not in our constituency. There are too many with part-time jobs with no security benefits. Even Irving hires people and then lays off dozens of our constituents on a regular basis.

This is something that has not been mentioned, so I'm going to really emphasize it tonight: there are too many Nova Scotians who are being unjustly denied their disability benefits. They are not getting the LTD, WCB, or CPP disability benefits when they are rightly and justly ill or injured. I was talking with a rep from Community Services today about one of my constituents who is disabled and injured, and the doctor has said so several times, but she cannot get her LTD benefits.

You all wouldn't be aware of this, but it has been my life for the last 25 years. The disability insurance companies, particularly the private ones, have gotten incredibly creative and incredibly good at denying benefits. Every physician I have ever met will tell you they are so frustrated with writing report after report saying you can't work, and it comes back from an independent medical evaluator who is paid \$3,000 to \$6,000 a pop to say that you're fine.

I have to tell you this story because I want to make sure I don't leave it out. At the Atlantic Mentorship Network for Pain and Addiction, we hosted a course on managing opioids and chronic pain. The chair of the Workers' Compensation Board was there. I asked him, what am I supposed to do as a physiotherapist who writes a 25-page functional capacity evaluation saying that someone is legitimately disabled, and the independent medical evaluator writes that she is just fine? He laughed at me and he, oh, you're talking about Dr. X. He didn't say the name; he said the initial, and every doctor in that room, including me, knew who he was talking about.

I call that insurance fraud, and I'm bringing it to the attention of the House. If you wonder why so many people are collecting from Community Services, not able to buy their medication - they had a car accident and can't get their benefits - it's because of these insurance companies which have millions and millions of dollars at stake and are paid to deny you benefits. They're getting away with it, and we cannot allow them to do that. I am calling on all of us to keep this at the forefront.

I want to talk now about health care challenges. This one, I'm not sure how to say it politely, and I apologize. I can only say it the way my residents want me to say it. The budget says there is a new \$6 million for collaborative health centres in Nova Scotia. The previous MLA promised our constituents during the campaign that we were getting a collaborative health centre. She promised us that. She put it in writing. She told everybody on the doorstep that she was going to get us one and that it was coming.

I noticed in the budget that Shelburne and New Waterford were getting them. My constituents want to know why I'm not getting it, why we're not getting it. I'm going to leave that with the Minister of Health and Wellness to address at a future date. (Interruption) I'm asking in earnestness, not in criticism. They were really hopeful. Just today, somebody who just moved to the community put on Facebook, help, I have this condition, and my family doctor just retired. We're shopping them around like we're trying to barter with each other to find a family doctor. Ironically I note in going back over previous MLA's speeches that Becky Kent asked for the same thing in 2007, and here we are 10 years later.

I want to go quickly through some of the issues that I have been hearing about constantly in an attempt to educate the members, especially those on the opposite side. I want to share my knowledge. I don't want to hoard it. The health profession has changed from when I graduated 35 years ago. If you learned something, you were working in a

hospital, there was nothing stopping you from sharing that knowledge with everyone. Now that you move into private practice, you hold that knowledge dear to you because you want to be the best and the only one who knows it. I have never been like that, I'm not worried about having a good case load.

I'm going to run through these things fairly quickly. There is a marijuana issue coming, and I'm not sure that we're ready for the increased health care costs and societal fallout that will come with legalisation. I know of an awful lot of patients who are waiting for it, and there are people who are eagerly looking forward to it. I'm sure that as a government we can get it done together.

Something else that hasn't been mentioned is that we are losing our private blood collection services in Nova Scotia. That's a topic for another day, but I worked with someone who owns his own private blood collection agency. I know the stories of what's going on there, but I personally lost the only person I had who was able to do blood collection. Now I'm going to have to take an hour or two out of my time to leave here and go over there instead of 10 minutes. Every senior who had that person come into their home now has to be dragged out of their home to go to a hospital.

We also have a situation that hasn't been mentioned, and I have no idea where it started. Employees with the Nova Scotia Health Authority are not allowed to talk about specific private home care or other health care agencies. You may not have been aware of that, but when someone is desperately looking for services - whether it's blood collection, physiotherapy, psychology, doesn't matter - they're not allowed to use our names.

Several years ago, because I was clinical director, we got a letter from the CDHA saying that we could no longer have our brochures out in the hospital. When I called to ask, are you talking about even the non-profits like the cancer foundation, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Arthritis Society - they're not allowed to put their materials out either? - they said no, and I asked why. They said because of infection control. I said, you can't be serious, because the doctors still have them in their offices. She said, well, it's because some of the more generous advertisers were upset that you guys were getting freebies. I thought, really, the Arthritis Society, which is totally dependent on donations, can't even put theirs out? No.

So I'm going to call on the government and the Health Authority to change that because the one thing I get asked all the time is, why didn't we know about your services sooner? You could even put a little kiosk machine right in there. You go and press a little button on a screen and use technology to say, oh, home care blood collection, boop. It prints out a little ticker tape thing. (Laughter) It says boop. Thank you, yes. There you go. (Interruption) I would like to know how Hansard is going to transcribe that one. Anyway, you may not have been aware of that, Mr. Speaker, but we spend a lot of time and money telling people where they can go to get services. There's a simple solution.

We are also relying a little bit too much on the non-profits to provide essential services where 20 or 30 years ago, those were offered in the hospital. I'm not saying there's anything wrong with that, but organizations like the Alzheimer Society and the Arthritis Society need the funds to do that if we're going to expect them to do that.

I won't belabour this, but we do not have enough long-term care beds. Not everybody can age in place. I used to start all my speeches by saying, I watched you walk into the room, and I can tell you if you're going to have a fall this year, and I can likely tell you the year you're going to end up in a nursing home. If any of you want to know, I can check you out later on after the speech is over.

I also want to acknowledge that I was sitting in Ocean View Manor when the cuts were made two years ago and last year. I do want to acknowledge that the government has worked harder to make sure that there are economies of scale when you're ordering certain things. So I know that there are those savings and benefits, and that was a good thing that they did there.

We also have problems with the lack of use of social workers, psychologists, massage therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and pharmacists. We do not need to go to doctors for everything. We have incredibly highly trained health professionals who are ready, willing, and more than able to take on a lot of those tasks. I'm going to call on us to do that as well.

Because I already mentioned earlier issues about sexual abuse and rape, I'm going to leave that out of my speech.

I do want to mention that the disability claim process for car accidents is incredibly arduous. It's supposed to be no-fault insurance, but there certainly are an awful lot of barriers to successful resolution. The only people that I see getting rich from this process are the private health insurers and possibly some lawyers.

I want to touch a little bit on the Nova Scotia Council for the Status of Women, which I had the privilege of meeting. They are the ones who, four years ago, held a Campaign School for Women, which I and several members took. It is one of the reasons I'm here today, and I want to acknowledge their efforts in doing that. They're about to do another one. I know some of the MLAs who are here today were inspirational to me, and I'm happy to be here.

My father was an accountant, so I know that a budget of \$9 million for the council sounds like a lot of money, but \$8 million of that goes to housing and protecting women and children and family members who have been abused. It appears that there's only about \$1 million that goes to prevention and treatment programs, which is an increase of approximately \$60,000 this year. I know we can't fund everything that we want, but I'm wondering if there couldn't be a little bit more in the budget for that moving forward.

If you ever wonder why the suicide rate is so high, stack bullying, sexual abuse, rape, incest, physical abuse, lack of health care and job opportunities, and perhaps not enough decent food and housing and you can see why so many reach the end of their rope and, unfortunately, some of them let go of that rope.

[6:30 p.m.]

I do want to touch on family doctors and I know that it has been a topic that has been talked about. We do have an awful lot of doctors who are teaching in this province, and a lot of people aren't aware of that. We have a disproportionate number of doctors in this province. If you look at the per capita, we are actually higher than other provinces. It just doesn't feel like that so we need to educate people because when I say that to them they get dirty at me and they say, well, then how come I don't have a family doctor. It's because they are busy teaching, which is important.

If you don't have a family doctor a whole slew of things could happen. If you do an impact analysis or a strength/weakness and opportunity and threat profile you will see that, but as a health professional I want to run through some things that happen when you don't have a family doctor. You can't get access for military spouses and their children who move here. I have Shearwater Base, most of them who move here never get a doctor and they are gone before they ever get off the wait-list. We can't get diagnosed so the treatment never starts. We don't get referred to allied health professionals because they don't even know that you need to go there. You can't get your prescriptions, your assistive devices, aids, or equipment covered because your physician has to write a prescription. That is something we need to change.

I want to emphasize this, Mr. Speaker, because this is something I hope we can all agree on. If you don't think the insurance companies are happy that we have a doctor shortage, lack of doctors means that you can't write a prescription for massage therapy or a wheelchair and they don't have to pay for it. In my mind, if a private health insurer requires me to get my doctor to write a prescription so that they will pay me my benefits that I am rightly entitled to, we should be charging those insurance companies for that doctor visit because right now we are all subsidizing the private insurance companies and they are loving it.

We also need to get regular medication refills changed. My mother complained to me the other day, she said make sure you tell them, Barbara, that my doctor wanted \$15 to refill my medication - I won't tell you who it is because you would all recognize his name. She says, I'm just going to get in my car and drive down so I don't have to pay it. Like now we're going to pay \$32 for your prescription. She said well, that's what you get.

We could put physiotherapists in the emergency rooms, like we did in Ontario. If you come in with chronic back pain, you do not need to see the emergency room doctor, you could see a physiotherapist. We could have social workers and counsellors and



psychologists in the departments as well, but there has been tremendous resistance because I've asked almost every year since I moved home. We don't like mixing private and public health care and I would love for that to change. I had physiotherapists and OTs working for both the hospital and for us, and they were allowed to be here one way inside the hospital *and another way out - and we need to change that, too.*

One of the sad stories I mentioned at the Doctors Nova Scotia Rally is that I had been told to tell pregnant women to put their fetuses on the 811 Doctor Call List. I just thought no, you're not telling me the truth. Then I met a volunteer who works at our free Foot Care Clinic in Eastern Passage. She is a nurse and her husband is a family medical student. They are both in the military so they moved here and got doctors themselves. But, they didn't get a doctor for their three-year-old and she put her fetus's name on the wait-list. She still hasn't received a phone call and her child is almost a year old. We need to change how we're doing things, Mr. Speaker.

One of the other things I want to refer to is that the family doctors are the ones required to fill out all the forms for EI, short-term illness, long-term disability, CPP, WCB, and the disability tax credit, as well as all the forms for anybody involved in car accidents. If we want to reduce how much we have to pay out in income assistance, we need those insurance companies to pay those benefits but they can't get them if the doctor is not writing those reports. We need to stop subsidizing the federal CPP Disability Plan, as well as the private health insurers.

Mr. Speaker, I think we need to require more doctors to take on the children of our current female patients because I can guarantee you that if I come to you and you won't take on my child but you will see me, I will gladly trade places. We need to do a better job of getting our children covered.

One of the options we talked about with the military is I would like to see the military start supplying doctors to the spouses and the children of the military members. I don't see why we're treating our military members so well and their spouses and children so poorly.

There's actually a pilot going on in Ontario - it might have been hush-hush, but I've just given it away. So, I'm hoping that we can bring about some of these different changes over the next several years.

I do want to mention seniors for a bit because that's where I spent my entire career, working with the elderly who, I have to tell you, are the most resilient, hard-working and obedient group of people. When you tell them to do something, not one of them would ever not do it - except for maybe my mother after she had her first stroke, and then she didn't want to do her stupid physio exercises, so I made her go swimming instead.

I wanted to note a couple of things in the budget, because there were several things in there that I did like, but a couple caused me some concern. There's only \$30,000 for entrepreneurship for older adults. I guess I'd like to know what constitutes an "older adult," because that might be me. I'm not sure what older is anymore or when a senior starts. My grandmothers lived to be 95 so I'm still a young chick as far as my family is concerned.

One of the things that I'm concerned about is the physiotherapists - it didn't appear to me, and I could be wrong that there was no increased funding for renovation grants, but you can not age in place if you can't get up your stairs into your house, or if the doorway is too narrow to get a wheelchair through the door. And so I have patients who are putting their family members into the hospital long-term care beds, purely because they can't renovate their home.

I do want to talk about education, because it was the hot topic in Cole Harbour especially, but certainly in Eastern Passage. We have inclusion issues and there was a big issue about the quiet rooms for children with autism last year. We have tutoring for the children of our community in Eastern Passage, but it's only available in Cole Harbour - have I mentioned that we don't have any bus going from Cole Harbour to Eastern Passage? I'm not sure if I've mentioned that.

We've got a delay in getting autistic children diagnosed so the parents, especially those in the military community, are paying an average of \$1,200 to \$1,500 to get their child diagnosed by a psychologist in order to get them access to the care, both at the IWK as well as in the schools. We do have a new school coming to Eastern Passage and there's been a lot of controversy around it. I don't want to talk about that because it's being built, it's going to be beautiful, and there are a lot of advantages to it.

The one thing that I will ask the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development to think about, is to our knowledge and understanding this new high school is not going to have any tech trades, nor is it going to have the IB program. And disproportionately the number of kids in the IB program in Cole Harbour, who come from Cole Harbour and Eastern Passage, they're from Eastern Passage. So, if my son was going to that high school next year, he would not be able to take that program; and my other son, who took construction engineering in community college, wouldn't have been able to take the tech trades.

So, we're worried because this new high school being built triggered a school review of Cole Harbour and Auburn High School, as well as all the feeder schools. The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is well aware that this process took over a year. It was delayed twice, then took a year and hundreds of people for the School Options Committee worked, the parents gave feedback time after time. The report was said to be released on a Friday and about 500 people were going to come to the meeting the following Wednesday, and the morning of that Friday at 8:00 o'clock, before the 12:00 o'clock release of the school board's recommendations, the process was stopped. We found

out about it when the school board representative, who had nothing to do with the decision, Nancy Jakeman, posted it on Facebook. That's how we found out. I can tell you that I was either talking about doctors or I was talking about that after it happened.

So as far as the job opportunities in my community, we are heavily reliant on tourism and we do have some of the most breathtaking coastline in the province. I noticed there's \$2 million for tourism in the budget, which is good, and it says "in key areas" - I'm wondering if we are one of those key areas; I really hope we are.

In 2007, Becky Kent reported on a lack of government interest in Lawlor Island and McNabs Island, and the Friends of McNabs Island and Red Beard, one of the fishermen who takes people out to McNabs Island, talked to Becky Kent in 2007. Guess who was one of the first people on my doorstep after I got elected - Red Beard. There is not enough government interest in McNabs Island, on our side of the island and so he and all the others are calling upon our government and the tourism dollars to come to our community.

We are a summer tourist community. Even Fisherman's Cove, with the exception of a couple of buildings, close down over the winter months. So our beaches which bring everyone to our community and the surfers that come and the beautiful kayaking and horseback riding are not going to work through the winter months, so we need help in that area.

We do have big business in our community. We have Cherubini involved in the Big Lift, we have Autoport and CN Rail, we have the fishing industry, we have CFB Shearwater and we have an awful lot of people who are dependent on them for their job. I noticed in the budget there was \$500 million for seafood exports and key markets. I'm just wondering are we one of those key markets? Because there is an awful lot of people who are relying on us for those jobs.

But we do have problems with our businesses. We have tremendous traffic and lack of skilled workers. We need stronger supports for new businesses and we need some lower taxes. We also need the trades in the classrooms - one of the things that I said on the campaign trail is that I want tech trades in all the schools, not just some of the schools in my constituency. My tag line was, I don't want any child penalized because of their postal code.

We also have a terrible problem with speeding. I get calls every single day asking me to make people slow down and I don't have a solution for that. I will tell you that there are way too many car accidents and as somebody who treated people for my whole career, I can tell you that those car accidents may happen in a blink of an eye but the damage lasts forever. As I was going home and thinking about this speech there was another really bad car accident right in Woodside as I was heading home.

There's no busing to our golf course, to our military beaches, to Rainbow Haven which doesn't have enough parking, so everybody parks on the highway and then they all get ticketed every day. We have Kiwanis Park; we don't have a bus to it. I want to mention that we don't have a bus between Eastern Passage and Cole Harbour and the distance between the two is five kilometres. If each bus, one from Cole Harbour and one from Eastern Passage each came 2.5 kilometres closer, they'd connect and the whole system and the whole community would be connected. So I'm calling on the municipal councillors as well as the government to try to help bring that about.

As far as infrastructure challenges go, we have the beauty and the beast. We have the most beautiful scenery in these communities, but we have some eyesores that need to be taken care of. We have Woodside with the oil tanks that are being dismantled and when I spoke to the car dealers across the road, I asked, is there anything you have for me? They said yes, could you stop the dust because they've been taking this place down for the last two years and they're trying to keep their brand-new cars shiny. I said, I really don't know how to fix that but we'll try to get it done as fast as we can.

Shearwater has a pool, a rink, a fitness facility, but we're no longer allowed to use it unless you buy a year-long membership and there are very few who can afford that. In Eastern Passage we have the Valero oil tanks, we have a government wharf which only a few licensed fishermen can use. We have a boat launch but you can't park your car or trailer there while you're out on the water and we don't have a public wharf. Tonight in Cow Bay they are at a meeting talking about tearing down some of the buildings there, with no promise to rebuild them. We have incredible walking trails but we can't get to them because we don't have buses. In Cole Harbour we don't have very many commercial spaces for any new businesses except for treaty gas, the trading post and, our latest addition, the casino.

We're calling on greater use of McNabs Island, we want the restoration of the homes on the island. We also want - we're being bold here - asking for the floating dock on the Halifax side of the harbour once you're done with it. It would be real easy to just float it right across the harbour and we can make good use of it. If no one has asked for it yet, I would like to be put at the top of the list.

Finally, in summary, we don't have a bank, a library, a public pool, public skating rink, garden, an all-weather field like the one that just opened up in the Cole Harbour-Portland Valley constituency. We only have two government offices, little commercial space. We only have two restaurants - Boondocks and Wharf Wraps - one of which has been for sale for the last year, which is Wharf Wraps. We have one grocery store, one pharmacy, no recreational facilities to speak of and, again, we have a liquor store, a pub and three Tim Hortons.

[6:45 p.m.]

The last thing I want to talk about with the few minutes remaining is politics and the role of government and our place in it. I heard so many concerns expressed on the doorstep that people were tired of partisan politics. I know it's a part of the process, but they see it as a game and a bit of theatre, and for that I'm sad. They want us to work together and they want some signs that we're not all great and you're not all bad or vice versa, but it's often sometimes not what you do but how you do it and when you say it, and so I'm going to bring three examples just - it may not have been this government who did it - but it struck people in the wrong way and I just want to point it out because maybe we can do differently moving forward.

I was involved with the 50-plus Expo several years ago when they were promised \$100,000 from the government of the day and they spent that money over the year getting ready, hiring people, printing flyers, arranging media coverage and, then, three weeks before the 50-plus Expo which is the opportunity for many small business owners to promote their works, they were sent an email saying, sorry, we're not giving you \$100,000 we're giving you \$10,000. We had the ridiculous difficulty of having to fundraise to pay for that \$90,000 difference after the event was already held. Now, how many people want to donate to something that was already done? So, I'm calling on people to give us more notice, that's all we're asking.

Again, when the long-term-care cuts were made at Ocean View Manor and around the province I was sitting in an Ocean View Foundation meeting, when it came in on a Friday afternoon, and I noticed that the cuts were retroactive. It was released in the middle of June, but the cuts were retroactive back to April. I don't know about you, but they'd already spent the money in April and they'd spent it in May and they'd already planned for what they were spending in June, July, and August. I just think a little more notice would have been nice.

Of course, we know about the non-profit that lost a classroom suddenly, and I am reminded of a little sign that was over the audiovisual department at one of the first hospitals I worked at, because we'd go to them at the last minute saying you've got to help me, I've got to have this audiovisual done, and the sign said, lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part. So, I think with this non-profit, we might owe them an apology. Maybe it was necessary but we might have been able to do it a little differently or given them a little more notice.

I would like to thank everyone in Nova Scotia who gets up every day and takes care of their own health because, let's be honest, the one good thing that's come out of not having doctors is some of the people I talk to are saying, well, I might as well go for a walk and lose some weight because I don't know when I'm going to get in to see my doctor, and there's nothing wrong with that. (Interruption) I'm allowed to say it, I'm over on this side, and just so you know because I can't help but do a little bit of teaching, my email address

is [pedometerphysio@gmail.com](mailto:pedometerphysio@gmail.com) because I've done a lot of research with pedometers and what people don't know is that we're supposed to be doing 7,000 to 13,000 steps a day. Since I started sitting in this Legislature, do you know how many I'm doing? Three thousand. I'm going to gain 20 pounds just from doing this job, so I just want to give you a heads-up. So, I think we need to have a few more breaks or I'm going to put a little pedal bike under my desk to keep me going.

In closing, I would like to thank everybody who takes care of their health, the health of their children, and the well-being of their families, who give of themselves every day for the betterment of the lives of others, and who take an interest in the issues and the challenges of the day. I love being a Nova Scotian and I most especially love where I live and the people who live there with me. I encourage everyone to be involved in the political process and I have to tell you that all those people I listed on my campaign team with the exception of one, none of them had any interest in politics. Now, I know they're all watching me tonight and they're watching to see what we're all doing because somehow they got inspired, and for that I am grateful.

I encourage everybody to be involved in the political process. This is no time to be passive. Lives literally are at stake. The future of our children and grandchildren rests on your shoulders and mine. Pay attention to what is happening and speak up when you can. Step forward to run for political office or support those who do. Don't ridicule us. It's a form of bullying and abuse and for those of us who haven't earned it, we don't deserve it. Most importantly, I'm asking everybody to vote in the next election and every other one after that. Our military personnel and our veterans fought and died on the battlefield for our right to vote. Don't let them down. It is the most powerful voice you will ever have. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Resolution No. 3.

Res. No. 3, re Estimates - CW on Supply: Referred - notice given Sept. 22/17 - (Hon. Karen Casey)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East with 27 minutes.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My colleague did an hour, and I don't think she even took a breath in that hour. It was amazing.

Just to wrap up my thoughts on the budget, obviously, there has been a lot of talk over the last couple of days about the budget in this Chamber. I was out talking to people in the community and listening to people, and it's amazing, Mr. Speaker. I do bring a message from the voters today, and that message was, we don't care. They're not

interested. They don't really believe what is put forward, and why should they? You know the perspective the budget comes from. It's the hopes and wishes of the government for what they expect might happen in the coming year.

It will be different. The reality will be different from the budget. The actuals will be different; they always should be. This is a little different this year because half of the year has passed already, so maybe it will be a little tighter, a little closer when it's all said and done.

When we look at the real issues around health care and the real issues in education, we know that the public is so interested in those issues. We had the teachers and others marching on the Legislature. People working in education are upset - and people in health care. We've seen a lot of them, Mr. Speaker. Then we look at the budget from last year, and we see that this government never spent their health budget - didn't see the need, I guess - and never spent their education budget, again didn't see the need.

This morning, we heard from staff at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development who talked about what's happening in the education system in P-12. They said, yes, we accept that the need is outstripping the resources. As members of the Legislature, we all hear from families who are frustrated by what they see as a lack of support for their children in the school system.

We know that the need is there. Then the question becomes, what steps will the government take to address the need? That's what we're all waiting for. We're waiting to see the steps the government will take to address the needs in health care. We're waiting to see the steps that the government will take to address the needs in education. We'll see how the government responds to those challenges in the coming year.

I did want to talk a little bit about the tax situation. This government has put forward what they referred to as the largest tax cut in recent history. That's a good thing that will help some people for sure, but at the same time, we see taxes creeping up elsewhere.

We still see the bracket creep issue on our personal income tax returns. That is slowly eating away and slowly draining more money from people who are trying to earn more and are trying to move ahead. That's an issue that's still there, and I don't know why this government is so reluctant to speak to that issue and try to address that issue. It is a known issue that could be addressed. So we see more taxes in the bracket creep. We see more taxes, more fees, more charges that are always creeping up in people's lives. When you go to register your car at the Registry of Motor Vehicles, it costs a little more now this time than it did last time - every type of fee and stuff. There's many of them that we encounter all the time.

We had some talk in this Chamber today about the federal tax changes. We can all talk about the messaging around those tax changes and disappointing messaging. But we

have to cut through all that and just think about what's really going on, what's really happening at the federal level, which impacts all of us. There's only one taxpayer, Mr. Speaker.

What's happening at the federal level is, we had some great news, good news. The economy is scorching in parts of Canada and the federal deficit is now going to be lower than was projected. It's going to be \$6 billion lower than was initially projected. Guess what? It has gone now from \$28 billion to \$22 billion and the sad part about that is, when the federal Liberals campaigned, and I'm sure many members of this House were part of that campaign as well, they campaigned on deficits for the first two years, not to exceed two years, an annual deficit not to exceed \$10 billion a year.

Well we know what has happened with the federal Liberals; they blew that. I am thankful that their provincial cousins don't have the same type of mentality in some of the spending that we see at the federal level but they promised \$10 billion dollars' deficit for two years. In the first year it will now be \$22 billion, it looks like, for this year. Guess what? Although they said that the deficits would only be a couple of years of spending, a couple of years of deficits, they now project annual deficits out to 2050. That's what is happening.

We only need to look at that and we can summarize that in one paragraph and then we can understand why the federal tax changes are coming; it's not an effort to do with fairness. If it was to do with fairness, then some of the finance minister's own structures would be subject to it. If it was to do with fairness, some of the Trudeau trust funds would be subject to it. It's not to do with fairness. It is to do with a money grab and it is unfortunate that we cannot get a clear picture from the Premier and this government that they will - at least just say the simple words: I oppose these changes. That's all. We stand with Nova Scotians and we oppose these changes. I said today on the Rick Howe Show that the single most important thing the Premier can do for health care in this province right now, is oppose those changes, because they will have tremendous - it is an easy thing for him to do if he was so inclined. He could stand with Nova Scotians and fight those changes.

I have not heard him say that clearly. I've heard him talk a lot around the issue, but he is very, very reluctant to, maybe challenge the Prime Minister, who is his buddy there, on something. But maybe he just doesn't oppose them. Maybe he thinks it's great because it will produce tax revenue for the province in time, it will. I know that when you think about the small businesses around the province that will be impacted, and there are a lot of small businesses in Halifax Chebucto that are worried about these tax changes. When you think about the impact on health care, it is going to be negative. It is going to have a negative impact on the province.

There are a lot of people in Halifax Chebucto who already don't have a family doctor and need access to primary health care. These are important issues to the people of the province. So, what I would say is, we will have time to go through this budget line by



line in 40 hours of estimates. We didn't get this opportunity when they tabled the budget in April because of course we went to the polls, we had an election. We will get this opportunity now. We will have some discussion of the good that is this budget, and there will be some good for sure. And we will have some questions about some other issues in the budget. But this is just a budget for this year.

My concerns are more focused on where we are going longer term and how the economy of this province is operating, because we need people working, we need people flourishing so they can pay taxes so we can afford the services that people deserve and the services that people need. With those few words this evening, I would say that I look forward to the healthy, constructive debate that will take place on this budget and I look forward to - maybe some modifications might be made through the estimates process. We will see how it turns out over these next few days. Thank you for the time tonight.

[7:00 p.m.]

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: It's a privilege for me to stand and respond on behalf of our caucus to the budget that was tabled yesterday. It's interesting that the government had an opportunity yesterday that many governments don't have or haven't had in recent history. That's the chance to truly address issues and concerns that we hear directly from Nova Scotians.

I say that because of course with the recent election, just prior to that, the budget was tabled in April. Because of what I would call a snap election - we weren't technically at a period where there had to be an election called in our province. I don't think we even hit the four-year mark from the previous election, in 2013. That gave the Liberal Government an opportunity to truly address the things that we hear and we heard on the doorstep during that campaign. It gave the Liberal Government an opportunity to correct, enhance, or maybe change the budget that we saw tabled in April in this Chamber.

It's obvious that we as a caucus don't believe the government did that. It's not just us. I've read media coverage of the budget over the last day and a half and saw words like "fall short" and "don't address the issues" that lost the government seats in the last election. It leads to some concern, I think, Mr. Speaker, that maybe the government members - maybe my colleague, the member for Yarmouth or other communities across the province that they represent - didn't hear the same thing that I heard on the doorstep.

I was very fortunate to garner the support of my community again in this election, but I had many discussions with residents, as I knocked on doors throughout my community, about what their main concern was. What was their issue of the day? What did they want to see change in the province to hopefully address the issues that they brought up to me? I have to say, in this election more than any other of the four elections previous

to that - yes, this is my fifth election - health care and especially the issue around doctors and those without a family physician in this province, they wanted to see action taken on that file.

Some two or two and a half years ago, I stood in my place here as an Opposition member bringing forward the names of constituents of mine who were without a doctor. There was a doctor shortage in Sackville-Cobequid and the surrounding communities. I heard from seniors who were very concerned that their physician retired or moved on, and there was no physician in HRM who was willing to take them on as a patient, to be their doctor. This was the first time that I've had to deal with this type of issue and doctor shortage in my community. As I mentioned, in August, I reached the 14-year mark representing Sackville-Cobequid, and over the last two years was the first time that I heard from so many constituents about the doctor shortage. I continue to bring those concerns to the fore of this Legislature.

The snap election, of course, gave an opportunity for government to readjust, to truly go out and find out from the people who sent us here what they want to see from their government. Mr. Speaker, I don't think that they've made the changes that I think Nova Scotians wanted to see in this budget.

It's important to remember that this government does not write their narrative based on the budget. They create a budget to fit their narrative, and we've seen that with a number of issues over the last number of years - pension valuation adjustments. We've seen this when it comes to using federal and municipal money as provincial revenue, and the list goes on and on. I could continue for the last three or four years that we've seen.

There is something very self-serving about this government's fiscal plan. We have seen it here over the last few years as the Liberal Government congratulates themselves for what they think is a job well done. Hearing from my constituents around the doctor shortage, I have to say that over the last three and a half or four years, the sheer number of people who have voiced their concerns around this building should have been an indication of how Nova Scotians were feeling about the job the government has done. They don't want to acknowledge how many people are hurting as a result of the policies this government has brought forward over the last three and a half or four years. I want to remind the government members that outside this House, many Nova Scotians do not believe the budget that was introduced yesterday is cause for celebration.

Despite the narrative being put forth by government, I don't think Nova Scotians are sitting around talking about how this government are good fiscal managers. Instead, I think they are questioning this government's lack of attention on health care and the needs of this province, and rightfully so. As I said, during the election, it was a top-of-mind issue, talking with Nova Scotians and the residents of Sackville-Cobequid, that health care needed some attention, needed more attention than was being provided in the budget that we saw in April and what was delivered yesterday.

You have a physician resource plan calling for 107 new doctors per year to 2026, and this government presents a budget that commits to hiring eight doctors. What are people supposed to think when they see that in the budget? That the government doesn't understand the severity of the situation. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid has the floor.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned my situation. There are members from all over this province, especially Cape Breton, who are in dire need of having the physician shortage issue - crisis - managed and addressed by the government.

This would be hard to believe given that doctors, health care professionals, patients, Opposition Parties, and media continue to document, on a daily basis, the growing need for new doctors in this province. Should people think that the government is putting their surplus ahead of the health care needs of Nova Scotians? I think there are many Nova Scotians wondering how there could be \$21 million left in the bank at the end of the year when their health care needs continue to go unaddressed.

Underspending the health care budget, like we've seen year after year, is unacceptable. I know first-hand, going into facilities across this province from one end to the other, that they could actually spend that money to try to improve health care services. I think it's unacceptable for the government to continue to underspend health care money. That's not money that's being asked for on top of the current budget. That's just the budget that the government presents on a yearly basis.

The Premier continues to tout the increased residency spaces at Dalhousie. While the ability to train more doctors for another day is welcome news to all Nova Scotians, I understand that these new spaces will not come online until at least 2018 or 2019.

These new spaces will provide little solace to the 106,000 people in this province without a family doctor. They don't really care that you added more spaces at Dalhousie to train more doctors. Even though it's welcome news, it doesn't help them today. As I stand here and members sit here in the House, there are people in their homes wondering, how do I get the help I need? I have a chronic disease, an illness I'm tired of going to the ER, and the walk-in clinic isn't open, or the hospital is closed today.

Our caucus was informed by the Department of Health and Wellness that the eight new hires I just mentioned this fiscal year will be specialists - again, welcome news, Mr. Speaker, but I'm concerned that this government can tell us very little about the hiring of family doctors in this province.

We hear announcements over the last year or so or whenever they're ready to hire a new doctor but I've tried as a member of the Public Accounts Committee on numerous

occasions, we've tried through freedom of information, letters to the government to find out really what's the net gain. If you're going to hire 13 doctors, but 20 left, you're not in a better position to address the family physician and the doctor shortage here in Nova Scotia, and on top of it knowing after the last election and hearing the federal government talk about the changes in the federal tax system and the concern from doctors in Nova Scotia, and Doctors Nova Scotia are bringing their concerns forward, we're very concerned that the budget yesterday didn't try to control some of those issues.

In the Speech from the Throne, the government says our doctors are not just health care providers, they are a source of information and insight into the health care system. Well, this must be like salt in the wounds for many doctors and to those health care professionals who have been voicing their concerns not only to the department and to the NSHA, only to have those concerns go unaddressed. Both the current and past-president of Doctors Nova Scotia have sounded the alarm bells about not only the physician shortage that we have in the province but also the way this government is communicating with doctors and handling the transition to a collaborative care model.

We heard that criticism just last weekend about the physicians in Nova Scotia and the inability for the federal government to communicate to them about what these changes will do for them on a federal level, but in a letter published in the media in September of last year the past-president said: "We still don't know what the province's vision for primary care is, what the role of physicians will be in this model and how we can contribute to its success." - and I'll table that quote. Meanwhile, the current president has recently said doctors are suffering from a high rate of burnout and they're frustrated that the increasingly bureaucratic health system, which is the new Health Authority, is impairing their ability to care for patients.

I've sounded that alarm prior to 2013 that one of the biggest concerns I heard from communities around the province is that if you go to a single health care system including the IWK that communities will lose their voice, that decisions in Halifax will affect communities and they'll feel like they don't have their voice - and don't take my word for it. We witnessed, I think for the first time in my five elections, physicians coming together during election to protest, to try to get the government who were seeking a second mandate to understand that they are concerned with what's going on - and a number of them in Cape Breton. The president goes on to say, the current president: "It's definitely gotten worse since the creation of the new provincial health authority, and now its [sic] hitting a tipping point."

Those are words that should concern the government and the Premier - "a tipping point." So, we have all these factors over the last number of years of seeing a doctor shortage. The recruitment of physicians hasn't been going well but we're at a tipping point of burnout and we know in the past professions that hit a tipping point usually mean there's going to be a long-term shortage of that profession for a number of years ahead and in the early to mid-1990s around nursing, the nursing shortage we had. When nurses felt the

government were against them and weren't on their side, what did we see? We saw the majority of our nurses in the province and Atlantic Canada go to other jurisdictions, mainly the U.S., and the fear is that this will happen with the physicians as we get to this tipping point and we move forward, and it's not going to be pleasant days ahead.

Other doctors who are well-respected in this province, who from my view have not been political to one political Party or another, Dr. A.J., Dr. Bob Martel, Dr. John Ross have started publishing opinion pieces that offer policy insight on the health care system, Mr. Speaker.

[7:15 p.m.]

This is something the government needs to pay attention to. Why has the media become the middleman for the doctors and the health care professionals? If the Premier and his government and the former Minister of Health and Wellness and the current Minister of Health and Wellness truly believe that doctors are a source of information and insight into (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I would like to remind everybody that the honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid has the floor.

The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Whenever the heckling starts, you are getting under their skin for some reason, so I'm on the right track.

If the Premier and his government truly believes that doctors are the source of information and insight into the health care system, I would expect more action on the health file than we saw in the budget on Tuesday. When asked about the crisis in health care, the Premier often returns - and he is well-trained - to his talking points about transition to the collaborative health care model. Enough with the talking points - it's time for action.

I'm very proud to be part of a government that opened Collaborative Emergency Centres in this province, Mr. Speaker. We began the conversation with health care professionals about what the transition to a collaborative model would look like. We introduced the rural residency program down in the Valley, which will hopefully contribute to seeing some of those physicians staying here in our province. I have visited that area. I know that has been a success, and I know the government has mentioned it on a number of occasions over the last number of years. It's frustrating, though, to see how little progress this government has made in four years in office.

Before the election, we had the Department of Health and Wellness and the Nova Scotia Health Authority appear before the Public Accounts Committee to talk about collaborative care. I have to say, I don't recall witnesses coming to that committee with

less information than you would expect those departments to have. The fact that the witnesses are tasked at leading the transition to this collaborative model, Mr. Speaker, was concerning for me and was concerning for our caucus.

We know that with the creation of the Nova Scotia Health Authority, the government has tried to give that responsibility to a different identity and say oh, the Nova Scotia Health Authority is making those decisions. Ultimately, Mr. Speaker, it's the government. It's the Premier, the Minister of Health and Wellness, the current government - whoever it is - that are ultimately responsible for the decisions about how health care services are delivered in this province. They could create 10 boards if they wanted to, even though they most likely won't. Ultimately, it stops at their feet. So while it is disappointing, it's not surprising that this budget offers little insight into the transition to collaborative care.

I also want to make known my disappointment about the fact that this government is making investments in mental health - which I applaud - but there was no mention of the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. I am also proud to have been part of a government that introduced Nova Scotia's first ever strategy in this area. However, with the first five-year phase almost finished, one would expect that the budget would address issues of the next phase or the next strategy. But the address offered little insight into the successes and challenges of the strategy, nor did it mention the government's intention for Phase 2 if, indeed, it even plans to implement a second phase.

I don't put that on the shoulders of the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board in her speech because I know how the Budget Speech is prepared. You put a request out to the department to ask, what's your top priority? Let us know, and we'll put it in the speech, make mention of it. I would hope that the Department of Health and Wellness would have thought it fit the mental health strategy, and what we would expect in future would be in there.

I look forward to the new Minister of Health and Wellness hopefully standing in this House and telling Nova Scotians where we're going to go with mental health and addiction in the next five years. It is a major issue in this province, and there was wide consultation with the creation of the first strategy, where groups came in together who often didn't see eye-to-eye to come up with a plan to address mental health and addiction in our province. I hope that it is sooner, not later, that we hear from the government on the mental health and addiction strategy and what they are going to do as we move forward.

Education is always important for members of this House, for our community, and for the children and parents who depend on a good education for our kids. The pre-Primary piece is a key initiative of this year's budget. We know that the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development was in my riding a couple of days ago announcing and doing a newsreel on how many pre-Primary were opening up and where we were going to be. I welcomed him to the community.

While our caucus supports universal programming for children and significant investment in education, I'm a bit perplexed by the rollout of the pre-Primary program and I say this for the following reasons. The Liberal Government came into office in 2013 and had years to consult with parents, early childhood educators, and child care operators about the implementation of a pre-Primary program. Last year they even made efforts to consult thousands of Nova Scotians on education. Yet they seem to be rolling out this program without doing their homework, and I would say scrambling at times to address issues as they arise.

We heard in Public Accounts today that those in the education system, throughout the summer, were running around trying to find out what space would be available, because the announcement and the work to move this forward happened after the end of the school year, when most people aren't in the schools and the teachers are off. The administrators had to scramble to try to get them to the point where they are today - another classic Liberal case of "act first, consult later."

I mentioned that earlier with our debating of Resolution No. 160 around the federal government. It must be in the DNA of Liberal Governments. This budget will increase the basic personal exemption amount by \$3,000 for those with taxable income under \$75,000. While I don't think many Nova Scotians will argue about a little more money in their pockets - it's a good thing - I think the Premier continues to exaggerate the impact of this tax cut.

We know that there was something similar that they introduced in the April budget, and I believe the change works out to about \$160 in savings per person. I think at the time there was some mention about "Oh, interesting, there's an election coming and they're giving back \$160." I recall an election where Nova Scotians got \$155 cheques, and that didn't work out well for them. I think that they did win a government, but it was a minority. Maybe if it was \$155, we'd have a minority right now, but anyway.

I'll move on from that, but it's interesting - many of these folks are the same people who have to deal with the impacts of the cuts made by this government over the last number of years. They may get \$160 in their pocket at the end of the year, but they supported groups and organizations like Feed Nova Scotia, CNIB, Alzheimer Society, and the AIDS Coalition of Cape Breton, cuts to EDNS - Eating Disorders Nova Scotia - which I've mentioned many times in the House. These are the same people who might have a loved one in a long-term care facility that's seen their budget cut two years in a row - \$8 million taken out of those facilities, I believe, and \$3.2 million went back this budget.

I know that, as a caucus, we made our intentions known to the Premier and to the government that we would like to see that \$8 million restored. Unfortunately, they didn't get 50 per cent of that. These are the same people who saw a reduction in services under this government. The same people who cannot find a doctor and will not be able to purchase one with that \$160 tax credit.

We know, now, that the Premier said, help is on the way for people who are struggling in our province, in Nova Scotia. But really, I doubt that there are many people struggling to make ends meet who will be jumping up and down with joy about the government's plan, or the government plans to make a plan to adjust poverty somewhere down the road. That's how we read what was in the budget on Thursday.

There are, unfortunately, 7,500 more people using food banks since the government took office in 2013 and last year, Nova Scotia had the highest annual increase in food bank use in any province in the country. Those are pretty sad statistics, nothing to be proud of, and it's an area where we need to do a better job and government needs to do a better job.

We also know that the highest rate of poverty and child poverty of any province in our country is Nova Scotia. We can't hold our heads up high, especially when there's money left on the table, when we see a dramatic increase in poverty and in food bank use. So consider these alarming statistics. The Premier committing, four years after taking office, to make a plan in the years ahead to address poverty - it seems a little underwhelming in our opinion, Mr. Speaker.

Another area, top of mind for many people, and I don't know, like myself over the last number of months, but, have been glued to the television sometimes, when we see the severe weather events that we have witnessed over the last number of months and definitely our hearts and thoughts go out to those who are suffering, to those families who have lost loved ones.

But of course, global warming has had an impact on these events and will continue to do so, even though it's something that we try not to talk about, or is not in the front line, or on the front page of most of the media outlets. It is when it's 40 hours of CNN, when the destruction is seen, when these weather events happen. I think all those concerned about the future of our environment will be disappointed with the lack of attention in the budget or the Speech from the Throne, given to environmental issues. We know communities, especially municipalities, are the ones who are at the front line when it comes to severe weather events, floodings, fires. They need to know that the provincial government and the federal government are there to support them, and it's great.

Especially in Nova Scotia when we see so many people give after the destruction is seen, but wouldn't it be great to be one of the provinces that says, no, we're going to be prepared, we're going to make sure that we make the investments to not only protect our environment but protect our communities, by investing in communities, to ensure that they're ready to address these events that we see, that ultimately are the result of global warming. No matter what Trump says, don't believe him.

In my time here, as I have seen legislation pass through this House, like the Environmental Goals, and Sustainability Prosperity Act, the Green Economy Act, we have seen nothing of this sort from this current government. In fact, one might argue that when



it comes to environmental issues, this current government has been coasting on the success of past governments. I think they have, and they know it's true, because I got a little bit of heckling there, because I got under their skin and I know I was on the right track.

I think Nova Scotians, particularly young Nova Scotians, are looking for progressive policies on environmental issues, yet this is the government that cancelled the COMFIT program and yet has not replaced it with anything. This is the government that has offered no new targets for electricity generation beyond 2020. This is the government that has shown no interest in giving people a greater say in the decision about environmental decisions that will impact their communities, and I know we'll talk about more of that as this session proceeds along.

[7:30 p.m.]

It's interesting that the government argues in the Budget Address that the fiscal health of the province has improved, Mr. Speaker. I believe that might have been on Page 1 of the address. The budget says that the debt-to-GDP ratio for the last year was 36.3 per cent and the current debt-to-GDP ratio is projected to be 35.5 per cent.

I will note that in 2010 and 2011 the debt-to-GDP in Nova Scotia was actually 34.8 per cent. It also was 35.5 per cent in 2011-12, Mr. Speaker, identical to this year's current projection and this was on the heels of the worst recession since the Great Depression. I'm just saying.

Economic forecasters now are pointing out that the province's shipbuilding industry is near capacity and major projects such as the Maritime Link and the Nova Centre, which have driven economic growth in recent years, are winding down. Then all the forecasts that we heard from government, from previous Finance Ministers, mentioned a couple of those projects and I wonder when they started. Therefore, it will be interesting to see what ideas this Liberal Government will have for improving our economy. What are the ideas to improve the economy? Unfortunately, I don't see much in the way of new ideas presented in this budget.

I listened intently to my colleagues from the Progressive Conservative Party. I didn't hear that they read something different about the new ideas. I listened to the Throne Speech as it was being read, Mr. Speaker. I didn't hear any new ideas, so to me that means trouble for us in the few years and the 2010-11 GDP ratio might be a record, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude by reminding the government that they cannot impose their narrative on the people of this province. I don't believe that Nova Scotians are talking around the supper table about how this government are great fiscal managers. I haven't heard that at the dinners that I have attended. I think they are talking about how family members or friends can't find a family doctor or they can't make ends meet. They

are talking about how worried they are about their future and the future of their communities, especially in rural Nova Scotia.

I know I represent the suburbs of Halifax, but I've been around this province and rural communities need a government to bring forward a plan to ensure that they can survive and thrive, Mr. Speaker. I think this government has a lot of work to do to help people find the answers to some of the questions that I asked and address some of the concerns that everyday Nova Scotians are talking about, and they sure were talking about them during the election.

Unfortunately, as I look at the budget, I am concerned that this government does not understand the realities facing many Nova Scotians. Those without a doctor, those living in poverty, Mr. Speaker, those are the concerns they want the government to address and, unfortunately, I can't give them a big shiny light and point to where it is in the Budget Speech.

We're going to work hard, as an Opposition Party, to make sure that we bring forward legislation, that we bring forward ideas and maybe the government might adopt those ideas. It might take four years, like the legislation did around PTSD which I am very grateful for, but it might take four years for us to get through to them and I'll assure you that the NDP caucus will be here to do that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Estimates are now referred to the Committee of the Whole on Supply unto Her Majesty.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, that concludes government business for the day. The House will resume tomorrow, Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. At the conclusion of Question Period we will move to Budget Estimates, followed by second reading of Bill No. 8, the Pre-primary Education Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to resume tomorrow, Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, between 1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

The House now stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 7:35 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****Tabled September 26, 2017****RESOLUTION NO. 206**

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas Robert (Bob) Kinsman, Manager of Hansard Reporting Services is retiring from his position on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017; and

Whereas Bob has served the Members of the House of Assembly and the Nova Scotia Legislature with exemplary service since 1981 beginning as a sessional employee, becoming Assistant Editor in 1989 and since 2000 as Manager of Hansard; and

Whereas Bob will now join his wife, of forty-four years, former Legislative Assistant to the Speaker, Nancy Kinsman, in well deserved retirement to spend quality time with their children, grandchildren, family and friends:

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly join me in congratulating Robert Kinsman on his retirement, wishing him the best of health and happiness in the years ahead.

**RESOLUTION NO. 207**

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Internal Services)

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

Whereas The Anchor is a newly opened restaurant in Fairview that has already become a popular spot for food and music in the community; and

Whereas in less than a year, The Anchor has been nominated in the Coast's Best of Halifax Awards for Best Caesar, Best Trivia Night, Best Clayton Park Restaurant, and Best Restaurant along with Chef Richard Julien being nominated for Best Chef in Halifax, leading The Anchor's total number of nominations to an impressive five; and

Whereas in addition to amazing food, The Anchor also serves as a music and cultural hub in Fairview and continues to grow and strive to contribute to the cultural

vibrancy of our community, while giving residents a place to fine dine in their own backyard:

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the staff and ownership of The Anchor on their accomplishments, and wish them nothing but success in the future.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 208**

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Internal Services)

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

Whereas Kenzie Burke graduated from the International Baccalaureate program at Halifax West in June 2017, excelling in every course she was enrolled in, including Higher Level Biology and Chemistry, as well as Spanish where she developed a strong understanding of the language, all while working as a lifeguard at the Canada Games Centre and participating in Model Parliament, an annual two-day-long event held at Halifax West where she was named Model Parliamentarian of the Year; and

Whereas Kenzie has always been passionate about science and animals, and had a lifelong dream of being a vet; and

Whereas she has chosen to attend the University of New Hampshire which has an acclaimed program in Equine Studies and was awarded the most esteemed scholarship the university has to offer, the Presidential Scholarship, a renewable scholarship awarded to those students who graduated within the top 10 per cent of their high school graduating class, with strong marks in advanced level classes, and exceptionally high SAT scores:

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Kenzie Burke on her academic achievements and wish her the best in her future studies.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 209**

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Internal Services)

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

Whereas Anna Gray was chosen through the international Sea Cadet Association to represent Atlantic Canada in a Canadian delegation exchange to the United Kingdom

last month for a three-week expedition where she took place in a wide variety of cadet exercises and activities; and

Whereas to be awarded the Royal Canadian Legion Cadet Medal of Excellence is an extreme honour, especially to someone as young as Anna Gray, but was awarded because she demonstrated greatness in society outside of the Cadet program; and

Whereas to be able to maintain both schoolwork and being an exemplary Cadet is something few people can accomplish and these skills are some that will continue to provide Anna with tremendous opportunity for years to come:

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Anna on her recent accomplishments and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavours.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 210**

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Internal Services)

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

Whereas last month, the Somali youth in our community who had recently graduated high school were recognized by parents, peers and mentors at an annual event held at St. Andrew's Recreation Centre which I was fortunate enough to attend and be able to congratulate and present these youth with certificates; and

Whereas during this event I heard about the future plans of these recent high school graduates and it further strengthened my belief that the young people in our communities are bright, strong leaders; and

Whereas as always, after attending this event I was left with an overwhelming sense of awe at how accomplished these young people are and how supported they are by their community:

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in recognizing the success of the young people of the Halifax Somali Youth Athletic Association and wish them the best in the next chapter of their lives.

**RESOLUTION NO. 211**

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Internal Services)

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

Whereas over the past 20 years, Halifax Dunbrack Soccer Club has become a staple in the lives of residents in the Fairview-Clayton Park community promoting a healthy lifestyle amongst players as well as providing a variety of opportunities to those who belong to this club; and

Whereas many soccer players in the region have gone on to play for universities and teams at the national level while also receiving thousands of dollars in athletic scholarships; and

Whereas, most recently, the club can be recognized for their fifth consecutive supreme ranking in the province with Kate MacDonald and Leanne Huck scoring in the gold-medal game where they defeated Halifax County United sending them to Canada Soccer's Toyota National Championships in Langley, British Columbia, in early October;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the players of the senior women's soccer team and wish them the best of luck at Nationals this Fall.

**RESOLUTION NO. 212**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas birthdays are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of an individual; and

Whereas on June 19, 2017, Marcelline d'Eon of Ste. Anne du Ruisseau celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday; and

Whereas to have reached 90 years of age and continue to be active and share all the memories gathered over your lifetime with your loved ones is a wonderful reason to celebrate;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Marcelline on reaching this milestone in her life and wish her many more happy birthdays and continued good health.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 213**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas birthdays are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of an individual; and

Whereas on July 28, 2017, Pauline A. d'Entremont of West Pubnico celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday; and

Whereas to have reached 80 years of age and continue to be active and share all the memories gathered over your lifetime with your loved ones is a wonderful reason to celebrate;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Pauline on reaching this milestone in her life and wish her many more happy birthdays and continued good health.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 214**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas birthdays are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of an individual; and

Whereas on August 13, 2017, Hilda d'Eon of Middle West Pubnico celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday; and

Whereas to have reached 90 years of age and continue to be active and share all the memories gathered over your lifetime with your loved ones is a wonderful reason to celebrate;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Hilda on reaching this milestone in her life and wish her many more happy birthdays and continued good health.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 215**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas anniversaries are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of two individuals united as one; and

Whereas it was once said that a marriage anniversary is the celebration of love, trust, partnership, tolerance, and tenacity but the order varies for any given year; and

Whereas on June 23, 2017, a very special occasion took place when Irene and Pius d'Entremont of Yarmouth celebrated their 70<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Irene and Pius on this remarkable milestone in their life together and wish them many more happy years.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 216**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas anniversaries are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of two individuals united as one; and

Whereas it was once said that a marriage anniversary is the celebration of love, trust, partnership, tolerance, and tenacity but the order varies for any given year; and

Whereas on June 10, 2017, a very special occasion took place when Russell and Linda d'Entremont of Belleville celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Russell and Linda on this remarkable milestone in their life together and wish them many more happy years.



**RESOLUTION NO. 217**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas anniversaries are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of two individuals united as one; and

Whereas it was once said that a marriage anniversary is the celebration of love, trust, partnership, tolerance and tenacity but the order varies for any given year; and

Whereas on July 13, 2017, a very special and remarkable occasion took place when Annie and Charlie Muise of Tusket celebrated their 75<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Annie and Charlie on this remarkable milestone in their life together and wish them many more happy years.

**RESOLUTION NO. 218**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas anniversaries are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of two individuals united as one; and

Whereas it was once said that a marriage anniversary is the celebration of love, trust, partnership, tolerance and tenacity but the order varies for any given year; and

Whereas on July 1, 2017, a very special occasion took place when Diane and Howard d'Entremont of Canaan, celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Diane and Howard on this remarkable milestone in their life together and wish them many more happy years.

**RESOLUTION NO. 219**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Edna J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on July 26, 2017, Stephanie Smith and Chad Goodwin welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Stephanie and Chad on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 220**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 18, 2017, Suzanne Newell and Kayden Reynolds welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Suzanne and Kayden on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 221**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on May 4, 2017, Terilyn Banks welcomed her son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Terilyn on this miraculous event in her life and wish her many more happy years as a parent.

**RESOLUTION NO. 222**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on July 12, 2017, Nakita Boudreau and Joe Goodwin welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Nakita and Joe on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 223**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on July 19, 2017, Kyla Symonds and Brett Nickerson welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kyla and Brett on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 224**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on July 29, 2017, Kristy Nickerson and Jeremy Williams welcomes their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kristy and Jeremy on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 225**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 1, 2017, Keisha Nickerson and Marc Green welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Keisha and Marc on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 226**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 6, 2017, Keely-Anne Nickerson and Justin Jacquard welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Keely-Anne and Justin on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 227**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on May 31, 2017, Georgena Swine and Matthew Goreham welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Georgena and Matthew on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 228**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on May 23, 2017, Christine Henneberry and Matthew Atwood welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Christine and Matthew on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 229**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on July 4, 2017, Chera and Garret Cottreau welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chera and Garrett on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 230**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 9, 2017, Bethany and Matthew Simpson welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Bethany and Matthew on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 231**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on August 23, 2017, Ashley Garron and Matthew Nickerson welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ashley and Matthew on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

**RESOLUTION NO. 232**

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Internal Services)

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

Whereas this summer, the Bayers Westwood Family Resource Centre hosted several events that gave families an opportunity to reconnect with others in the community, partake in the fun games, as well as learn about other cultures; and

Whereas these events provide recent immigrants and refugees of various backgrounds to come together and reconnect, such as the International Bazaar - a successful market that featured traditional clothing, jewelry, and food - giving community members the opportunity to sell their products and gain entrepreneurial knowledge; and

Whereas the Bayers Westwood Family Resource Centre is an organization that is heavily committed to those in the area, with employees dedicated to the families, providing endless resources including free preschool, parenting support, and a community garden, making our community feel like home;



Therefore be it resolved that that the members of this House of Assembly join me in recognizing the Bayers Westwood Family Resource Centre and their rewarding efforts in making their surrounding community a place so many people are proud to call home.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 233**

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Internal Services)

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

Whereas each year, the TD Scholarship, valued at up to \$70,000 each, is awarded to 20 students from across the country who make a tremendous difference in their communities, as well as possessing strong leadership skills; and

Whereas Qendresa Sahiti spearheaded many eco-friendly initiatives, developed a battery recycling program that creates pills for children with zinc deficiencies, spent hours volunteering in a local senior care facility, and served as the secretary of the inclusion committee for the Nova Scotia Secondary Students Association; and

Whereas these and other achievements helped her receive the TD Scholarship, allowing her to enter into her second year at Dalhousie University's integrated science program in the path of neuroscience in hopes of researching further into early onset dementia and mental health diagnoses;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Qendresa Sahiti on this great achievement and wish her continued success in the future.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 234**

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Internal Services)

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

Whereas Amanda Beazley, a property manager in Fairview-Clayton Park, who has risen above the call of duty by accommodating the needs of new Nova Scotians, many of whom have arrived in Nova Scotia through the Government Assisted Refugee Program, by creating a system that allows fellow employees and tenants to clearly communicate through the usage of pictures and translation software; and

Whereas Amanda has taken this inclusive approach one step further by sitting down with her tenants and giving an overview of their lease and the Residential Tenancies Act,

ensuring that new tenants are not only aware of their responsibilities but also their rights as a tenant in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas with this approach, Amanda facilitates an environment where tenants who speak the same language or come from the same region can help those who need it, ensuring that everyone is able to live comfortably in their new home;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly thank Amanda for her inclusivity and accommodation of new Nova Scotians.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 235**

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Internal Services)

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

Whereas each year, the Nova Scotia Secondary Schools Athletic Federation distributes awards to a male and female recipient from each school who demonstrates exceptional athletic ability and sportsmanship at an annual luncheon, the Celebration of School Sport; and

Whereas this year, Hannah Huntley and Justin Barron were recipients of this prestigious award from Halifax West High School; and

Whereas Hannah is an avid volleyball player, playing for the Bedford Blizzard Volleyball Club as well as being a key player in her school's own team, and Justin was recently the Halifax Mooseheads' 13<sup>th</sup> overall pick in the Quebec Minor Junior Hockey League Draft;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Hannah Huntley and Justin Barron on their athletic achievements.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 239**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas 20-year-old Savannah Elizabeth Sullivan was crowned Princess Windsor 2017 during a special ceremony on Saturday, April 1, 2017, at the Hants County War Memorial Community Centre; and

Whereas Savannah graduated from Avon View High School in 2014, will be graduating from the experiential tourism program at NSCC in Kentville this Spring, and plans to attend Mount Saint Vincent University in the Fall to complete her degree in tourism and hospitality; and

Whereas Savannah has a love for the growing wine industry in Nova Scotia, enjoys giving back to her community by volunteering at various events, and is looking forward to representing Windsor-West Hants over the next year;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Savannah Sullivan on being crowned Princess Windsor and wish her all the best during her reign.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 240**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas the first Spark West Innovation Challenge was a huge success in the western part of Nova Scotia, where they received 32 submissions vying for up to \$50,000 in cash towards expenses for an early stage technology company; and

Whereas chosen by Innovacorp and ACOA, Windsor entrepreneur Joy Hillier, president of the Midgard Insect Farm in Windsor, was chosen for one of the top prizes of \$45,000; and

Whereas the Midgard Insect Farm breeds and processes crickets to create insect-based protein powder for use in various industries;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Joy Hillier on receiving the award and wish her all the best.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 241**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Jeff Redden of Windsor was chosen by the Town of Windsor to be recognized at the 43<sup>rd</sup> Provincial Volunteer Awards; and

Whereas Jeff works with many worthwhile organizations such as Christmas Angels and the Hants Community Hospital Auxiliary and is involved with Communities in Bloom and the Windsor Tree Canopy project just to name a few;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly thank Jeff Redden for his commitment and dedication to helping others and congratulate him on receiving a Provincial Volunteer Award in 2017.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 242**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas volunteering is the practice of people working on behalf of others or a particular cause without payment for their time and services; and

Whereas Rita Porter (Nan) of Ardoise was chosen by the Municipality of the District of West Hants to be recognized at the 43<sup>rd</sup> Provincial Volunteer Awards; and

Whereas Rita has been an outstanding volunteer for more than 53 years in the Municipality of the District of West Hants where she has volunteered for more than 35 years with the Ardoise Community Hall and has been a canvasser for the Canadian Cancer Society for more than 25 years;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly thank Rita Porter for her commitment and dedication to helping others and congratulate her on receiving a Provincial Volunteer Award in 2017.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 243**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced in 2014 by Terra Firma Development Corporation in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board to provide the opportunity for students

who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph;  
and

Whereas an extremely bright and capable young man, Braeden Reade, always has a smile on his face and has been able to make so many friends this past year at West Hants Middle School; and

Whereas Braeden has maintained good grades, become very open with more people, and overcome many challenges;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Braeden Reade on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award and wish him all the best in the future.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 244**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced in 2014 by Terra Firma Development Corporation in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board to provide the opportunity for students who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph;  
and

Whereas an extremely bright and capable young lady, Shiane Rehberg, has been described as keen, awesome, and conscientious by her teachers and has drastically turned her life around both socially and academically with a positive outlook on all that she does;  
and

Whereas during the 2016-2017 school year Shiane was a model student in Grade 10 at Avon View High School and academically she was in the top ten per cent of her grade;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Shiane Rehberg on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award and wish her all the best in the future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 245**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced in 2014 by Terra Firma Development Corporation in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board to provide the opportunity for students who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph; and

Whereas Traykiea Grandy has learned invaluable life skills through her various places of work and volunteering and is more focused in the classroom; and

Whereas Traykiea worked hard to make numerous positive choices in her life as she made strides past life's obstacles while moving through high school and into a very bright future;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Traykiea Grandy on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award and wish her all the best in the future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 246**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced in 2014 by Terra Firma Development Corporation in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board to provide the opportunity for students who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph; and

Whereas Garrett Nathan Rines through self-motivation and self-discipline has proven to himself and to others that he is capable of setting and achieving goals; and

Whereas while Garrett's high school graduation in June is the result of his hard work, determination, and commitment he was also rewarded the Turnaround Achievement Award Scholarship of \$1,000 which will help with his post-secondary institution fees;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Garrett Nathan Rines on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award and wish him all the best in the future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 247**

By: Mr. Chuck Porter (Hants West)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's first Turnaround Achievement Awards program for students was introduced in 2014 by Terra Firma Development Corporation in collaboration with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board to provide the opportunity for students who have overcome personal and educational challenges to be rewarded for their triumph; and

Whereas while attending the West Hants Education Centre Jessica Osmond established herself as a dedicated student and has shown excellent growth personally, socially, and academically; and

Whereas while Jessica has worked hard to develop her strategies to persevere through any challenges both in the classroom and in life, she plans to earn her high school diploma at Adult High then further on to post-secondary education;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jessica Osmond on receiving the Turnaround Achievement Award and wish her all the best in the future.

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**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****Tabled September 27, 2017****RESOLUTION NO. 251**

By: Hon. David Wilson (Sackville-Cobequid)

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

Whereas Sackville is fortunate to have many volunteers who are dedicated to making our community a better place to live; and

Whereas Jason Craig joined the Acadia Recreation Club in 2015 and became project manager for the Sackville Community Food Garden. which got underway in the Spring of 2017 with the construction of garden beds at Acadia Park for a hands-on vegetable garden; and

Whereas the first growing season yielded not only a bountiful harvest but also cultivated discussions on healthy eating, as well as showcasing Sackville's community spirit;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize Lower Sackville's Jason Craig and the Acadia Recreation Club for their efforts to establish the Sackville Community Food Garden and extend best wishes for future success.