



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

**DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS**

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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**First Session**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2017**

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House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2017**

**Sixty-third General Assembly**

**First Session**

**1:00 P.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy

**DEPUTY SPEAKERS**

Mr. Chuck Porter, Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

We'll now begin the daily routine.

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition. It goes like this:

Nous soussignés appelons le PREMIER MINISTRE, le MINISTRE DE L'ÉDUCATION et le GOUVERNEMENT DE LA NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE à annoncer la construction d'une nouvelle école élémentaire à Wedgeport. L'école actuelle est un environnement d'apprentissage non acceptable et la langue et la culture acadienne françaises sont en crise.

Mr. Speaker, in English:

We the undersigned call on the PREMIER, the MINISTER OF EDUCATION and the GOVERNMENT OF NOVA SCOTIA to announce the construction of a new elementary school in Wedgeport. The current school is an unacceptable learning environment and the french acadian language and culture are at risk.

Mr. Speaker, there are 150 signatures and, as per the rules, I have affixed my signature as well.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

### **PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Private and Local Bills, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bills:

**Bill No. 18 - Congregation of Notre Dame, Saint Joseph Province Dissolution Act.**

**Bill No. 24 - An Act Respecting Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada.**

**Bill No. 36 - Lunenburg Common Lands (2017) Act.**

**Bill No. 41 - Digby Water Commission Act.**

and the committee recommends these bills to the favourable consideration of the House, each without amendment.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of the Public Service Commission.

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a report in English and in French: Moving Toward Equity, 2016-2017.

MR. SPEAKER: The report is tabled.



**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS****GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, may I do an introduction before I do my resolution?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

THE PREMIER: I want to draw the attention of the House to the east gallery. With us today is Dr. Ron Stewart, the former MLA for Cape Breton North and Minister of Health - it's great to see you back in this House, sir.

With Dr. Stewart, he has several guests with him: Dr. John Geddes and his wife, Florence; Dr. Richard Crampton and his wife, Julie; Dr. Eugene Nagel; and Dr. Tom Baskett and his wife, Yvette. I'd ask you all to stand and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Standing Ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

**RESOLUTION NO. 445**

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

Whereas 2017 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the publication of papers testing the theory that citizens who have been dying within an hour of a heart attack could be saved if given immediate or rapid care; and

Whereas this foundation was the basis for the creation of our Nova Scotia Emergency Health Services system 20 years ago, which is being recognized at the EMS 20-50 Celebration Symposium in Halifax; and

Whereas this symposium has brought together three of the original innovators who pioneered emergency health services, who will receive the appreciation of health care professionals, educators, and government for what they have done for the reformed emergency health services system;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly offer thanks and congratulations to Dr. John Geddes, Dr. Richard Crampton, and Dr. Eugene Nagel on their enormous contributions to emergency health services in Nova Scotia and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, before I ask for waiver, I think it's important to this House to recognize and honour the member for Sackville-Cobequid and the member for Hants West who both were paramedics in this system and continue to bring it from its infancy to the fine service that's being recognized around the world.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction before mine also?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, joining us today in the east gallery this afternoon are three remarkable women who are living with dementia and have bravely shared their own stories in videos that were recently released.

I would ask our guests in the gallery to stand as I call each of them by name: Sandra Britten, Anne MacQuarrie, and Reverend Faye Forbes. Also, joining us today are two representatives from the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia, Kara Gouthro-Murgatroyd and Dr. Wenda MacDonald.

I'm very happy that they've joined us today, Mr. Speaker, and I would ask the members of the House to join in welcoming them. (Standing Ovation)

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

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 446**

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

Whereas a video series featuring three remarkable women sharing their stories of living with early stage dementia were released yesterday by the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia under the provincial dementia strategy; and

Whereas complementary to these videos are three reflective guides to help people with dementia live well with the support of their partners in care and health care professionals; and

Whereas these are important education and awareness tools that are person-centred in the first-person voice and are by people and for people living with dementia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize the important work being done by the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia and join me in thanking these three women for sharing their stories in their voice.

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 Premier.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 447**

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

Whereas earlier today the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the Centre for Women in Business at Mount Saint Vincent University hosted an event, Leaders in Action, to celebrate the advisory council's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; and

Whereas the advisory council works to make sure that issues affecting the lives of Nova Scotia women become part of government's plan, while also playing an important leadership role in advancing equality, fairness, and dignity for all women and girls in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas to create the impact of change we must all have a role in continuing to work for creating equal opportunities for women and girls in our province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly thank the members of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women for their work and recognize those Nova Scotians who dedicate their time and efforts to ensuring that everyone will see themselves reflected in our institutions and in our province.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

[1:15 p.m.]

The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 448**

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

Whereas Nova Scotia's Campground Hosts program runs from June to September each year since it was introduced in our provincial parks in 1996, and since that time hosts have made thousands of campers feel welcome as they visited our campgrounds; and

Whereas campground hosts provide a valued service by contributing their own unique experiences, skills and knowledge of the province, resulting in an enhanced camping experience for campground visitors; and

Whereas in 2017, Wheet Wilcox of Hantsport was recognized for 20 years of volunteer service and hosts Sharon and Ken Comeau of Dartmouth, Lesley and Ted Gates of New Ross, and Victor Peach of Port Williams were recognized for their 10 years of volunteer service to the Campground Hosts program;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House acknowledge the years of volunteer service provided by the members of the Campground Hosts program and

recognize their dedication and pride in providing exceptional service to visitors in our beautiful provincial parks.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Immigration.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 449**

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is home to many immigrants, international students and refugees from around the world, and continues to grow as a more diverse and inclusive province; and

Whereas it is important that newcomers like all Nova Scotian citizens feel safe, welcome and supported in our communities; and

Whereas today, October 24<sup>th</sup>, is United Nations Day, a time to honour and promote human rights, social progress, and world peace;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in acknowledging all Nova Scotians in our vibrant communities for welcoming and embracing new people in our province.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 450**

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

Whereas in 1967, Canada marked its Centennial and Lee Nauss was elected as councillor for the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg for the first time; and

Whereas Mr. Nauss has been acclaimed and re-elected to his council seat ever since; and

Whereas on October 21<sup>st</sup>, residents gathered to celebrate Mr. Nauss' remarkable 50 years of service to his community;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this Legislature thank Lee Nauss for his dedication and commitment to the people he has served for half a century.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board on an introduction.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw people's attention to the east gallery where we have visitors here today. I am pleased to introduce them. They are interested in some afternoon entertainment, so they are going to stay for Question Period - we hope that you are well entertained while you are here. These members are from the advocates group. They are advocates for the benefit and the importance of financial planning, wealth management and debt management for both individuals and small business.

They are celebrating their Legislature Days which are October 24<sup>th</sup> and October 25<sup>th</sup>, so we certainly welcome them here on this date. I would like them to stand please as they are introduced. Robert Caissie, no relation; John Nicholson; Nick d'Entremont; Joshua Vekeman, Gregory Bonnell; Branden Mosher; Greg Pollock; Peter Tzanetakis; and Andrew Kimber.

They are here as the members of the Financial Advisors Association of Nova Scotia, with a focus on financial advice and how we can all be better managing our debt and our wealth. Welcome to the Legislature and I hope that you enjoy the proceedings. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice on an introduction.

HON. MARK FUREY: I draw your attention to the east gallery, where we're joined today by a young lady by the name of Emma Wagner. She's a Grade 12 student at Parkview Education Centre. Emma is a participant in the Options and Opportunities program, a three-year course where Emma contributes 100 hours of co-op work to each course over the course of three years, and at the end of the program has a preferred seat at the Nova Scotia Community College.

I would ask my colleagues to provide Emma a warm welcome to the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice on an introduction.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I didn't at the same time acknowledge Julie Vissers, my constituency assistant from Lunenburg West, who is the face and voice of the office - my left and right hand. I ask my colleagues to give Julie a warm welcome to the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice on an introduction.

HON. MARK FUREY: As well, in the west gallery, we are joined today by 12 students who are enrolled in the law co-op program in the Halifax Regional School Board. I will ask them to rise as I call their name.

They include: Shannon Woodworth from Auburn Drive High School; Madelyn Keeping from Citadel High; Bianca Voicu and Callista Elrick from C.P. Allen High School; Charish Connelly from Dartmouth High School; Siobhan Beattie from Halifax West; Spencer McFarland and MacKenzie Hale from J.L. Ilsley; Tylor Ritchie from Musquodoboit Rural High; McKenzie Marchand from Sackville High School; Lindsay Berringer from Sir John A. MacDonald; and Abbigail Lefebvre from École du Sommet.

If my colleagues could give them the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: They're joined today by Laura Wheatley and Lynda Rogers, law students and program coordinators with the Pro Bono Dal group; and Eric Feunekes, an article clerk with McInnes Cooper, who hosted us earlier today at the firm for a great discussion around legislation. I thank my colleagues for the support and recognition. (Applause)

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

MR. BILL HORNE: In the east gallery, I would like you to welcome Brett Boutilier. He's a high school student at Lockview High, and he is a co-op student with me for the next 100 hours. I would like to introduce and congratulate him for being here today. (Applause)

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill No. 60 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 18 of the Acts of 1998. The Municipal Government Act, and Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008. The Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. (Ms. Claudia Chender)**

**Bill No. 61 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 18 of the Acts of 1998. The Municipal Government Act, and Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008. The Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, Respecting Disclosure of Municipal Employee Compensation (Mr. Brad Johns)**

**Bill No. 62 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 511 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Youth Secretariat Act. (Mr. Tim Houston)**

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

### NOTICES OF MOTION

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

### FRASER, JONATHAN: FIREARMS COLLECT. - RECOGNIZE

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: I rise today to recognize Jonathan Fraser, who is fascinated with the history of firearms. When he is not working out west, Jonathan uses his Facebook page, Firearm Removal Cape Breton, to pick up unwanted firearms. He restores them and adds them to his ever-growing collection. He does not want to see historical items



destroyed, which is what normally happens when people turn their old firearms over to the RCMP. Jonathan is an avid collector and enjoys sharing his collection of stories behind each firearm.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Jonathan for his hobby, which has helped to retain a slice of history for all to enjoy.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

**HAQ, SAF/BROW, LISA: TART & SOUL OPENING - CONGRATS.**

MR. GARY BURRILL: I rise today to recognize Halifax residents Saf Haq and Lisa Brow on the opening of their new café, Tart & Soul, earlier this summer on the corner of Coburg Road and Oxford. Since these NSCC graduates opened their café and bakery, residents of South End Halifax have been treated to savoury soups, delectable baked goods, and pot-loads of fresh hot coffee, all made on the spot with great care and real passion for good food.

I welcome the House to join me in congratulating Saf and Lisa on their business venture, and I encourage everybody to stop by and try one of their fantastic treats.

MR. SPEAKER: I'll take this opportunity to remind all members once again that, even though it is Small Business Week, we're touching very closely on the promotion of commercial enterprises here.

The honourable member for Halifax Armdale on an introduction.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, may I make the introduction before reading my statement?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. DIAB: I'd like to draw your attention to the east gallery, where we are joined by two wonderful women. I ask them to stand as I say their names: Gloria Stephens, a retired nurse and president of the Association of Health Sciences Archives and Museums of Nova Scotia; and Mary MacCara, a pharmacist and secretary for the association.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

**AHSAMNS: WORK - HIGHLIGHT**

HON. LENA DIAB: I rise today to highlight the work of the Association of Health Sciences Archives and Museums of Nova Scotia. This association has a passion for protecting and documenting Nova Scotia's health sciences history. Founded in January 2009, it has directors from the professions of medicine, nursing, dentistry, and pharmacy, as well as an archivist and a health sciences librarian.

Its president is Gloria Stephens, a graduate of the VG Hospital School of Nursing Class of 1953. The association is working to find a permanent home for its significant collection of health sciences artifacts, antique devices, documents, and memorabilia that date from the mid-1890s onward. Many of these are currently stored in the Abbie J. Lane and the Bethune Building, as well as in private homes. The association's mandate is to preserve the history of the health sciences in Nova Scotia in a location where it can be made available to the public and researchers.

We have a rich and interesting history of the health sciences in our province, with several Canadian firsts. I applaud the association for their commitment to its preservation.

[1:30 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**ROTARY INT./KENTVILLE ROTARY CLUB - WORLD POLIO DAY:  
CONTRIBUTION - CONGRATS.**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, October 24<sup>th</sup> is widely recognized as World Polio Day. Since 1985, Rotary has contributed nearly \$1.2 billion and countless volunteer hours to the protection of more than two billion children in 122 countries. The disease remains endemic in three countries - Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Pakistan - although there are other countries that remain at risk for imported cases.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Rotary International and the Kentville Rotary Club for their huge part in the eradication of polio worldwide.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**LAROCHE, JEAN: PRESS GALLERY - WELCOME BACK**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome back to Province House the senior member of the press gallery, Jean Laroche. He had to miss some of our shenanigans last week due to a happy but also stressful situation, the arrival of a new-to-her kidney for his lovely and talented wife, Catherine Frances.

I wish Catherine well in her continued recovery and then happy adventures to Catherine and Jean together, as they enjoy freedom from dialysis.

May I amplify Jean's comments on social media and compliment the transplant and care team, and remind us all to sign our donor cards.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Annapolis.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, may I do an introduction before I do a member's statement?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to draw the attention of the House to the east gallery where we're joined by a Grade 9 class from Bridgetown Regional Community School. I want to welcome them here. They are with their teacher, Mrs. Ward. Mrs. Ward's father was also a teacher in the Bridgetown school system and her mother was the go-to person at the elementary school, especially for pizza. Both of my kids will recognize that and remember that.

With her as well is Mrs. MacDonald, my sister Elaine. Elaine's husband, Len, was in here last week with Mr. Hirtle and Mr. Marshall, as well as Angela Yeo, who is my constituency assistant.

I would ask all of you to stand and receive the warm welcome of our House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Annapolis.

**GOV'T. (N.S.) - ACCESSIBLE SPEAKER'S DAIS:  
FIRST IN COMMONWEALTH - RECOGNIZE**

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to stand in my place today. Four years ago today this House had a special convening, where we called and we elected our first Speaker - Mr. Speaker - who is in a wheelchair. That Speaker's dais was the first one in the Commonwealth that was made accessible. (Applause)

I am sure, like all members of this House, we've seen Nova Scotians come in here who, four years ago, did not have access to what is the people's Chair. To watch them go through the corridor, through the Opposition, up the ramp to take their place, how emotional it is for them. It is a dream I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, and all members, the tremendous work that you did and so many in the disabled community, to make sure that the Act we all proclaimed in this House for people with disabilities is a piece of legislation that I think other provinces will look to and model.

I can't tell you how proud I was the very first day that I saw you take your rightful place in this House. Something that is unknown to many members of this House, when we were going through the process of suggesting who may be the Speaker before they were elected, there was suggestion that we could not make that Speaker's Chair accessible. The former Clerk of Executive Council, David Darrow, who is no longer with the province, said we can make that Chair accessible.

If you look at the workmanship by the people who work on behalf of all of us and the people across this province, you would believe that that ramp was put in this place when it was built centuries ago. I can't tell you how proud I am and how people with disabilities are proud of you, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that the young people in this gallery today recognize there are no limitations to whatever their dreams want them to achieve. (Standing Ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. You must be buttering me up for something here. Thank you very much, I appreciate the comments.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**DART. PERFORMING ARTS SOC.: COM. VOLS. - CONGRATS.**

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the amazing work being done by the Dartmouth Performing Arts Society.

Bill Mills and his team of dedicated volunteers have plans to not only utilize the existing infrastructure in Dartmouth East but to enhance it for the improvement of the community. This society represents what community groups are all about. They plan to incorporate theatre students into their productions, as well as teaching lighting and sound skills to students who are interested. This is a phenomenal idea for underutilized space in my constituency of Dartmouth East.

I wish them the utmost success as work gets underway and I can't wait to take in some of the shows.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**FIRE PREV. WK.: FIREFIGHTERS' FAMILIES - THANK**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: As Fire Prevention Week ended on October 15, 2017, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the families of volunteer firefighters who put their lives on the line to save and protect others.

Many times we forget that when the alarm rings those firefighters may be called away from a graduation, a concert, or a family gathering. This time is being taken away from their loved ones, to protect the life of someone else.

These families are the ones who provide the support, pick up the pieces, and carry on awaiting the safe return of the firefighter. This must be a very overwhelming position at times.

I wish to humbly thank each and every firefighter's family for being there so their loved ones can protect our loved ones.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

### **WOMEN'S WELLNESS WITHIN: SERVICES - THANK**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: I wish to acknowledge an inspiring new organization of women helping women.

Women's Wellness Within was begun just in the past year by a team of dedicated volunteers, and they offer legal support, doula and midwifery care, pre-natal support, and education to criminalized and incarcerated women in Nova Scotian's prisons.

Women's Wellness Within partners with many organizations, and recently delivered the keynote address at the Canadian Association of Perinatal and Women's Health Nurses, at their national conference here in Halifax.

As most, approaching all, women who are incarcerated are there as a result of trauma experiences earlier in their lives, Women's Wellness Within is a commendable response, and one which we should all support however we can.

I would like to congratulate this organization on its dedicated service to women in Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

### **WILLIAM KING ELEM.: OUTDOOR CLASSROOM - CONGRATS.**

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: The official opening of the William King Elementary School outdoor classroom took place in June of this year.

The classroom is made up of a semi-circle of large rocks, raised garden beds, gravel floor, and accessible walkway. Through the help of local landscaper Peter Reid, and the students at William King Elementary, the classroom was designed and built.

The outdoor classroom provides a unique learning environment, and is intended to promote the students' appreciation for the surrounding, natural, environment.

I'd like to congratulate all the students at William King Elementary School on their new outdoor classroom, and for exploring a unique way to engage their studies.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**COLSON, PATTI:  
FIBRE ARTS COMMUNITY (CUMB. CO.) - RECOGNIZE**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: I would like to recognize Patti Colson and the fibre arts community in Cumberland County.

They are vibrant and talented, showing off many creative skills while working with textiles and other fibres to create beautiful crafts and items. Amherst is home of the Nova Scotia Fibre Arts Festival that is now entering its 10<sup>th</sup> year.

I would like to recognize the efforts of those who have been part of the celebrations of all things fibre, from rug hooking to knitting, and so much more. Fibre arts and history go together hand-in-hand, as they draw together our past and our present.

I would like to say thank you for the showing of commitment, dedication, and carrying on a legacy to pass along to others.

Fibre arts will always bring comfort, support, and enrich generations to come in our communities - and also brings a great economic benefit to Cumberland County.

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

**HUBBARDS AREA BUS. ASSOC./HUBBARDS COVE WATERFRONT DEV.  
ASSOC.: CONTRIBUTIONS - CONGRATS.**

MR. HUGH MACKAY: On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the eyes of the world were once again on the World Tuna Flat races held annually in Hubbards Cove, on the waters of beautiful Chester-St. Margaret's.

Tuna flats are large, open boats that are commonly towed behind larger fishing craft on the way to the tuna fishing grounds. They got their name from the fact that three or four men, or women, could all stand on one side of the boat, or flat as it is called, and haul in a large tuna without capsizing the flat.

These unique water craft are found only in St. Margaret's Bay, and the World Tuna Flats competition is the Hubbards community's way of preserving their heritage, and honouring the history of the once- thriving tuna fishing industry in St. Margaret's Bay.

During the highly competitive competition, teams of four race large flats over a quarter-mile course on Hubbards Cove.

I ask the members of the Legislature to join me in congratulating the Hubbards and Area Business Association, and the Hubbards Cove Waterfront Development Association for their contributions to the history and heritage of Nova Scotia.

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

**SEASIDE MUSEUM: SUCCESSFUL HAUNTED HOUSES - CONGRATS.**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: For the past six years, the Seaside Heritage Museum in Clarks Harbour has been hosting haunted house tours. While the efforts and craftsmanship that go into setting up each year are nothing short of amazing, the centre has its own history of haunted tales.

Rumour has it that the ghost of Myrtle still exists in the museum. Neighbours say that they can see her peering out of the attic windows when the museum is locked, and sounds of music have been heard with no source to be found after investigation.

This sparked the interest of former Barrington resident and cinematographer Dylan Garland, who is filming Haunted, a Nova Scotia series co-hosted by Paul Kimball and Holly Stevens. The duo decided to stay the night to film their experience, which will be aired later this month.

I would like to congratulate the Seaside Heritage Museum for not only landing a spot on Eastlink's first paranormal investigation show but also for continuing to host successful haunted houses.

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

**N.S. WORKS TEAM: PREM. AWD. OF EXCELLENCE (2017) - CONGRATS.**

MR. BEN JESSOME: I would like to congratulate the Nova Scotia Works transformation team at Labour and Advanced Education, which won the 2017 Premier's Award of Excellence.

Nova Scotia Works employment centres provide a suite of employment services under one common brand that helps Nova Scotians understand, prepare for, and attach to employment while helping businesses find, recruit, hire, manage, and develop the talent

needed to be more productive in a global economy. The transformation team worked to redesign the employment system to better reflect the needs of the working population, resulting in an increase of front-line staff and scope of services. My constituency office is home to a satellite location on Friday mornings offering their services to Hammonds Plains-Lucasville and surrounding communities.

I would ask the members of this House of Assembly to join me in congratulating the transformation team on their award and work to promote these services in our communities.

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

### **FLU SHOT - ENCOURAGE**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: For the third time, I bring a message to this House that I have ignored most of my life: Get a flu shot.

Flu shots are recommended annually for people over the age of six months, not only to prevent contracting the illness but also to protect against spreading that virus. I finally got that message, Mr. Speaker. The formulation of the flu shot is changed each year to fit updated strains of the influenza virus, which is why they should be received once a year.

I got my flu shot yesterday morning, and I would like to take a moment to encourage my colleagues and all Nova Scotians to get their flu shots and be healthy.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

### **KNICKLE, MARY: HFX. EXPLOSION COMPOSITION - CONGRATS.**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mary Knickle is a composer, singer, vocal instructor, and Lunenburg native, and I would like to congratulate Mary on the composition she has written to honour the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion.

Mary's composition has five distinct movements, commencing with the City of Halifax prior to the devastation, moving through the explosion, and eventually into the rebuild of Halifax. It is composed for a five-part choir - soprano, alto, tenor, bass, and a youth choir. It incorporates an acting scene to commemorate the historic efforts of Vince Coleman, the telegraph dispatcher who stopped trains from entering the city and in turn lost his life.

Mary's piece is 15 minutes long and will be performed on December 6<sup>th</sup> at St. Matthew's church to honour the anniversary of the Halifax Explosion. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you and all members of this House of Assembly join me in recognizing Mary Knickle's composition and the coming debut of this Explosion centennial piece.



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

**SPONAGLE-TAYLOR, DEBBIE: ARTISTIC CONTRIB. - RECOGNIZE**

MS. KIM MASLAND: A group of young artists from Queens County have volunteered their time and efforts to give back to their community.

These young artists are under the guidance of their art teacher, Liverpool's Debbie Sponagle-Taylor, more affectionately known as Debbie Doodles. In the past, they have worked to fundraise for organizations such as the IWK and SPCA. This year, they have given their time and talent to painting murals in the tumble room of the elementary school, the windows of buildings on Main Street, and most recently on the door to the enhanced unit at Queens Manor.

Deb and her husband Chuck are community-minded individuals and wonderful role models for our youth. I am pleased to recognize the contributions of Debbie Doodles and her amazing young artists.

I would also like to invite all members of this House to visit my constituency office to view the beautiful painting by Ruthie Heartland, one of the great artists in Queen's County.

[1:45 p.m.]

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

**BOUDREAU, JAYDEN/DUNBRACK SOCCER:  
NATIONALS - CONGRATS.**

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jayden Boudreau and her fellow teammates for representing Nova Scotia at the National Championships this month. Jayden Boudreau was one of the many young women to represent our province at National on the Dunbrack Senior Women's Soccer Team.

At the tournament the team fought hard before placing sixth, an accomplishment that the spectators at home were all very proud of. Jayden has played soccer for many years and has many victories under her belt that have made our community very proud.

Mr. Speaker, will the members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jayden Boudreau and the Dunbrack Senior Women's Soccer Team for their representation of Nova Scotia at the National Championships this October.

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

**N.S. ALZHEIMER SOC.: HARD WORK - ACKNOWLEDGE**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I am particularly pleased today to acknowledge the hard work of the Nova Scotia Alzheimer Society, in addition to what was already mentioned earlier. Linda Bird and all the staff recently completed this afternoon a two-day conference over in Dartmouth, the 28<sup>th</sup> Provincial Conference, with almost 300 health professionals and caregivers.

I'd like to pay special acknowledgement for the development and production, with the support of the government, for a video and lecture series called Supporting Activities of Daily Living at Home. It's a two-hour lecture, eight caregiver training videos, a frailty level equipment prescription handout, equipment brochures, caregiver checklists and more.

I'd like to acknowledge Catherine Anne Murray from Dalhousie University, Robin Carter from Carter's Senior Care, the Parkland at the Lakes Phase 2 and Lawtons Home Health Equipment who loaned us the equipment. I'd especially like to acknowledge the amateur actresses Barbara Mulrone and my mother Marjorie Hare for participating in these series. We expect them to be in every health care facility, library, Alzheimer Society around the country, and we want to thank them, especially the actresses, for their part and their role.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**DEN HARTOG, VINCENT: 20-YEAR CAREER - CONGRATS.**

MR. KEITH IRVING : Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Wolfville architect Vincent den Hartog. After over a decade of learning his craft in Montreal and Munich, Vincent moved to the Annapolis Valley in 1997 and opened his own architectural firm, specializing in unique, beautiful and functional designs to complement rural Nova Scotia landscapes.

Examples of his work include the Dr. Frank W. Morris Memorial Library, the Wolfville Field House, the Annapolis Animal Hospital and most recently the new Lightfoot & Wolfville Winery. His residential, commercial and institutional work has contributed greatly to the aesthetic appeal of our communities and rural Nova Scotia has benefit greatly from his experience, talent and vision.

I invite all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Vincent den Hartog on 20 years of exceptional architectural design, contributing positively to the built form of rural Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**MAYBE, JIMMY “MAYDAY”: 30<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: On Friday, Jimmy “Mayday” Maybe turned 30 years old. Mr. Speaker, he is sharp with the wit but even sharper with the keyboard. He is one of the best software engineers that Rabbit Town has ever produced and I’m certainly proud to call him my friend. I want to stand today and wish him a happy birthday.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

**CMHA (SOUTHWEST NOVA) - MEADOWFIELDS COM. SCHOOL:  
CALENDAR FUNDRAISER - RECOGNIZE**

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, last year the Southwest Nova Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association carried out a project with Grade 5 students at Meadowfields Community School in Yarmouth. With the assistance of teacher Connie Penney, the students made drawings containing a mental health theme or message. Many of the drawings were chosen at random to be part of a calendar.

Now this calendar is being sold as a fundraiser for Southwest Nova Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association. In addition to the students’ artwork, the calendar also contains information for mental health and related services at the local, regional and provincial levels.

I ask this House to join me in recognizing Peter Croxall, board chair of Southwest Nova Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association and the board members who volunteer their time at the branch, teacher Connie Penney who guided and assisted the students, the Grade 5 students at Meadowfields who contributed their artwork to the calendar and Loretta Davis and her staff at Sentinel Printing in Yarmouth, all of whom committed their time and energy to seeing such a meaningful and important project come to life so that both funds and awareness can be raised for mental health issues.

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

**BUILDING FUTURES SOC.: WE ARE ONE FESTIVAL - THANK**

MR. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Building Futures Employment Society, formerly known as Anchor Industries, which has served the Sackville-Beaver Bank community and beyond for more than 40 years. Founded by a group of parents in 1973, the goal of the association was to improve the quality of life of those living with intellectual disabilities.

To celebrate Canada 150 and to acknowledge the support of the community, the Building Futures held a We Are One festival, a free event full of music, games and food,

to encourage all members of the society to interact and get to know one another in a fun environment.

The Building Futures Employment Society has done many things assisting those people living with disabilities across HRM and helping them to provide a variety of different services to the community at large. I would like to thank the Building Futures Employment Society for showing us that all members of our community are valuable and make a contribution.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

**HENDERSON, LEO: 80<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY - ACKNOWLEDGE**

HON. MARK FUREY: I rise today to acknowledge Leo Henderson. Leo recently celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and has decided that it's also a good time to retire.

Leo has been working in the hardware section of Gow's Home Hardware since 1987. In fact, Leo had started his career at the age of 12, working afternoons and weekends at his father's store, Henderson's Hardware.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish Leo a happy 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and a long and enjoyable retirement, and would like to thank him for his many years of exemplary customer service. All the best to you, Leo.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**STELLARTON - MAYOR/COUNCILLORS: LEADERSHIP - RECOGNIZE**

HON. PAT DUNN: The Town of Stellarton marked its 128<sup>th</sup> birthday on Friday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, by raising the new official town flag. Mayor Danny MacGillivray was joined by town councillors Bryan Knight, Susan Campbell, Simon Lawand, and Gary Pentz, and town crier Jack Langlois and piper Madeleine Langlois.

Mayor MacGillivray described the flag's design to the crowd gathered at the town square pavilion, a flag containing two components. The town's deep coal mining heritage was one of the highlights of the town's new flag. It's another part of Stellarton's rich social and mining history to be proud of.

I would like to ask all members of the Legislature to join me in recognizing the leadership role Mayor MacGillivray and his energetic councillors have taken to protect and enhance the town's future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

**MACVICAR, DON - ACADIA SPORTS HALL OF FAME:  
INDUCTION - CONGRATS.**

HON. KELLY REGAN: I would like to congratulate a Bedford resident on his induction into the Acadia Sports Hall of Fame earlier this month.

Don MacVicar was a three-sport athlete - rugby, football, and hockey. Back in the 1950s, he suited up for three seasons of varsity rugby. When Canadian universities switched to football, so did Don. He played that first season as a fullback and place kicker. In fact, he scored Acadia's first-ever touchdown. On the ice, Don was a cagey defender and a solid puck-handling left-winger for the Axemen for three years.

A little biographical note for the House: Don is from quite a Glace Bay sporting family. His dad was famous rugby coach Charlie MacVicar, and Donnie was the third MacVicar brother to wear the red and blue, behind his brothers Scorchy and Lefty.

Don's induction into the Acadia Sports Hall of Fame follows his wife's. Ann (Mosher) MacVicar was a spectacular three-sport athlete herself.

I would like to congratulate Don on a stellar varsity career and induction into the Acadia Sports Hall of Fame.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**CROSBY, CIEL - N.S. FILM IND.: COMMITMENT - COMMEND**

MR. TIM HALMAN: The arts community is vital to the success of our province. In the film industry in Nova Scotia, you are hard-pressed to find someone on set who doesn't know Ciel Crosby. Ciel has had a big part in film productions in Nova Scotia since 1993. She is a well-respected talent agent. Ciel is responsible for some of the most talented performers in our province.

I ask all members of the House to join me in commending Ciel Crosby for her commitment to the promotion and development of the film industry in Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

**NATL. LIMOUSIN SHOW: 4-H MEMBERS - BEST WISHES**

HON. KAREN CASEY: On September 9<sup>th</sup> and September 10<sup>th</sup>, the second annual Maritime Junior Limousin Show took place in Great Village, Colchester North, at Balamore Farm, owned by Joe and Carolyn Cooper. Thirty-six junior members and 45 Limousin cattle from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island took part in the show.

On Saturday, the juniors participated in icebreaker games and team-building. On Sunday, the juniors displayed all the hard work they had put into their cattle in both the Showmanship and Confirmation classes. Taylor Richards travelled from Saskatchewan to be the judge at the show. Many awards were presented, with the Grand Aggregate, a title that all juniors strive for, going to William Cooper.

The junior members left the Maritime Junior Limousin Show looking forward to next year, when they will host the National Limousin Show, which will also be hosted by Joe and Carolyn Cooper at Balamore Farm in August 2018. The national show will have about 70 juniors participating, last four days, and have between 200 and 300 people from across Canada attending the show. All the best to our 4-H members.

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

**BENZ, BRIDGET: SYD. C OF C IMMIGRANT OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: I rise today to congratulate Bridget Benz of Fiddler's Lake for being selected as Immigrant of the Year during the recent awards night held by the Sydney and Area Chamber of Commerce.

Bridget Benz is a graphic designer who also runs a successful B&B. She and her partner, Joe MacHoll, are active members of the community, organizing Octoberfest for many years in Marion Bridge. Joe owns and operates MacHOLL IT-SERVICES. Both came to Cape Breton by way of Frankfurt, Germany.

I stand here today to thank Bridget Benz for the many hours that she and Joe both contribute to Marion Bridge and all the surrounding communities. Once again, Mr. Speaker, congratulations.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South on an introduction.

MR. KEITH IRVING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask all members of the House to look up to east gallery where we're joined today by a young politician from Kings County, one of two young mums who serve on Kings County Council. Meg Hodges is here today and with her is the next generation of young politicians - her son Hollis has joined us as well. I ask all the members to give them a welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

**NICKERSON, STEVE - GREENWOOD DOJO:  
20<sup>th</sup> ANNIV. - CONGRATS.**

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Steve Nickerson of East Coast Aikido for celebrating 20 years of success. Opening in 1997, East Coast

Aikido has provided martial arts training to students throughout Nova Scotia. Aikido is a martial art of the Samurai and places emphasis on compassion, harmony, and humanity.

The Greenwood Dojo at École Rose-des-Vents hosted a 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration with demonstrations from highly ranked guest instructors, several black belt tests, and presentations honouring the milestone anniversary.

On behalf of the Province of Nova Scotia, I congratulate Sensei Steve Nickerson on 20 years of developing martial arts in Nova Scotia, in addition to congratulating Greenwood students Emma Hogenbom and Tim Dean on their black belt promotions during the anniversary celebration.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside Westmount.

**ROTARY INT. POLIO PLUS PROGRAM:  
WORLD POLIO DAY (2017) - THANKS**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Rotary International Polio Plus program. They have raised \$1.7 billion to immunize more than 2.5 billion children in 122 countries.

October 24<sup>th</sup> is World Polio Day and this year they are celebrating the fact that polio has been reduced by 99.9 per cent worldwide. Local Rotarians have, at their own expense, travelled to Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Pakistan to help health workers end polio.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all volunteer Rotarians for their combined effort to create a polio-free world.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**FRASER, MATTHIEU: YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR AWARD - CONGRATS.**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, during Small Business Week, the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce hosts its annual Antigonish Business Gala and Awards Night. The chamber asks for nominations from the community for its five awards. The chamber's Young Entrepreneur Award is designed to recognize youth who have contributed to the prosperity and well-being of Antigonish through entrepreneurship.

This year, Mattieu Fraser, owner and operator of the Highland Bike Shop, was nominated and acclaimed the winner. The Highland Bike Shop opened in 2013 and it has now grown to support snowshoeing, skiing, trail running, and hiking. The shop supports the local bike club, local races, and is a big supporter of the Keppoch Mountain, a four seasons recreation park. Mattieu truly embodies what the award acknowledges - that young

entrepreneurs strengthen local networks and contribute to the development of transferrable skills for themselves and the community.

I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mattieu on this well-deserved award and recognition.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

### **CCTS: TRANSPORTATION SERVICE - APPLAUD**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, the Cumberland County Transportation Service Society is an accessible, affordable, non-for-profit public transportation service for the residents of Cumberland County who are transportation disadvantaged. It provides quality, inclusive service to all residents facing barriers to transportation in Cumberland County bringing a viable transportation option to our county.

This group of individuals decided to subsidize taxi fares to provide accessible and affordable services for persons with disabilities and, as well, low-income earners in Amherst and surrounding areas. I applaud the Cumberland County Transportation Service Society for providing a sustainable transportation service that is accessible, reliable, affordable, and safe for residents of Cumberland County facing transportation barriers.

[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. - HEALTH CARE: ACCREDITATION PROCESS - ALLEGATIONS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Thirty independent assessors from Accreditation Canada are reviewing our hospitals this month. They are comparing our hospital results to national standards for such important health care services as mental health, emergency rooms, and surgeries. This is a very important matter. Nova Scotians deserve an independent, straight-up assessment of how things are going in our hospitals.

However, noted health care advocate Allan Lynch has just published a report entitled *Compromised Accreditation*, which I will table for the House, which reports that in the case of the Valley Regional Hospital, Nova Scotia Health Authority management has circulated the accreditation questions to their staff in advance, with preapproved management answers. This is a serious allegation, Mr. Speaker.



I would like to ask the Premier, is he or his government aware of the allegations being made about the accreditation.

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Indeed, I want to thank all those health care workers across the province who are in the institutions that are providing primary care to our families and emergency care when required, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to tell the honourable member that this is a standard practice that our institutions have accreditation, but I have no knowledge of the allegation that the Health Authority is sending out answers to questions that may come up, Mr. Speaker.

One of the things that I have discovered in my short period of time in this House is that Nova Scotians will be very direct and honest and up front with the opportunities and challenges that are facing them in their workplace and we'll all in this House work together to make sure that we have the appropriate environment.

MR. BAILLIE: Well, Mr. Speaker, if the Premier truly wants to thank the health care workers of this province, as we all do, then I would say this: let them speak. Tell their managers to let them speak freely about what's going on in our hospitals, to the independent assessors who are here, checking on their accreditation. These are the people who deliver mental health services, who work in our emergency rooms, who book and perform important surgeries, and we are being told that they are given preapproved answers to questions from their bosses. We'll never get anywhere in this province if that kind of thing goes on.

Will the Premier direct the Health Authority today, to back off and let our health care workers speak the truth to the accreditors about what's going on in the state of our hospitals?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the honourable member for the question. There are a number of assumptions on his part. First of all, there's an allegation that he's putting on the floor of this House; he doesn't know if it's accurate or not. Furthermore, I want to remind the honourable member and tell the honourable member I have all faith in health care providers across this province who will be direct and honest and up front with the accreditors who are in this province, to ensure that the environment they are working in is the environment they want to be in, and it reflects the values that they believe all Nova Scotians want in their institution and it reflects the care that Nova Scotians deserve.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, no wonder this is a government where the employees who work for them report record low scores on job satisfaction, when they see independent assessors come to this province on something as important as health care and they want to speak the truth so we can actually start to move our health care system forward. The

Premier has a duty to know that our accreditation is legit and is not managed with more spin.

I'd like to ask the Premier, what steps has his government taken to ensure the accreditation process is fair and unbiased?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the people who are doing the accreditation analysis are independent from government. They are coming in to have a look. They don't only look at this province, they look across the country.

I have all the faith in the world in health care providers who will continue to speak to anyone who comes into our facilities and let them know the challenges and the opportunities, quite frankly, that exist in this health care system.

Mr. Speaker, while there may have been challenges over the last four years when it comes to delivering services to people in the Province of Nova Scotia, one of the things that I'm very proud of is that public sector workers from one end of this province to the other continue to work with our government to ensure that front-line services will be there for Nova Scotians.

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

### **PREM.: HEALTH CARE SYSTEM - CRISIS**

MR. GARY BURRILL: When I was previously in this House, from 2009 to 2013, I worked from a constituency office that was very busy. Our phone rang all the time, we often had people waiting. In all that time, I only recall one resident having come to that office for help finding a doctor, and in fact that was somebody who was coming looking for my physician brother.

In the few months since I've represented Halifax Chebucto, looking for help finding a family doctor is the single greatest subject of all our constituency casework. Does the Premier see that this situation reflects the deterioration in the availability of health care in Nova Scotia since his government came to power?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank the honourable member for his question. The budget he voted against had in it 10 residency seats to be added to the 35 that currently exist at Dalhousie University. There will be another 10 residency seats that will be there for foreign-trained doctors to get accreditation in our province. The budget he voted against had money in it for 70 collaborative care centres across the province to bring together primary health care teams, nurse practitioners, and family practice nurses. In some parts of the province, I believe a social worker should be part of that health care team.

We continue to work to make sure they have access to primary care. Are there issues in pockets across the province? Of course there are, as there were when that honourable member sat on this side of the House. We're going to continue to find a long-term solution by ensuring that we have the appropriate number of seats at Dalhousie Medical School to be able to ensure that we're turning out enough family physicians to practise in this province.

MR. BURRILL: The Premier has been in office for 1,463 days. After all that time, we face the situation today where a Lockeport mother of two, looking at the longest diagnostic mammogram wait times in the province, receives a more timely appointment only after going public with her situation, and where, media reports, a Sydney Mines mother of four is facing selling her home to get care in the U.S. in the face of long neurosurgical wait times.

Yet every time throughout this session that I've asked the Premier about the health care question, he makes primary reference to the government that preceded him. I want to ask the Premier, is 1,463 days not enough time for him to take responsibility for his own health care record?

THE PREMIER: Again, I want to thank the honourable member for his question. We've continued to invest in primary health care across the province. As I told the honourable member, there will be 20 new residency seats in this province to ensure that we have access to the training to ensure those positions are here. Collaborative care centres and nurse practitioners will be associated with the collaborative care to provide the health care delivery model, if you look at the investments we've made in SchoolsPlus, in and around adolescent mental health.

Not only did we do that, we provided the largest single tax cut in the history of this province for low-income Nova Scotians. We invested the \$56 million that that government cut out of the classrooms back into classrooms. We've continued to provide opportunities for young Nova Scotians. In the last two years, we've had more young people move into this province than leave - the largest number since 1990.

We're going to continue to move forward to deal with not just one single issue but with all of the opportunities that face Nova Scotians.

MR. BURRILL: A Kijiji want ad was placed a few weeks ago under the title "Family doctor needed ASAP!" The ad's author had just moved home to Halifax from the U.S. and describes having to send their spouse back to the States in order to get their prescriptions filled. Another day, another absurdity in the world of Nova Scotian health care.

In order to solve a problem, you have to be able to see it. I want to ask the Premier, why can't he see that our health care system in Nova Scotia is in a state of crisis?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member again for the question. I want to repeat what I've said to him already. We identified the shortage of family physicians. That's why we've gone toward adding those 20 residency seats to ensure that we're continuing to have a supply of family physicians into this province. That's why we've continued to advance primary care that we know new young physicians want to be part of, along with a collaborative care team. As I said to him, I believe a social worker should be part of that.

The challenge for any government is that you can't ignore what happened before you got here. They ignored the real challenge. We're putting in place long-term solutions to the challenges facing our communities.

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

**PREM.: ACCREDITATION PROCESS - ACCURACY**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, it turns out that providing pre-approved management answers to staff to give to the accreditors of our hospitals is not the only problem to surface. It's also been reported that a Health Authority manager in Pictou County once stood over his staff as they filled out the accreditation survey. Now, how can we get an honest assessment of our health care system from that?

The Premier says he has faith in our assessors. We want to make sure that those people assessing our hospitals get the straight goods - that they get the truth.

I'd like to ask the Premier, will he take steps today to ensure that the accreditors who are visiting our hospitals are getting straight goods from the people who provide health care services, not pre-approved answers from their managers?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, there are a whole bunch of assumptions in his question. The one that I think (Interruption) I want to tell the member for Pictou East that leadership will be up soon and he can start campaigning then, if he'd just let me have an answer.

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

THE PREMIER: To the Leader of the Official Opposition, quite frankly, I have all the faith in health care workers across this province to be frank and up front with the assessors as they are with their managers, as they are, quite frankly, with their government when they see challenges and opportunities.

MR. BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, a government that had faith in health care workers wouldn't give them pre-approved answers to the questions that they are being asked by people determining whether we're meeting standards in mental health or standards in our

emergency rooms or national standards in our surgeries. They wouldn't need to give them pre-approved answers because they would just be told to speak freely so we can at least get to the bottom of what has gone wrong in our health care system.

I'm going to ask the Premier, how can he assure Nova Scotians that we're meeting the national standards of delivering in health care when he won't even look into these serious allegations that have been published this week?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to assure the honourable member that the Minister of Health and Wellness would investigate the allegation. I think it's important in this room and on the floor of the House of Assembly, it is an allegation. But again, in a number of his questions he made a whole host of assumptions about health care workers across this province which I don't share.

Quite frankly, they've been up front and direct with our government. They've been up front and direct with the supervisor and I fully expect them to do the same being up front and direct with the accreditors who go into this province because they know how important it is that the appropriate information gets to our accreditors so we continue to improve the health care system in this province, based on fact.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

### **EECD - ONLINE SURVEY: TIMELINE - INADEQUATE**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. On October 11<sup>th</sup>, we learned that a knowledgeable expert, Dr. Avis Glaze, had been hired to conduct an education system administrative review. Despite the very short timeline, both the minister and the B.C.-based experts said they were coming to this review with an open mind and were interested in listening to all stakeholders.

Yesterday we found out that parents and members of the public will have 10 days to provide feedback through an online survey with three broad, vague questions. In the midst of packing lunches and taking kids to school, I wonder how many parents will find the time to engage with this process.

Mr. Speaker, does the minister think the concerns of parents will be adequately captured in this manner?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, we are very proud to have found Dr. Glaze who is a world-renowned expert in these matters. We are taking leadership on the questionnaire, on the timeline for it, from her. She is currently out meeting with board

representatives in communities as we speak and of course the public has another venue via the Internet, to submit their thoughts on the administrative model.

I think that any parent who has an interest in this will take the time to fill out that survey and ensure that their views are properly heard in this process. Thank you.

MS. CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I wonder about parents who don't have access to the Internet and who are already disadvantaged.

In this government's first mandate they commissioned the Freeman report, which made 30 recommendations based on 19,000 completed surveys. The final report from the Commission on Inclusive Education is due March 18<sup>th</sup>. Extensive consultations on pre-Primary are expected to begin in the next few weeks.

Last February thousands and thousands of educators and parents and members of the public came to this Legislature to voice their concerns about the administration of the education system. Unfortunately, members of this government were not there to listen to them.

Mr. Speaker, how many times and in how many ways do parents have to express their concerns before this government will listen to them?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, this process is a continuation of the Myra Freeman report. In fact, she had a recommendation to review the structural model. We have not heard from just parents, we have heard from teachers and students who have identified a number of challenges in the system, which we are all tackling systematically, the system of inclusion, early learning, our administrative model and classroom conditions which impede teachers from focusing on teaching.

These are the focuses of our government, based on the feedback we've had from the public and we are not going to waste a day in bringing forward transformative changes that will have a positive impact on the lives of our kids. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

### **JUSTICE: MOTHERISK LAB RESULTS - FAULTY**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Justice. An investigation into the Motherisk lab conducted by the Fifth Estate and *The Toronto Star* featured a difficult Nova Scotia story. I'll table that story.

Mr. Speaker, a Halifax couple lost custody of their son, based in part on a Motherisk testing. When the father paid an accredited U.S. lab to test his hair, it came back clean but it was too late, the couple's son had already been adopted.

I would like to ask the minister, how many Nova Scotia families were damaged as a result of faulty unreliable Motherisk hair testing?

[2:15 p.m.]

HON. MARK FUREY: My colleague with Community Services will respond to that question.

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to assure the honourable member, and indeed all Nova Scotians, that we take child protection, child safety, very seriously. I want to assure Nova Scotians that in any determination, hair strand testing would have been one factor; it would never have been the determining factor in a custody case.

I want to assure all members that as soon as we learned of the issues with Motherisk, we discontinued their testing. The following year, all hair strand testing was discontinued.

MS. MACFARLANE: I am aware that last year the past minister indicated that yes, there was no more communication with Motherisk testing. However, there were incidents in Nova Scotia - not just the one I just spoke of - there were many, actually. The minister said government would not conduct a blank review like Ontario because of the extraordinary amount of human resources a review would require.

My question is, given the results of the Motherisk lab tests - and they have proven to be so unreliable in court, where people lose their children - will the minister review all the cases where Motherisk test results were a factor?

MS. REGAN: I want to assure the honourable member that we're just finalizing the parameters of our review. It will not just be of the cases where Motherisk was used, Mr. Speaker, it will also include any case where any hair strand testing was done.

I want to assure the honourable member and the members of this House, and Nova Scotians, that if anyone wants us to review their case in the meantime, they can approach Community Services, and we will do that.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

### **SNS - RURAL INTERNET: ACCESSIBILITY - TIMELINE**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My question is for the minister responsible for rural Internet. We spoke about the challenges that rural folks, many people all across Nova Scotia, have accessing proper Internet speeds. I'm hearing from constituents who are receiving fee increase notices from their service provider, that their fees need to go up to upgrade the network from speeds of 5 to 10. When they ask the provider what speed they're

on now, they're on 1, and they're trying to figure out why they're paying for an upgrade from 5 to 10 when they're on 1.

The question for the minister, is he aware of the fee increases, and what can he say to people who don't have adequate Internet about when they might get it?

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I thank the member for the question. He did make me aware of some of the concerns and complaints coming from his constituents.

Obviously with the importance of the broadband file, there's a staggering amount of investment that we'll make as a province over the next five years. The fact remains that we have got to work with our providers and ensure that their customers, the clients, the people across this province, are getting adequate service and they're paying adequate fees for the level of service that they're receiving.

With respect to the specifics, I could certainly check. If the member wants to get me details on that constituent, we can check the fee structure and why that is taking place.

Again, in a broader sense, we're very much aware that the provincial government and the national government have to make major investments on behalf of our people to ensure that we're connecting Nova Scotians in having access to Internet that provides support for people and support for building the economy.

MR. HOUSTON: I thank the minister for that answer, Mr. Speaker. Maybe the minister can shed a little light on the subject for the House as to when the money that has been allocated will start to be spent - specifically, when will we see the network start to be built out and built up in rural Nova Scotia to improve speeds?

MR. MACLELLAN: The answer to that is "immediately." Our \$14.5 million, which per capita is one of the largest investments in the federation in terms of provinces, will begin immediately. Obviously, my colleague with Municipal Affairs has had a number of conversations with our municipalities across the province about what their priorities are for building that middle mile capacity.

Then it's the Connecting Canadians program with the federal government. We have got to leverage those federal dollars. In partnership with three levels of government and with the private sector, fibre op operators are building that capacity. Of course, many satellite entities and organizations have come to Nova Scotia looking for a place to develop and grow their product.

There is a lot of work; there's a lot of planning. At the end of the day, this is going to take a major investment and the Province of Nova Scotia will be there to make that investment.



MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**COM. SERV. - INC. ASSIST. RECIPIENTS: SHINGLES VACCINE - PROVIDE**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services. Colin Pothier, a constituent of mine, told me that he is at high risk for contracting shingles. Mr. Pothier would like to receive the vaccine to help protect himself but he cannot afford it. The gentleman receives income assistance and the \$211 vaccine is far too expensive given his fixed income, and the vaccine is not covered in the Pharmacare Program for those on income assistance. Can the minister inform this House why this important vaccine, the shingles vaccine, is not covered in the Pharmacare Program for those on income assistance?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I would be happy to sit down with him and look at this particular case, thank you.

MR. LOHR: I thank the minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, anyone who has ever had chicken pox can develop shingles. Shingles can be incredibly serious and could have a significant impact on a person's health. But the province will not provide additional funding to protect those on IA. My constituent believes that since he is at high risk, that the vaccine could actually save the province money, given the high cost of treating shingles. Will the minister act to help Nova Scotians on income assistance and at high risk to protect themselves from shingles?

MS. REGAN: I want to assure the honourable member I will sit down with him and will take a look at this.

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

**MUN. AFFS. - WHITNEY PIER RINK: POWER COSTS - ASSIST.**

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the board that runs the Whitney Pier rink went to the media last week about their budget shortfalls. Without government assistance for a large power bill, the board will not have funding to operate the rink for this season. The board needs that money by the end of this week. My question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, will the minister provide the \$20,000 needed so that Whitney Pier rink can operate for this season?

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I would like to thank the member for the question. I have been working with Whitney Pier rink since last February when they approached my local office for some of the challenges they were facing with operations. Since that time, we have worked closely with them to try to hold local fundraisers, with them to try to support some of those operational challenges that they have. In those conversations with them, I was quite clear with them that we provide a number of grants

throughout the community that we have been successful with in Whitney Pier, but specifically with what their ask was, the paying a power bill, there is no grant envelope that covers operational costs.

MS. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, we know how important community rinks are all across the province. They are a gathering place for families and provide access to recreational activities to Nova Scotia's seniors and children alike. Perhaps if the minister hadn't moved his office out of the Whitney Pier area, he would have had more opportunities to hear from the folks how important the rink is to them. Why is the minister standing by and allowing Whitney Pier rink to close?

MR. MOMBOURQUETTE: I can stand in my place as the MLA of Sydney-Whitney Pier and say we have done a tremendous amount of work to support organizations in the Pier. Mr. Speaker, I stand in my place to say that we supported Chester Borden with close to \$100,000 so the youth of Whitney Pier could have a new youth club. We supported the Ukrainian Church Hall with \$50,000 for their community facility. We supported the new St. Mary's Polish Church; we supported the St. Michael's Polish Hall. We support the Whitney Pier Historical Society to support the cultural significance of Sydney-Whitney Pier.

We supported Whitney Pier rink since day one, working with Nova Scotia Power to work out a payment plan, to work out fundraisers to help them support that. We will continue to do that, as a local office, to support the Whitney Pier rink and support any organization of that community. But the specific ask that they asked for with the power bill, we cannot pay it under a funding envelope, but of course my local office is there to support Whitney Pier rink and any other organization that requires my help.

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

### **CCH - PERKINS HOUSE MUSEUM: RENOVATIONS - TIMELINE**

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, in May, 2015, it was announced that the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Perkins House Museum in Liverpool, one of this province's oldest museums, will be closed due to structural problems. In March, 2016, the Liberal Government said it would repair and re-open the museum. Sadly, this did not happen and the museum had to remain closed for another season, which would have marked the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this historic home. On April 23, 2017, three days before the election call, the government announced that they would make the necessary repairs and renovation this year.

My question to the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage is, given that there are only two months left this year, have the design work and renovations started yet? Have you met the deadlines that were set in April? And is it still the government's intention to have the Perkins House open in 2018?

MR. SPEAKER: I'd like to remind the honourable member not to pose questions directly to members opposite, to keep your comments through the Chair.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I guess the 50-second answer is as follows: Yes, we've taken a very considerable look at Perkins House and in order to restore it to its original condition, you know it does need that expertise to go and take a look at the proper drainage system around the home, how in fact it can be kept intact, as close to its original condition. I can guarantee the member that this design work and the plan to have this available to the citizens of Liverpool and all Nova Scotians is well in hand.

MS. MASLAND: So, I guess that means it's not going to be repaired by 2018.

Mr. Speaker, in 2015 it was stated that the cost to repair Perkins House was estimated at \$550,000. Government announced in April that estimated cost of the Perkins House renovations ranged from \$1 million to \$1.5 million.

Now that five full months have passed and design work and renovations were slated for this year, are they now prepared to commit to an exact monetary figure, or will this figure continue to rise because of the inaction of this government?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, when you get a structure and a heritage building such as Perkins House, you know there were two views - one wanted the Disney World version, something that looked like Perkins House, but what we're going to do is restore Perkins House to its original shape, regardless of cost, over the next two years people will be going back to Perkins House.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**COM. SERV. - DISABILITY SUPP. PROG.:  
SUPPORT DOCUMENTS - FLEXIBILITY**

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services. Individuals in need of financial support through the Disability Support Program require a family doctor to sign off and prove their disability in order to qualify for funding. I have a constituent who is unable to work due to a PTSD diagnosis. Unfortunately, this individual is among the many thousands in this province who do not have a family doctor and his mental health professional is not qualified to sign the forms.

Knowing there is a shortage of family doctors in this province, will the minister look into creating more flexibility in who can sign off on disability support forms?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. There is no doubt that some people are having difficulty accessing family doctors at this time. Some are able to find some alternative ways to do this, but I would be happy to sit down and see if we can assist your particular constituent to find a family doctor.

I know that in my own constituency this is work that we carry out for our constituents.

MR. HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, my follow-up question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness.

In my constituency, I have people unable to receive child tax benefits, disability support funding and being forced to face shockingly long wait times for appointments and treatment, all because they don't have a family doctor.

The negative impacts of being without a family doctor spread far beyond the ability to receive basic medical care. On November 1<sup>st</sup>, Dr. Gregus, who has over 1,500 patients in his downtown Dartmouth office will be retiring. He not only works in his practice but also in the walk-in clinic, so wait times are set to increase even more.

Mr. Speaker, when will this government and minister finally admit there is a health care crisis and commit to a long-term plan to recruit family doctors?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the question. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I believe I, and the Premier and other members on this side of the Legislature, have stood on numerous occasions to advise this House and all Nova Scotians that indeed our budget that we tabled demonstrates our commitment to recruiting physicians and primary care providers. We're adding to the residency program where we know that when a resident performs the residency part of their studies that they have a high probability of staying in the province to complete their studies.

We're doing international recruitment and supports there, Mr. Speaker. We are committed to improving primary care access to all parts of the province, whether that's in Cape Breton, in metro, Yarmouth, Antigonish and all points in between. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

#### **H&W - HOME CARE SERV.: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - MEET**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: I have a question for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Over a year ago, home care agencies from the Eastern Zone submitted a proposal to the Department of Health and Wellness. They're trying to be as efficient as they can by working together, to meet key performance indicators.

Six months from now, new contracts will be issued to provide home care service. Will those contracts recognize the difference in providing home care in rural areas, versus urban, knowing that geography and weather impact the performance of agencies delivering the service?

[2:30 p.m.]

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I appreciate the member raising this question, it's a very important question. With respect to home care services, we recognize as a government the importance of providing continuing care services, in the last number of years and to continue commitment to expand our supports for home care services, where many seniors across the province want those services. But an important part of that is ensuring that the services they receive are of the best possible quality that we're able to access, that we're providing the same level of service across the province. That's where the key performance indicators come into play.

What we've been doing is rolling those out and providing time to work with the service providers who are currently in place, to work with them to identify and assess how well these key performance indicators are working, within the system.

MR. MACMASTER: There's nothing wrong with indicators, but we have to make sure that apples are being compared to apples. Rural versus urban, they're two different ball games. There are only so many variables managers can work with to control costs. Some of them are outside of their control. I think of cancellations due to weather and road conditions, as one example.

For this reason alone, the dollar per direct service hour indicator can vary widely between rural and urban areas. Come April, what is the government's plan to continue providing home care service, if existing service providers cannot meet these performance indicators?

MR. DELOREY: Again, one of the important things, this is a transition, it's a new approach to working with our home care providers and the partners who provide these services, these valuable services to Nova Scotians, both rural and urban, across the province.

That's why we took the time to develop key performance indicators, based on information that reflects best practices, but in addition, we recognize this is a change in the way of operating, and how home care has been delivered in the past. It is a change for those organizations and, indeed, for the government, in providing these services.

So, an important part of that step was working with the service providers, and assessing how they're performing against those standards, so if we need to make changes

on how we respond, we get that information and we do so accordingly. That's why we phased it in.

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

**STATUS OF WOMEN - GOV'T. POLICIES:  
GENDER-BASED ANALYSES - LIST TABLE**

MS. LENORE ZANN: In Budget Estimates, I asked the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education if any gender-based analysis had been conducted around government's decisions, including funding tuition for apprentices returning to the classroom for technical training. The minister said that no such analysis had been done. But this is troubling, because according to a report from the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, since the year 2000, on average only 2 per cent of registered apprenticeship and trade qualifiers in Nova Scotia are women.

My question today is for the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Could she please table a list of all government policies and spending commitments that have undergone a gender-based analysis?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to assure the member that we have had training, undergone by civil servants, so they know how to do gender-based analysis and, in fact, when MECs, memorandums to Executive Council, go to Cabinet, there is a place to account for that.

I would note that the previous Minister of Labour and Advanced Education worked very hard to encourage more women to enter the trades, as does the current minister, and we will continue to do that because we know that a trade is a great career for a woman.

MS. ZANN: I thank the minister for that answer. Women in Nova Scotia earn less than men. They're more likely to work part time, and more likely to do more hours of unpaid care work. The government has a responsibility to understand how public spending will impact women and men differently. This year, the federal Liberal Government produced a budget that looked at some of these differences recognizing that gender-based analysis is an important tool for developing effective public policy.

So, this time, I'd like to ask the Premier, is he willing to commit to a full gender-based analysis of all future provincial government budgets?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to tell her how much I enjoyed this morning celebrating with the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women on their 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

I also want to tell the honourable member how proud I am of my daughter who, as many of the people in this House would know, my daughter was a Page in this House and my son, and how much I work extremely hard to ensure that she recognized the same opportunities that he saw were there for her. I would encourage anyone to enter the trade system in this province. Quite frankly, you become the Premier if you do.

But I also want to say to the honourable member that when she had an opportunity in government they appointed 10 people to the bench in this province - and eight of them were men, limited minority representation. I am very proud of this group of men and women on this side of the House. The next appointment will bring gender parity to the bench in Nova Scotia.

I want to tell the honourable member when she looks at the executive team in the Province of Nova Scotia there are more women at the DM level than there are men. That's what this government believes in gender equality. Mr. Speaker, we're putting our money where our mouth is and advancing our daughters where they should be, and rightly so. (Applause)

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

#### **H&W: SPECIALIST CARE - ACCESSIBILITY**

MR. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, our office has received a call from a constituent who has been unable to obtain a physician for her elderly parents, so they must attend a walk-in clinic. Unfortunately, both require a specialist's care but walk-in clinics do not refer patients for specialists. The only recourse for this elderly couple is an already overburdened emergency hospital room where they have to sit and wait and wait and wait.

My question is similar to that of the member for Dartmouth East to the Minister of Health and Wellness. What is the minister doing for patients such as these two who are falling through the cracks and are in desperate need of ongoing care?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Indeed, as the member would know, the government has recognized the need in our commitments to improve primary care access for all Nova Scotians. That's why we committed in this budget as part of our efforts around primary care to expanding access to residency seats which provide opportunities for medical students to complete their training here in the Province of Nova Scotia.

We know from past residents who have gone through the system that a high proportion of them, I believe somewhere in the vicinity of 70 per cent, stay in the Province of Nova Scotia where they practise. We commit to the collaborative care practices which allow also nurse practitioners, family practice nurses, social workers, many other health

care providers to come together, work together to provide the best possible primary care service for all Nova Scotians, and all of those efforts are under way.

MR. JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that this government does believe that they are doing things to help the health care, but the reality is there is a crisis across this province and you can't use band-aids for amputations. Okay?

Stories like this are far too common; I'm getting calls every day from people in my constituency. Nova Scotians are not able to get health care when they need it. They've exhausted possibilities. I want to know, what measures will the minister put in place so that Nova Scotians without family doctors will have access to specialist care?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as I said, we've expanded the residency practice. The follow-up question speaks specifically about specialist care. That work includes commitments to provide additional specialist residency positions as well. So, both family practice providers and specialists, there are increases for residency positions providing more opportunity for people to come here in Nova Scotia to get their training here in the medical profession, to provide those services to Nova Scotians who need it. So, again, we are taking those steps and they are under way now.

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

**EECD - DUTCH SETTLEMENT ELEM. SCH.: SAFETY CONCERNS -  
ADDRESS**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: My question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. I met with parents of Dutch Settlement a week ago yesterday at the elementary school in Dutch Settlement. They expressed concerns respecting the safety of the children. The parents have tried to bring attention to these concerns but to no avail. They feel as though the school in Dutch Settlement is just one of those forgotten schools. Can the minister check into the status of Dutch Settlement school with respect to future plans?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to sit down with the member and go over the safety concerns of that community and make sure that they are properly addressed within the system.

MR. HARRISON: I was there to see the concerns first-hand. They are warranted, in my opinion. They seek a crosswalk for students who walk to school. There is one driveway. That means cars going in and cars going out of the same driveway, and it is in deplorable shape. Again, I am going to ask, would the minister cause a staff member to assess the concerns?



MR. CHURCHILL: Specifically, what I will be able to do is direct the department to see if those capital requests have come in through the school board. The process that we currently have in place does require that the board present capital expenditures to us on a priority basis. We will review to see if those requests have come in. If not, I would urge the member and the community to reach out to the local school board to make sure that capital requirements are on the list. That will allow the department to act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

### **AGRIC.: CUMBERLAND CO. - EMPLOYEES**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Cumberland North contributes to large export sales to the Province of Nova Scotia, yet I know we're only scratching the surface of our economic potential. We have 30 per cent of the arable farmland in Nova Scotia, but too much of it is unused and growing up in alder bushes. I believe with the support of many government programs through the Department of Agriculture, we can grow this sector; however, currently we have absolutely no employees of the Department of Agriculture in Cumberland despite having 30 per cent of the province's arable farmland.

My question to the Minister of Agriculture is, within your \$42 million budget, could we have some employees physically working in Cumberland County to support the growth of this agriculture sector?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: That's a very important question. We have outreach workers who work all over the Province of Nova Scotia. Indeed, they do go to your riding on a regular basis and talk to the farming community there. It's important that we do that outreach all the time, and we will continue that work.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: With all due respect, it's not the same. When someone is working physically in an area, they're much better able to serve that area than when they're physically located in another sector. I truly believe that if we had employees working right in Cumberland County, it would better serve our industry.

I do want to bring up one other important topic that a farmer came to see me about. That is on the issue of innovation and technology. Sometimes our regulations and laws don't keep up with it. He was stopped for speeding on the highway driving his tractor. He was going 60 kilometres an hour, and the law states he is not allowed to go over 40 kilometres an hour. This law was introduced years ago, when tractors were much slower. I'm wondering, would the minister work with either TIR or the Department of Justice to correct and amend these laws to allow farmers to drive faster than 40 kilometres an hour?

MR. COLWELL: I would be very pleased to take that up with the Minister of TIR.

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

**MUN. AFFS. - HRM: COMMUTER RAIL - PARTNER**

HON. DAVID WILSON: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The City of Halifax is set to consider commuter rail as part of the overall integrated mobility plan. The study is coming to the HRM Council in the first week of December. Commuter rail could be extended to Cobequid Road, Beaver Bank, Elmsdale, and further, making the daily commute much easier for thousands of people. I would like to ask the minister, will the minister agree today to actively partner with the municipality to establish a commuter rail system?

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I have had the opportunity to speak to Mayor Savage and council on a number of occasions. I don't have the specific details on this project, but what I can say is that we continue to work with our federal partners to provide transit funding to the HRM and other communities across the province. We also provide other programs to support transit research in rural communities across Nova Scotia and to support communities that want to upgrade their buses to be more accessible. Specific to this project here, I look forward to the proposal that will be before council and future conversations with HRM.

[2:45 p.m.]

MR. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm a bit disappointed, I don't think I've seen anything in the budget that would lend support to this. Bringing commuter rail to the Halifax area will not only make the city more accessible - it is true for the member for Yarmouth - it would take cars off the road. It would reduce congestion and reduce our carbon footprint.

We know that the municipality is already considering commuter rail and VIA Rail has come forward to express their willingness to work with the council. All I'm asking is, will this government do the same as VIA Rail and partner with the Halifax Regional Municipality to ensure commuter rail is finally available here in Nova Scotia?

MR. MOMBOURQUETTE: I thank the member for the question. As I said, we've had open dialogue with HRM on a number of issues that they want to bring forward to our department. Specifically with this proposal, the private sector is going to play a big part in how it is rolled out. I haven't had the opportunity to see the details of that proposal. I look forward to seeing it and I look forward to continued open dialogue with HRM.

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

**H&W - COLE HBR.-EAST. PASSAGE:  
NURSE PRACTITIONER - RECRUIT**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. As everybody is aware, I have the Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage constituency, with no family doctors at all. We've been given permission to try to recruit one, so we're going to be starting that process next week but we're not overly optimistic that it will be a speedy one.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, if we were able to secure a clinical nurse practitioner who was willing to come out to our community, would we be allowed to do that as a starting point, to provide the constituents of my area with health care services?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I appreciate the member's question. Actually what I really appreciate is the member's recognition that the recruitment process is not a speedy process, despite the suggestions that seem to be coming from the other side of the House most days, Mr. Speaker.

I do appreciate the member's acknowledgement that the process for recruiting physicians and primary care providers does take time and that this government is moving forward on those recruitment efforts and we continue to do that, and not just recruit those physicians and primary care providers, but to create an environment to provide an opportunity that does provide long-term benefits through the residency program, through the clerkship program. I do continue to make those commitments and will continue.

MS. ADAMS: I appreciate the answer, but what I really want to know is, can we have a clinical nurse practitioner there in the meantime, while we're waiting to recruit a family doctor?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I again appreciate the question. As part of our commitment to provide primary care providers throughout the province, nurse practitioners are part of that process and part of the team providing primary care services across the province. So if the member's community believes they have the opportunity to bring a nurse practitioner to provide those services for her community, we'd certainly work with her to make sure that we get the appropriate funding in place for that.

If she wants to connect with me offside, we can have that conversation in a little more detail. I'd be happy to do that.

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

**H&W - SYD. MINES REHAB. CTR.: PROSTHETIC CLINIC - REOPEN**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. (Interruptions) He says he doesn't think he'll have time to respond but he never answers anyway, so it's not much difference. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that nearly 40 per cent of the people who attend the prosthetic clinic here in Halifax travel from Cape Breton. At one time there was a service available in Cape Breton at the Sydney Mines Rehabilitation Centre where you could actually go and get adjustments and things of that nature done, so there wouldn't be a great deal of travel. I know of one patient who has made five trips to Halifax in five weeks for a 15-minute appointment.

My question to the minister is, would he look at reopening the prosthetic clinic on the Northside to cut down on travel of those who can't and don't have the resources to do it?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I believe the member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage knows that I do answer questions directly. To the question there, I believe it came up in Estimates and I did commit to looking into it. I don't know if it will be at that location or not but we'll look into the possibilities. Thank you.

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

**GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Public Bills for Third Reading.

**PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 7.

**Bill No. 7 - Workers' Compensation Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness on an introduction.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, this bill that's come before us - there's certainly a lot of interest across the province. I would like to take a moment to direct the members' attention to the east gallery, where we have representatives from the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union. We have Janet Hazelton and Paul Curry in the audience with us. (Interruption) To the Premier's question, both are originally from beautiful Antigonish, but both providing great health care service and with a particular interest in this bill. Please give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 7, An Act to Amend Chapter 10 of the Acts of 1994-95, the Workers' Compensation Act, be read for a third time and do pass.

I want to thank all my fellow MLAs for their remarks on this bill. There was a lot of great input from all sides of the House. The amendments to the Workers' Compensation Act will make it easier for front-line and emergency response workers diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder to access Workers' Compensation benefits. They will ensure that covered workers no longer have to prove their PTSD diagnosis was caused by a workplace incident.

Our front-line and emergency response workers have often witnessed great tragedy, sadness, and loss when helping those in need. It's important that we make it easier for those who suffer from PTSD to access benefits and treatment.

These changes are a step in the right direction. We want to thank employers and employees who shared their feedback on barriers to coverage and treatment for workers diagnosed with PTSD. Their input has helped shape the amendments and will inform the upcoming regulations.

I want to thank the members opposite for their comments on the bill and for the presenters' comments at the Committee on Law Amendments. There was an amendment brought together at the Committee of the Whole House, and I want to assure the House that that amendment will be looked at over the next year before the bill has Royal Assent. I will communicate that publicly as well.

I want to thank everyone for their input into this process, and I look forward to further consultations during the development of the regulations.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I just want to rise to say a few words for a few minutes on this bill.

It was good to see in the Committee on Law Amendments that the Nurses' Union, with over 7,000 members, came to express their concern but also their support for this bill. They were quite pleased that nurses and CCAs would be added to this bill, but they had a concern about the lack of psychiatrists and psychologists who could professionally diagnose people with PTSD. They did ask that family doctors and maybe nurse practitioners could be added to that list.

But the question and concern I have is, who's going to pay for the training for these people to be added to this list? There was some talk about occupational therapists, social workers, physiotherapists, and a few others being added to that list of who could diagnose. That's a lot of responsibility to put on people without adequate training and adequate compensation to receive that training and/or compensation to make that diagnosis to put on a group of people.

We also heard from the NSGEU, which has 31,000 members who are disappointed that sheriffs, social workers, and others were not going to be added to this list, that they would be done in regulation. The concern is that the regulations don't have to go through the scrutiny of the Legislature. Those people who are recommended to be added by a number of different groups would maybe not get on that list and could face problems with being diagnosed and getting the treatment they deserve.

There were a few examples given of why sheriffs and social workers should be put on that list. They were quite compelling and quite compassionate about the job they do and the reasons they do their job, and the reasons that job can affect them.

The other concern is the need to be in receipt of WCB. We have fire departments in this province who are volunteer. We have people who volunteer in certain situations who would be exposed to different types of situations where they could be affected by it. The very front-line workers who deal with this stuff daily - doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists - are not ones that are able to be part of the pursuant - to be diagnosed with PTSD and receive treatment for it.

There were also some concerns about the time restrictions. How long after the diagnosis would it be before a person would either be qualified or denied? It was brought up - maybe a year, maybe two years.

The problem is that people who leave a profession because of what they've seen, what they've done, or the conditions they had to work in, may not surface with them for years and years to come. The people who were diagnosed with PTSD previously, who didn't get compensation through the Workers' Compensation Board, are going to be reassessed, I hope, and when they are, they would have to apply for benefits, but it would be after the year of their diagnosis - two years of diagnosis. We're concerned about that.

The other concern I have is, who is going to pay these benefits? If a worker who was working as a paramedic years ago went to another job, and the PTSD surfaces either after they retire or after they change jobs and work for another company, who's going to pay the premiums for that WCB? The premium will have to be paid. They're going to have to come up with someone who'll pay that in order to allow that. So the problem is, who's going to pay for that?

Again, who's going to pay for the extra training? Who's going to take responsibility for the diagnoses? Who's going to make sure that the people who are making these diagnoses, who are providing the diagnoses for the people with PTSD, are adequately compensated in both monetary issues and in training?

Those are a few of the things we have - a few of the things I'm concerned about. I hope this is addressed in the regulations. I hope they will add some more people who are real, serious front-line workers who are exposed to issues and situations that most normal people aren't exposed to in their daily jobs. We know paramedics, police officers, or firemen are exposed to that on a regular basis. But social workers who work for Community Services who are in child welfare, and other workers in this province who are exposed to issues that normal people in normal daily routines don't get exposed to in their jobs - I hope they get added into the regulations. We hope that that's considered before the bill receives Royal Assent.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his comment.

I look forward to the passing of this bill. It's something that I've mentioned on a number of occasions and that I've worked extremely hard on, to try to ensure that the policies and the legislation and the programs that we have here in Nova Scotia help those who need help.

With this piece of legislation, I believe it will go to help men and women who give a lot of themselves to provide care for Nova Scotians, to make sure that we're protected, and to make sure that visitors to Nova Scotia are protected by being on call. Those who enter the professions that I just spoke about do it for so many reasons. I know many of them go into the profession knowing that they're going to be exposed to situations that will have an effect on them.

I have to say, for my own situation and my own experience, that that was a second thought. I always wanted to ensure that I did something when I was older that I thought contributed to helping people. It could have been being a firefighter or a police officer, which - those were the two professions I saw myself moving into when I was a young person. (Interruption) Maybe I'll talk about how I ended up here, Mr. Speaker.

Those were the professions - I think like most young boys, for example. Now I'm so glad to see young girls looking at - more than just those two professions, but are moving in to provide that help and that service to their community. It was through my volunteerism as a firefighter that it exposed me to the kind of medical side of emergency services, which led to my path of becoming a paramedic.

[3:00 p.m.]

What I want to ensure is that people recognize and make sure they keep at the forefront as we debate bills in this House like this bill, that there are many people who will be affected by what we do here in this Chamber. This piece of legislation I think will go a long way to help those people who choose to enter the profession of public service officers or first responders, Mr. Speaker.

As I've witnessed, I don't think you could prepare yourself mentally for the job of any of those, be it corrections, be it children's services, firefighters, paramedics, police officers and many others. I don't think you could prepare yourself on exactly what you are about to see, what you are about to experience, and how that will affect you as an individual. It's much broader than that, it's not just that individual worker, Mr. Speaker.

I know this bill is about amending the Workers' Compensation Act but it's about the effects that those professions have on family, friends, and the community as a whole. I'd be remiss not to ensure that there are those out there who give themselves 100 per cent to the profession, but yet it has a negative impact on them, especially when we're dealing with a diagnosis of PTSD, Mr. Speaker.

I know that over the last number of years there has been much said around PTSD and I think our involvement, as a country, in some of the armed conflicts over the last number of years really put a light on post-traumatic stress disorder, especially for our service personnel, but it also allowed for a light to be shined on those professions that never addressed - and to this day probably haven't addressed - the fact that the workers that provide the care need the help of not only the higher-ranking individuals within a service but need the help and support of the government.

A diagnosis of PTSD is something that I know those whom I talk to who have been diagnosed with PTSD would say that they would never have thought that they would be affected by what they've seen and that it would lead to a diagnosis of PTSD. Often, I have to say even though this legislation talks about support through WCB, many of those individuals who are affected by what they see end up leaving their profession - they feel alone, they feel isolated, they feel depressed, but another factor is that they feel angry.

Often that angry feeling results in conflict at the workplace. I know over the last couple of years a few of the individuals I've spoken with, that I've tried to support and



help, have found themselves losing their job just because of their inability to recognize that they had PTSD and they weren't diagnosed, Mr. Speaker, and they got fired.

I don't believe the employers of this province yet are doing enough to make sure that they re-evaluate how they approach maybe an employee who might be angry, who might not be showing up to work, who might be calling in sick on a regular basis. That is the challenge we have in front of us - how do we address making sure that those people are taken care of under this legislation because we know through the creation of the regulations a lot of the details will be worked out there.

One of the areas that the government needs to address is what do we do with people who no longer work for a service or a company or an employer, who is now diagnosed with PTSD, may be going through treatment, how do they benefit from a change in policy and a change in legislation like we see here? It's imperative that the government recognize there cannot be restrictions, especially around the timeline of when you were diagnosed.

If we're going to truly reflect having presumptive coverage of WCB for people who work in certain professions, then you can't restrict that because - I know paramedics who have quit because they couldn't handle it, they're doing other jobs. That affects their other job so it doesn't just go away because they come off going on ambulance calls or they stop responding to police emergency calls or responding to fire calls, it follows them to their next profession, which usually ends up creating a very difficult situation for them and their families.

One of the things I think we as legislators need to do is lead by example. Don't be worried about talking about mental health and shying away from the stark reality of what we're talking about. For me, what's been driving me over the last couple of years is recognizing just how many of those people I just described in all those professions, who found themselves at a point in their life where they couldn't go on and they committed suicide. They've hung themselves, they've shot themselves in the head, they've taken pills, they've overdosed on drugs and alcohol - that's what's been driving me.

If we could prevent one person from deciding that there's no one there to help them, then it's well worth it. It's well worth it. It's interesting, this year alone there are a number of organizations who have been providing amazing care and directives and support for people with PTSD as well as other mental health illnesses. One I often talk about is the Tema Conter Memorial Trust. Tema is an organization that a number of years ago, I believe it was in 2014, started to track suicides in Canada and they just tracked the ones that are reported to them. So provinces, employers, associations like the paramedic association or a firefighter association will actually now report in to Tema and say unfortunately we've had someone in our profession commit suicide.

So far this year across Canada, unfortunately, there have been over 49 reported suicides and it runs across so many different professions. So far this year eight current or

veteran military personnel have committed suicide. There have been 15 police officers who have committed suicide in Canada, 14 paramedics, 9 firefighters, 3 correctional officers. I know those numbers are just the tip of the iceberg.

That's why in some of our discussions and some of the comments, I emphasize the fact that we need to recognize the number of professions. I'm encouraged by the minister's comments around including, even though the government didn't accept our amendments on including more in the definition of the professions that will be covered under presumptive coverage, but the minister indicated he will work with his department to ensure that they're included. Just so the minister knows, the note he sent me is pinned up on my office with yesterday's date and we'll look forward to that happening.

Of the professions, interestingly enough, one I don't think many talk about as much - because when we say first responders, a lot of people move to the firefighters, police and paramedics - but correctional officers have the highest percentage of their members who are diagnosed with PTSD, followed by the paramedic profession. About 25 per cent within the paramedic profession will be diagnosed with PTSD, firefighters are about 17 per cent, military are about 8 per cent, police services about 7 per cent. Just to compare, the general public is about 9 per cent.

It's very prevalent in some of those professions that we don't often think of as first responders, but definitely correctional officers have to be one of those professions that not only do we see a high number of suicides but definitely a high number of their members who are diagnosed with PTSD.

It's interesting, through my career, especially over the last couple of years when I meet people who come to me and talk about their situation - I recall working as a volunteer firefighter and a paramedic in Sackville when we had the correctional centre there, which we went to often, and it was many years later that I ran into one of the former guards there who was retired who came up to me and said that he has PTSD and it just, it never ceases to amaze me the sheer impact that this has and this happens to people you would never think. What you might think are tough individuals who were good medics, they were good police officers, they were very good correctional officers, they are affected by this and how can you not be?

You know, I've said this many, many times, and I consider myself very fortunate that I've had a break for the last 14 and a half years from responding to medical calls because when I talk about this and I know my colleagues, we have discussions outside the Chamber, who are involved in maybe being a volunteer firefighter or a former paramedic or a 911 dispatcher, that it's a bit concerning because the more we talk about it the more - I know it happens for me - I remember some of the calls that I went on and it wasn't yesterday. It was well over 14 years ago and the thing with me is that when I live and work in the community that I lived in - I worked as a paramedic and a firefighter in the community that I represent now - I often drive by and I know the houses.

One, now, more recently, I'm glad to say that I kind of know which homes had a sign in the last election and I'm hoping that they'll put a sign up in the next election but, also, at that, I recall some of the terrible, terrible calls that I've gone on and you don't forget. You don't forget seeing, you know, a seven-year-old boy who is not breathing, whose heart is not beating, and you're trying to resuscitate them. You don't forget the look in their eye, in their eyes and that one probably haunts me the most over the years and, yet, it happened so long ago, like, pushing almost 20 years ago and I can't imagine those who continued on - those who I did my training with in the mid-1990s who haven't had that break that I've had, who continue to see those seven-year-olds who pass away, those accidents where you see parts of bodies not on the body - you see decapitations, you see brain matter splattered all over the place.

Those are things that kind of burn a picture in your head and in your mind that you don't forget about and those people, those men and women are supposed to just - you don't get time off after you do a bad call. They give you sometimes a little 15, 20 minutes but you go right back out there, and I think that that has a deep impact on people who have continued on in professions, who see those terrible things, and that's why it was so important to talk about and ensure that cumulative exposure to these traumatic events is something that we address because in the policy of WCB for a lot of years it was for you to gain access to WCB benefits you had to have witnessed a single traumatic event and you had to be diagnosed within a year, but we're finding now more and more that's usually not that single event that causes the PTSD - it might be the trigger but it's not that single event that leads into recalling many, many things that you have seen over your career.

[3:15 p.m.]

I was glad to see that Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia had moved away from that strict kind of policy, not to say that it's been perfect because there are still I think about 15 or 20 Nova Scotians who have been denied benefits over the last four years because either they don't work for their company anymore or that trigger and the cumulative effect of it isn't recognized, if it was like five or 10 years ago.

Some of the cases that I hear from that have a lasting impact are ones like Swissair. You would think, Swissair, well, the plane went off down in the water, so there were no traumatically-injured people who needed caring for, but my Lord, Mr. Speaker. I was at an event this weekend where one of the gentlemen, one of the guest speakers, talked about being a recovery diver - for the RCMP, I believe - and what that individual saw.

I had colleagues who were out on the boats - and they were not only military boats, but fishing boats. People in the community all went out in hopes of trying to find survivors, and the largest part of a body they found was a torso. That has an impact on people. It wasn't until many years later, after maybe a trigger event, that they realized they needed to get help and make sure they get the support they need.

By no means will this eliminate all the stuff that I've talked about, especially the suicides, Mr. Speaker, but I'm encouraged that it will allow an individual to take something off their plate so that they can deal with the diagnosis of PTSD.

I think there are some members here who heard a gentleman this weekend who said that for him it was like having a glass and it filling up, and you need to make sure you can empty that glass so that you can continue on. Far too often people don't know how to empty that glass. They don't know how to get some of the things that they are dealing with off the table.

This will just be one component, to know that, okay, I can take some time off, and I won't have no money coming in - I'll have some. I mean, WCB benefits - I don't think anybody is jumping up and down saying, put me on WCB benefits. You are not going to make the wages you are making, and that too may need to be looked at.

There was a presenter who recognized the need to maybe look at what percentage of your salary do you get, and should it be capped at - I'm trying to think of what it is - \$50,000 now or something. I think the most you can really get out of WCB is about \$35,000, maybe \$40,000.

There are many things that the government needs to do. I hope they recognize and don't forget about those 49 individuals who won't be supported by this legislation, or those individuals who are no longer working in a profession but are still affected by what they saw. I hope that the regulations address a lot of the issues that are out there.

I know it says a year, and I'm asking the government to make sure that that happens before that. There is enough expertise and knowledge and data collection and the willingness to move forward sooner than a year. That is one of the criticisms that I do have with the government, that we could be sitting here today having passed this four years ago, knowing that men and women who are diagnosed with PTSD, who work for services in Nova Scotia, could benefit from a change like this.

I hope the government moves quicker than a year, and it's imperative that this does not happen solely in the offices around Halifax here. With all respect to civil servants and bureaucrats, it cannot happen just solely with them writing the regulations. You have to have people's input on what is truly needed. That's my offer to make sure that I - not that I need to be there, but I could facilitate and hopefully make sure the government is in contact with people who have been truly affected by not having a piece of legislation like this.

So with that, I'm glad to see this piece of legislation come to third reading, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker. I just want to briefly chime in, I guess, for lack of a better term, on this very important piece of legislation that has been around this House for some time now. It's good to see it coming to a conclusion and making its way through.

I want to echo the comments of others who have spoken - my friend, the member for Northside-Westmount, and my former colleague and partner for a while some years back, the member for Sackville-Cobequid. They have spoken very passionately about this, and so they should. My biggest piece of this, I guess, is to echo and support the communities that have already been put forward but most importantly for us not to forget that we have come this far on a very, very important piece of legislation.

That time frame has been raised. We talked about it in the bill briefing the day I attended that as well, the time frame around how long you can go back to file for that diagnosis. What you have heard described, I won't get into that. I won't go back down that road again. I think it's important that people realize how that does affect people.

But everyone is different, Mr. Speaker. It takes longer sometimes. It could be an incident, or it could be many incidents. I think it is extremely important that we look at it. I don't know what the right time frame is. I'm the first to say that. I know there are examples in other provinces. I'm not saying that that's right or that that's wrong. Maybe that works for them.

I don't know the percentages, the workers per capita when we take in all of the firefighters and front-line workers and paramedics and police officers and so on - all those who have been named. I don't know what works for Nova Scotia.

I do hope, to the point of the honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid, that we take the time, but not forever, to look at how very, very, very important it is to have input from people who have been in that position, who understand how this impacts families - not only themselves but their families as well.

I just want to take that brief minute or so to be on the record to say this is an important piece, one that I certainly support going forward, one that we need to make sure we get right. I think it's a living document, if you will. There will be amendments over the years that will probably come, that will be required maybe.

I can't imagine that any piece of legislation in this House, regardless of what stripe of government puts it through, is perfect. We all know they're not. Otherwise, there would never be amendments coming before us in this place.

This is something that we need to pay continuous and close attention to as the weeks and the months and the years go by so that we get it right and we do our best to serve the good folks who are out there working hard in situations that are just not normal.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: I just wanted to say a few words today as well. This is a good thing for so many people. When I think about this legislation, I obviously think about my colleagues in the Chamber here today, two former paramedics.

But I also think of people like Sean Watters back at home, who is suffering the effects, and somebody like John Garth MacDonald, who after 23 years as a paramedic had just had enough. When I first met John Garth, I was at a dinner at the Westville Fire Department, and he was the guest speaker. I didn't know who the guest speaker was going to be, and I certainly wasn't prepared for the message that he delivered that night about his experiences and the issues that he dealt with personally and, as my colleague says, his entire family when he left these services. It took a big toll on him. But he's a survivor, and he got through it. As he spoke that night, I looked around the room at the firefighters who were assembled there for the dinner. There was hardly a dry eye in the place, and it moved me quite a bit that night.

I'm glad to see this legislation. I'm glad to see that this legislation will help those who need it and bring some measure of relief to them and their families. I applaud the government for bringing this forward, and I hope that they continue to work on the changes that need to be made. The minister has said that they will continue to look at this and review it. I believe that they will, and I applaud them for doing that.

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

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: I would like to thank the presenters. Special thanks to the member for Sackville-Cobequid for all of his hard work on PTSD. (Applause) I would like to thank our other first responder, the member for Hants West as well, as he has been advocating for this to me. I would like to assure the member for Northside-Westmount, he brought up some of the aspects of the bill regarding who can diagnose and the original bill did say psychiatrists and psychologists. As the member pointed out, over the summer as we did consultation, in that consultation we heard that there could be others that could diagnose as well as nurse practitioners and doctors. So as opposed to making the bill rigid we made it more flexible. We will be able to add any other health professionals in regulation as opposed to having to wait until another session opens, coming in and passing new legislation.

So that process can happen a lot quicker and I think that is the right approach. Along the same line of thinking the bill in the Spring wasn't flexible by allowing more people to be added and over the summer we actually saw groups that should be added to the bill and we did add them but then we thought, well, the world changes, jobs change, you know

information changes and our data changes. So what we did then is we added the flexibility in the bill through regulation to add more people to have presumptive PTSD coverage.

The changes, as I said, will happen faster in regulation than they would under legislation. I did commit to look at certain social workers. I think personally it would be a great addition to have. You know in terms of jumping the gun and just adding it myself, I would rather give the chance to Workers' Compensation to present us the data and go through the process as they did in the summer.

I did mention that within one year of Royal Assent the presumptive coverage would be happening. I have already asked the department to look at these other areas for certain social workers to be added and they would be gathering that information for me.

So with those few words I move that we close debate on Bill No. 7, an Act to Amend Chapter 10 of the Acts of 1994-95, the Workers' Compensation Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 7. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Happy to be part of that moment for a great day for the Legislature for all people involved, and all Nova Scotians.

With that, Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 15.

**Bill No. 15 - Environment Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Environment.

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 15 be now read a third time and do pass. Climate change is a defining issue of our time. Most of the members in this House know that and unfortunately, we are seeing the impacts every day. Thanks to the work of Nova Scotians across this province, we are a national leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Despite this success, we need and want to do more to address the damaging effects of climate change on our province and its broader implications for our country and our

world. We are prepared to take further action and reduce greenhouse gas emissions above and beyond the targets we already have in place.

Bill No. 15 is a pivotal moment for Nova Scotia. This bill lays the legal foundation for a cap-and-trade system that will allow us to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while protecting our economy. This bill is a product of countless hours of consultation with Nova Scotians and negotiations with the federal government.

Bill No. 15 balances environmental concerns with business concerns and it builds on the tremendous work that has already been undertaken by Nova Scotians to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. That work, along with the achievements of Efficiency Nova Scotia and benefits of initiatives like the HomeWarming and Heating Assistance Rebate Program, which were just enhanced this week to provide help for even more low-income families, are what make cap and trade the right choice for Nova Scotia.

[3:30 p.m.]

We are choosing to act in a way that is focused on what really matters, reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the most cost-effective way; that is what a market-based system achieves. It finds the lowest cost reductions.

We could have taken what some may consider a similar approach and put a carbon tax on the fuel of Nova Scotians that they use to drive cars and heat their homes, but Nova Scotians were clear - that's not what they wanted. Nova Scotians are reasonable people and are prepared to participate in a way that recognizes the work they've already done through cleaner investment in the electricity sector. This bill strikes the right balance. It is an important step as we transition to a low-carbon economy. That transition is important.

The goal of the cap-and-trade system is to provide certainty about the amount of emission reductions. It will encourage our largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions to reduce their carbon footprint by capping emissions, enabling a trading program, and, as a result, effectively putting a price on pollution. It will also encourage the lowest-cost emissions reductions to happen first, further helping to mitigate costs to consumers here in the province.

The federal government set the guidelines for carbon pricing but they have recognized our aggressive and early action on reducing emissions in our electricity sector and, because of that, we will develop a cap-and-trade program that works for Nova Scotians. If we had not acted early, the cost to Nova Scotians would have been much steeper.

We know that Bill No. 15 will ensure our emission limits are enforceable against polluters and secure us critical gains to improve environmental outcomes for all Nova



Scotians and the minister will be required to present the results to this House on an annual basis. We will all be able to track the progress and outcomes of the program over time.

I want to thank those who came forward to speak at the Law Amendments Committee and who shared their concerns and expert opinions. What I heard through the process is that stakeholders and environmental groups want to see declining caps beyond business as usual. Some want to see Nova Scotia's cap-and-trade system linked to other jurisdictions. They want meaningful public consultation and a robust green fund. I want to assure all key stakeholders and cap-and-trade critics that we are absolutely going to have declining caps beyond business as usual.

Much of the discussion at the Law Amendments Committee is relevant to how regulations are developed. Additionally, we have intentionally made the legislation nimble so that we have the ability to link with other jurisdictions in the future, if and when that is what is best for our province both economically and environmentally.

Finally, we are currently working with the federal government to increase investments in Nova Scotia's low-carbon economy, including additional work on energy efficiency and clean technology. We will continue to consult. In fact, I look forward to hearing from Nova Scotians and our stakeholders as we work together in consultation to develop the regulations that will support this bill in 2018.

When it comes to the green fund, I want to be clear. The cap-and-trade program that we're moving forward with is designed to drive cleaner innovation. The purpose is not to raise revenue. Some may disagree with that approach but we believe it's the best way forward for Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, my department has been working hard to get this program in place in the time frame required by the federal government. Currently, we are consulting on the first of two sets of regulations. This first regulation will require large emitters and fuel suppliers to report their greenhouse gas emissions. This information will be used to track greenhouse gas emissions annually, and used to help create the rules for the cap-and-trade regulations to be developed in 2018. As we gather this information, we will be able to share more details on how the program will work, including specific details on a 2030 GHG target and the declining caps, who will be required to participate and how the market will function.

We want to create a program that is fair, competitive, and transparent. The action we take today will help secure a healthier environment, a more competitive economy, and a better future for our children and grandchildren. This bill and the resulting regulations enable us to do that. Thank you.

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

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to rise today to speak to the third reading of Bill No. 15, the Environment Act.

In October 2016, the federal Liberal Government announced a pan-Canadian approach to carbon pricing and the Trudeau Government mandated the implementation of a carbon-pricing scheme. In November 2016, the provincial government announced its intention to adopt a cap-and-trade system, and here we are today as we debate to the third reading of this bill.

As I stated previously, the stakeholder time period of March 8<sup>th</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> was short, leaving little time for Nova Scotians to, first of all, begin to understand the implications of the choices being proposed and provide input. The general public have not even begun to grasp the real implications because of the focused, technical consultation.

This weekend, while back in my constituency, I had several constituents ask me to explain cap and trade. They asked, what will this do for the environment? Then they asked, how much is this going to cost me?

Many low- and fixed-income people are worried. They are worried about the winter season and their ability to pay the heating costs, and now they are worried about the lack of transparency with cap and trade with the resulting cost causing more anxiety. This province has introduced a cap-and-trade system, but continues to be vague in providing the cost to industries and, most importantly, what impact it will have on emission levels.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Environment is making the sales pitch as a made-in-Nova Scotia approach, one which will protect the pocketbooks of Nova Scotians and will have limited impact on consumers. But the Minister of Environment has not been able to put a dollar amount on the cost, stating that it is pure speculation but higher costs would not go to customers. As stated before, this worries me and it worries many more Nova Scotians who are left wondering how this legislation will impact them.

While the minister cannot speculate or offer an economic analysis of something so important, we have learned through Question Period that he is not the only one who cannot offer reassurance to Nova Scotians. During Question Period, the honourable member for Cumberland South questioned the Premier about electricity rates. The question asked was: Can the Premier confirm that Nova Scotia Power is an emitter and subject to the new carbon pricing rules under the cap-and-trade system?

This seems to be a simple yes or no question but, Mr. Speaker, there was not a yes or a no. Nova Scotians deserve a straightforward answer. Does the CEO of NSPC even know how they will be affected? Nova Scotians already pay the highest power rates in the country, which have carbon pricing embedded in our electricity bills. Electricity costs have risen 62 per cent since 2005.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotia has been successful in reducing emissions in our electricity sector because Nova Scotians have been doing the heavy lifting for the past 10 years. We have paid through the nose to achieve greenhouse gas reductions through transition to renewable electricity generation and efficiency - LED lights, streetlights, heat pumps, and solar panels. Over 100,000 Nova Scotians have made the investment for renewable heat in their homes. We are doing our part.

Mr. Speaker, our commitment to the last 10 years has grown our renewable portfolio from 7 per cent to 30 per cent, exceeding our reduction targets - actually, our greenhouse gas emissions have been declining since 2005 and we are currently the provincial leader. But we are the provincial leader because of Nova Scotians paying those high electricity rates and now they deserve to know if they are going to be asked to pay even more. But the details are not forthcoming. With this government, we are unsure of costs and we are unsure of emission targets. The one thing we are sure of in this bill is that carbon will be priced at \$10 per ton in 2008, going to \$50 per ton in 2022.

Mr. Speaker, referenced in my comments in the second reading of the bill I stated that the Conference Board of Canada is suggesting \$80 per ton in 2025. At \$80 per ton it will cost the average household another \$2,000 a year - and I will table that document. Those are numbers and costs that this government is not talking about when questioned at the introduction of this bill and now we are into third reading. The reality is that this will have a huge impact on the pocketbooks of Nova Scotians, a huge financial impact with little to no reduction of GHGs.

Sadly, this is not an environment bill - it is a bill to tax Nova Scotians even more on the essentials of life. Time and time again, as a senior safety coordinator, I discovered seniors bundled up, towels under the doors, blankets over the windows, trying to stay warm. Time and time again I have met low-income families choosing to pay the oil bills or electricity bills over quality food.

What about the people who need to drive their vehicles to work in rural Nova Scotia? People cannot cut back on driving. In my hometown of Caledonia, we don't have a bus system. We don't even have taxis. How can this government put forward something as significant as a cap-and-trade system when there is no economic analysis, and claims it won't hurt anyone, but also claims people will have a reason to reduce their consumption? It simply leaves me shaking my head.

Will the end-user be penalized because they'll be forced to reduce their consumption of home heating oil, gasoline or electricity because they will not be able to afford to purchase it? Is that the plan? These are essentials of life. As my colleague for Cumberland South stated previously, Nova Scotians cannot drive 80 per cent to work. They have to drive the entire way to work. They cannot heat 80 per cent of their home, they should be able to heat their entire home and enjoy warmth and comfort.

This made-in-Nova Scotia approach - well, I'm not really sure who the government was thinking about here. We live in a cold climate. More Nova Scotians heat their homes with oil than anywhere else in Canada and we pay some of the highest consumption taxes in North America. This was not made with Nova Scotians in mind.

While presenting on the second reading of this bill, the Minister of Environment was not happy with some of the numbers I spoke of. Numbers that were calculated by Dalhousie University, looking at the cost of carbon pricing targets and breaking them down into more cents on a litre of gasoline, more cents on a litre of home heating fuel - real numbers that the government does not want to talk about. When they hit their targets on \$30 per ton, they are going to add 7 cents per litre to the price of gasoline, 9 cents a litre to home heating fuel and 1.8 cents per kilowatt hour on electricity bills.

I know during my last speech, the Minister of Environment was yelling across the floor for me to table these figures, so I will table those figures for him today. I hope this does help in providing some clarity on real numbers that are going to come out of this bill. Nova Scotians deserve clarity, they deserve clarity on the real costs of this cap-and-trade system.

I also want to take the downloading of costs to Nova Scotians a step further. As my colleague for Sackville-Beaver Bank brought to our attention on the second reading of this bill, there's one taxpayer with one pocket and everybody is reaching into it. We pay federal tax, we pay provincial tax and we pay municipal tax. Our municipal government covers the cost of fire, policing and garbage pickup. The cost of fuel for these buildings will increase, the cost of fuel for these tanks will increase and the cost will come from one pocket of that one taxpayer, and all of these costs are going to come under the cap-and-trade system.

Nova Scotia manufacturers are saying this will definitely negatively impact competitiveness in an already fragile economy. I'm worried about places close to home, places that employ thousands of South Shore residents; Michelin is a prime example. Many residents who worked at Bowater, who lived in my constituency, have gone to work there. I'm worried about our mills and I'm worried about our fishermen and fisherwomen. I worry about where those people will go if businesses are forced to close because of increased costs and competitiveness in an already fragile economy.

Cap and trade will stunt our economic growth and it will be difficult to attract new businesses to Nova Scotia, especially those that have large emission and export their product. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business states that small businesses in Nova Scotia believe protecting the environment and implementing environmentally friendly measures in their business are important. However, striking the right balance between protecting the environment and growing the economy is essential for long-term success.

A survey done of small business owners in Nova Scotia, showed that 79 per cent of small business owners have taken steps in their businesses to implement environmentally-friendly measures within the past three years, whether it's through introducing or expanding recycling, reducing electricity usage, in making buildings more energy efficient.

[3:45 p.m.]

Small businesses in Nova Scotia also indicated that tax and regulatory costs are their leading cost constraints and that potential additional regulatory costs from a cap-and-trade system would further restrict small businesses and harm their ability to grow and invest in their businesses. We all know that when businesses are investing and growing, it means employment for Nova Scotians.

Small businesses worry about being able to stay competitive in the global economy. When asked what the impact of increased costs would do to their businesses, 70 per cent said it would reduce their profitability, 67 per cent said they feared it would increase operating costs, and 40 per cent said it would put pressure on them to freeze or cut employee salaries. Only 20 per cent said it would be an incentive to reduce emissions - and I can table that document.

Besides stunting our economic growth, this legislation does little to address a GHG-emission neutral path, one that shifts from wasteful use of imported fossil fuels to the efficient use of renewable energy that is and can be produced right here in our own province. The Conference Board of Canada has stated that investing in green energy is the way of the future, and I truly believe this needs to be our continued direction.

Nova Scotia is unique. We have done much research in tidal power and wind energy, and we are blessed with the Bay of Fundy - the highest tides in the world. Nova Scotia has more wind power in our mix than eight other provinces, and we have the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act, which became law in Spring 2007, introduced by the Honourable Mark Parent, minister in the Progressive Conservative Government - a piece of legislation that was supported by all three Parties of this House.

This very successful piece of legislation outlined the long-term environmental and economic objectives of the province to achieve sustainable prosperity and to establish clear goals that foster an integrated approach to environmental sustainability and economic well-being while working toward continuous improvement in a measure of social, environmental, and economic indicators of prosperity.

Under EGSPA, we are more than a decade ahead in reducing our GHG emissions. We have reduced 30 per cent below 2005 and are on track to reach 46 per cent by 2030. That's commendable. We are known all over the world for being leaders in recycling and

composting. We have cleaner energy through energy efficiency. We have saved \$110 million in power costs, and we have reduced 590,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

EGSPA has provided a strong framework for our province and integrating environmental sustainability and economic prosperity with great success. The EGSPA 2015 to 2017 report highlights the achievements and commitment to identifying new ways to focus on supporting a green economy.

The economy and the environment must prosper together. We have done and continue to do all of this without a tax scheme. We did all of this while creating jobs in Nova Scotia.

Although we've been told that the agriculture industry will be exempt from this program, I still remain very concerned for our farm-to-fork industry. Fuel is needed to transport and export. The administration of this cap-and-trade system will be complex and it will be costly, and a very tiny market of emitters. Nova Scotia does not have a heavy industry, and although I believe that we all have our role to play, Nova Scotia has a minimal impact on the world stage of emitters.

My colleague for Cumberland South challenged the minister to bring forth the regulations before third reading of this bill. We have seen nothing. We have seen nothing when, in fact, the minister stated when bringing this bill forward that it was to give Nova Scotians certainty about where the future was going on cap and trade. The certainty under this legislation is that our costs are going to increase.

Mr. Speaker, climate change is real. We see that when we turn on the news. We know this is an environmental challenge of our times, and I know I'm not alone when I say Nova Scotians want to do their part. We can always do better, but this legislation is empty - when it comes to further reducing our GHGs, it is empty. It does very little in protecting our environment going forth, and it does very little in protecting the pocketbooks of Nova Scotians.

For these reasons, we will not be supporting this legislation.

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: I'm glad to be able to address Bill No. 15, the Environment Act, on third reading.

As this bill has moved through the House over the last few weeks, there has been a lot of talk of the great work that the province has done to fight climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing renewable energy generation.

Well, this is something that we should celebrate, but I have to say, when a government spends too much time congratulating themselves and patting themselves on the back for the work that past governments have done, resting on the laurels of others, they tend to become complacent.

That is one of the things that concerns me most about this bill. Nova Scotians know that we do not need a cap-and-trade program, nor do we need a carbon tax program, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fight climate change. We know this because we've done it; in fact, we did it by setting hard targets for emissions reduction and renewable energy generation. And yet, this government is offering nothing of the sort in Bill No. 15.

There is simply no vision in this bill. Bill No. 15 basically says that there'll be a number of companies that are subject to an emissions cap in order to help Nova Scotia achieve a long-term emissions reduction target. However, it leaves many important questions unanswered. For instance, which companies? We don't know. What will their emissions cap be? We don't know. What is Nova Scotia's long-term emissions reduction target? We don't know.

It's not exactly like the federal government just announced its intentions yesterday, that each province has to have a system in place. No, it has been over a year since Prime Minister Trudeau told the provinces that they have until 2018 to adopt a carbon pricing scheme. I think the minister should explain why, more than a year after getting this message from the federal government, he would bring to this House a bill that is so vague and so inadequate.

On behalf of our NDP caucus, I tried to put forth amendments that would have strengthened this bill and give it some direction. First, we tried to simply insert the word "declining" before emissions limitations targets, so that the bill would explicitly state that the cap on GHG emissions for program participants would actually go down over time, as opposed to the government's business as usual case that the caps are declining. Their business as usual case goes out to the year 2030, and the Ecology Action Centre also suggested this change as they presented it to the Law Amendments Committee, which I am a member of.

So, proposing that caps are declining just seems like a no-brainer to those of us in the NDP caucus. But, what did the government do? They said, no.

Second, we tried to ensure that a portion of the money in the Green Fund would be used to help low- and moderate- income Nova Scotians in order to transition to a low carbon economy. And this was also a recommendation at our Law Amendments Committee, brought to us by the Affordable Energy Coalition who represent a variety of organizations and individuals in Nova Scotia, whose main goal is to ensure that low-income Nova Scotians have access to the energy services that they need to live and to thrive here in Nova Scotia but government was not interested, Mr. Speaker. They said no to that.

Third, we tried to ensure there would actually be money in the Green Fund by selling the initial allowances and putting them in the Green Fund, rather than giving them away to another polluter to continue polluting, for free. But what did the government do? They said no to that as well.

We tried to ensure that multi-billion dollar private corporations would not profit from this program by diverting money made from the sale of extra-emission allowances into the Green Fund, but once again, unfathomably, Mr. Speaker, the government said no to that as well. So here we are with a bill before us that leaves most of the details of the government's cap-and-trade program to be dealt with later on, down the road, with regulations. I have to say that that is so telling. Why do I say that? Because this is a government with no vision for addressing climate change here in Nova Scotia.

They said nothing about it in their Throne Speech and barely mentioned it in the budget. By not providing any sort of vision in the Statute and with no further hard caps on greenhouse gas emissions, this government has left us completely in the dark, so to speak, about what the regulations will contain. This is a very crucial time in the history of Nova Scotia, of Canada, and of our entire little blue planet, at a time when climate change is surely the biggest challenge of our time.

I have to say, this is simply a disgrace. Government should be ashamed of themselves. They are the ultimate posers, pretending to do something while really just treading water, still clapping themselves on the back.

Mr. Speaker, I say that governments should be especially ashamed of themselves for trying to introduce what I call the do-nothing bill. Therefore, the NDP caucus cannot and will not be supporting this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and say a few words on this bill here. It's interesting how we have the government positioning this bill as doing great things to reduce greenhouse gas emissions but at the same time not costing anything, or not being willing to acknowledge what it might cost.

It kind of strikes me as we're having our cake and we're eating it, too. I think what we really know is happening here is that the Prime Minister wants to have a talking point that every province has done something, so in Nova Scotia our Liberal Government wants to fulfill that, they want to give the Prime Minister the ability to say that but, at the same time, not have any influence on what we're paying for things, on our economy. They want their cake but they want to eat it, too.

The lack of information that the government is providing to Nova Scotians about the costs, about the impacts, is concerning on the one hand but, for the most part, I believe



it is probably disingenuous. I believe that it's disingenuous because for years now we know that this Liberal Government has been analyzing options and the impact - I will table this eventually, too - but back in October 2016, so a full year ago, Mr. Speaker, the Premier acknowledged that the Department of Finance and Treasury Board had set up a working group on carbon pricing a year before.

So for two years this government has been overseeing a working group on carbon pricing a year before. So for two years this government has been overseeing a working group that's had the sole purpose, most likely, of looking at the impact of carbon pricing on the Nova Scotia economy. When pressed at the time, the Premier said that his government "... had been working with the Department of Environment to look at what ... it believes "... is a fair solution for Nova Scotia." The Premier went on to say, "We have laid out a couple of options."

[4:00 p.m.]

Again, I do believe that if you have a working group focused on this and you're laying out options to the national government, there has to be a little bit of meat around those bones. Yet Nova Scotians are presented with this legislation and saying, there is no meat on the bones, we'll figure that out later in regulations.

The Premier was clear that this working group was active and it was considering options. What were they doing? What were they doing, if not some analysis of the different impact of their thought process on our economy?

This issue was in the media quite a bit about a year ago. Around that same time, the Premier was pressed on Ottawa's cap-and-trade option that it was peddling. The Premier said that he wasn't sure whether it would work for Nova Scotia, and he said that the province is running models on its potential effects. He wasn't sure if it would work.

With the introduction of this bill, now that we've worked its way through the Legislature, hopefully he has determined that he is sure of whether it would work for Nova Scotia or not. At the time, he wasn't sure if it would work. Today, a year has passed. He must be sure - here we are at third reading on this bill. How can he be sure if he can't provide basic-level information to Nova Scotians?

Where are these models? Where are these models that the Premier purported to be running? We do know at the time that the Premier was dismissive of a carbon tax, saying it would simply put a greater financial burden on people who need - in this case, he was talking about people who need to drive in a largely rural province. So he acknowledged that the carbon tax would put a greater financial burden on Nova Scotians; he wasn't sure what cap and trade would do, but was running models.

So here we are today. What is the end result of all this analysis, all of these models, if this government, when it's introducing legislation to this House that will bind Nova Scotians, can't tell us what the impact is? Do I deduce from that that it can tell us but doesn't want to tell us? Or do I deduce from that that after two years of a working group - after two years of models being run, after two years of analysis in the Premier making his determination that he was sure what would work for Nova Scotia and what wouldn't - he knows the results, but he won't share it?

That's the question that I'm left with. We have a bill with no regulations and allegedly a lot of research done. Perhaps even a bit of soul-searching. We know the Premier is famous for soul-searching on issues that trouble him. Maybe he did a bit of soul-searching on this issue as well.

We do know that it's being pitched as a unique plan for this province. The Premier made it clear that Nova Scotians had reached their target, had done the hard work - we've heard about that numerous times in this House, that they've reached some admirable targets. He was always clear that he was working on a unique plan with the federal government.

I believe the unique plan must have been a bait and switch of talking points. Let's tell them all we've done something, but maybe let's really not do something.

If you don't know, how can you say it won't cost Nova Scotians anything? People know that (Interruption) Oh, that hasn't been said, I heard from one of the members opposite. If it hasn't been said that it won't cost Nova Scotians anything, then maybe we'll hear at the close of third reading what it will cost because I do believe, I do believe that it is known what the cost will be.

From the analysis, from the soul-searching, from the working group, the cost would certainly be known and I would dearly love to know it, as would my colleagues and as would Nova Scotians because you can't say on the one hand that it will cost nothing but we're going to have all these wonderful benefits. The world doesn't work like that outside of this Chamber and it's easy to say that standing in here. But we will see where this goes in the fullness of time and that's the shame of it because we should be given some expectation as we stand here today to vote on a piece of legislation, we should be given some expectation of the impacts that it will have on Nova Scotians, on industry, but we don't know that today.

We're left to say we'll trust the government to come up with some regulations that will have wonderful effects without any impact. I find that a little hard, just a little bit hard to swallow, Mr. Speaker, when I think about the comments that the Premier has made.

So, we'll be here making our assessment as to whether this really does anything and what the cost may be and the national government will make their assessments of

whether it meets their requirements and I guess probably it does. They probably want to put a tick in the box and they'll probably say that the Province of Nova Scotia has met the Prime Minister's mandate and they've passed this - but, without the details, I'm left to assume that the devil is somewhere.

So, with those few words, I would take my seat. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to speak to Bill No. 15. I won't speak for a long time.

I think, as a number of people have, a number of members have already commented, really, we don't know a lot about what this bill will mean. I went through and I know we're not allowed props in the House but I highlighted all the times that regulations appeared in the bill and it is many, many times in many different sentences that clearly are the guts of the bill, the guts of the bill, the meaning of this bill will be determined in the regulations who can participate, how they can sell, how credits will be issued - virtually everything will be created by the regulations and/or determined by the minister.

So, as a relatively new member of this House, I guess I'm left feeling a little bit frustrated that we're not trusting this House and its members to truly shape how Nova Scotia is responding to the greatest challenge of our time. I think in this case we're also frankly really counting on the leadership of the federal government - and isn't that odd? We pat ourselves on the back in this House so much - to some extent, justifiably - on all sides for leadership, the work that Nova Scotia has already done and, now, we're saying, okay, and, now, whatever else we're going to do it's going to be at the behest of the federal government to meet what is required of us and as determined in the regulations instead of this House really grappling with this situation before us and taking action, and I find that disappointing. As the urgency of climate change increases, it seems that the political courage in this House has waned.

I recommend that all members listen to the Springtide podcast, Off Script, the interview with Mark Parent about how the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act actually came to be enacted. I found it quite fascinating, particularly given how often that Act is referenced and how much, again, all Parties take some credit for that moment 10 years ago when this House was so forward-looking.

It made me realize what we all must do, I think, as we try to show leadership for Nova Scotians outside this House, who want us to show leadership. We must be ready for the moment to present itself when there's an opening and there's some space to move forward. It strikes me that in this House right now, we're not at that moment, between an Opposition which sees any action, so far as I can tell, on climate change as a tax grab and, frankly, a government where this does not appear to be a priority.

I wish the Minister of Environment well in sneaking some stuff into the regulations. Maybe that's the best that we can hope for right now.

The NDP's proposed amendments would have strengthened this bill. They would have helped to put money in the Green Fund, both to foster innovation and increased adaptation to climate change and also to help to direct much of those funds to low-income and moderate-income Nova Scotians. That is what we must be doing as we address climate change. There is no option but to grapple with the reality that we are in.

One significant part of that reality is that some of us are far more able to adapt than others. Frankly, I would welcome financial incentives to encourage some of my fellow members who drive from the far reaches of Nova Scotia to maybe not drive such big trucks all by themselves on the 100-Series Highways. Maybe they would get a Lexus if there was a financial incentive in the form of a carbon tax - or get a hybrid or something. I recognize that not everybody can ride their bicycle in from the North End as I sometimes do.

Almost nobody embraces change. I think everyone who has been in government has grappled with that. Yet leadership is about helping change to happen in a positive direction.

[4:15 p.m.]

One of my big concerns about this approach in this bill is that I fear that the government is granting a golden egg, or perhaps even a goose that will lay one into the future on a regular basis, to big emitters. Insofar as I understand the bill, we are granting the initial allocations of carbon for free to the big emitters. Why? They are exacting a cost from us all in terms of what they are doing to our environment. I would say in general that they recognize that the way of the future is to innovate and to reduce. That is just increasing their business models. Yet there's going to be this public subsidy, effectively, for them.

It reminds me of growing up in Newfoundland. There was this whole cohort of business owners who were purported to be great entrepreneurs and forward-thinkers, just really successful, wealthy folks. In my town in particular, some of them moved in the same circles as my father, who had turned down an opportunity to get an early cable licence. Those cable licences were allocated either at very low cost or for free because nobody knew that a cable licence was going to be worth anything. People couldn't imagine what that would look like in the future.

So by the time I was 15 years old and it was 20 years on, the folks who were smart enough or had the right funds to get in on that cable licence deal, were driving the big cars and were kind of the big shots around town. I just wonder if the folks who are going to be getting this allocation - are they going to be patting themselves on the back for no particular service to our community or to our province's economy?

To respond a little bit to some of the concerns raised by the member for Queens-Shelburne, I really do hear those concerns and I have some of the concerns, too, about seniors who are struggling with heating costs. How unfortunate that we are not unifying our voices to ask for real revenue generation with this bill, to put money into a green fund to address the needs of low-income Nova Scotians and innovate and pay for younger Nova Scotians to do that work. That's part of my response to that. But then my other response is that things have changed in certain ways in our economy, in our society, and they will have to change again as we again adjust to this reality that is bigger than us and from which there is no fleeing, but there is adapting.

I think about an opportunity I had to travel in Ireland when I had just graduated from university. I was in my very early 20s and I went to stay with a family on a farm, whom my father had stayed with some 20 years earlier. At the end of the meal - okay, so there was a fire in a stove in the kitchen, and the fire in the stove in the kitchen heated some heaters up in the bedrooms. I wanted to retreat to the bedroom where I was staying, to write in my journal or something, and they were like no, no, no, we don't turn those on until after we dampen the fire in the kitchen and then we turn on the fire in the living room. Basically, everybody always had to be in one room because there was only ever one room at a time that was warm. Yet there was no sense of deprivation. There was a great sense of community, a great sense of hearth, a great sense of continuity.

I expect that that house hadn't changed very much in the 20 years between when my father had spent time there and when I did. It's now again about 20 years later and I wonder if, like many Canadian households, that house has been expanded several times over, because we know that in general Canadians are living in much larger homes than they were, certainly. The house that I live in with my partner and my two kids is maybe about the same square footage as the house where my grandparents raised nine.

We know that in general Canadian houses have increased, Canadian household sizes have gone down, and that change has happened over a couple of decades. I think we all know from the many conversations that we have in this House, that that doesn't necessarily in and of itself mean that we are better off, but it has in general meant that we are living a more carbon-intensive lifestyle. Again, that will have to change and I find it disappointing when the conversation in this House does not encourage the forward-looking view of how can that change be positive? What are the good things we can look towards?

I think certainly one of the things that has changed over the past number of decades across Canada, and certainly Nova Scotia is no exception, is the increase in inequality. That is something that this bill, if it were fortified with revenue generation through meaningful sales of carbon allocations, could be addressing by investing money in the green fund - again, harkening back to the NDP-proposed amendments, investing or spending much of that green fund on lower-income Nova Scotians to help them adjust and adapt. Instead it's not clear to me where any funds for the green fund will come or how it will become a significant player.

We know change is hard, at least when you contemplate it before you're into it; maybe change is hard to sell. Maybe that's what it actually is. But change has meant jobs in Nova Scotia. We have some 1,300 people working in efficiency in the province, many more people working in a range of different companies working on innovation, working on renewable energy, and even doing other things that you can see as being tied to some kind of low-carbon future.

In my own district, I just attended the opening of the Halifax Tool Library. The tool library opened a couple of years ago, but it just moved to Veith House, where I used to be the executive director. Veith House has been around - well, that particular building was built to replace an orphanage which was destroyed in the Halifax Explosion. As executive director, one of the things that completely overwhelmed me was going down to that basement and seeing how full it was of stuff.

Now it's been magically transformed into the Halifax Tool Library, which takes donated tools and concentrates them in a community workshop so that anybody can pay a very small fee and have access to those tools, as well as gatherings and workshop space. Instead of having to have the bigger house with the wired garage or the wired workshop, you can come together with people and have access to something without owning it and pursue that activity with other people so that your actual well-being increases.

I think of that as a sign of how things may be, where change might be hard to sell but when you're in it, you're like, "Oh, this isn't so bad, I'm changing with other people. I'm getting to know other people."

The same as another way that some folks in Halifax Needham make a living - I know it's a modest one - by being involved with the Halifax Music Co-op, where, again, a whole bunch of people are coming together and making sure that people can learn music really affordably and doing wonderful shows together. You have the Big Sing, which is a gathering where every two weeks people come together and sing a song. The next time up it's going to be "Bobcaygeon," in tribute to Gord Downie.

All of these things are low-carbon fun, and they are initiatives that weren't around 10 or 15 years ago, but I tell you, a lot of young, often relatively modestly-employed residents of Halifax Needham are seeing the future. They're finding ways to make living that change relatively pleasant. I wish this House would show leadership again on that front. I also wish the government would seek out ways, with a whole-government approach, to really figure out how it has to change. There are so many different ways.

I'll go back to the loss, effectively of Thrive!, which has now been relegated - no offence to the minister - to Communities, Culture and Heritage. It's now considered a sport program, whereas at one point it was looking at how the provincial government sites buildings and does built infrastructure to encourage activity and active transportation, to

encourage greater health, and to encourage active transportation, to encourage greater health, and to encourage a low-carbon transition.

The siting of the outpatient clinic in Bayers Lake flies straight in the face of that strategy. I know because I heard rumblings out of the bureaucracy. Young public servants - young as in my age, recognizing I'm no longer young - public servants of my generation were just fuming that so much work went into doing the analysis of what is required from the government to demonstrate change, and then it was like all that advice was just frittered away and an opportunity lost.

Public buildings are sited equidistant to two different towns because you don't want to pick one or the other, and therefore folks from both communities need to drive. School sitings in Nova Scotia are a classic example of that. Basically, we have beggared two towns because there's a lack of political courage and, yes, maybe a lack of resources. But for the long-term future, wouldn't it be better to figure out how to place smaller schools in town so that people can walk to them, and they can provide all the different services that a hub school can?

There's all kinds of ways that we could be transitioning, that we could be showing and demonstrating that change is not awful - it's just sometimes hard to imagine - and if we do it together, it doesn't have to be unpleasant. I don't see evidence of that in here. I guess I will wait, like many other people, to see the regulations.

I look forward to the day in the House when I see us all come together, as EGSPA magically made it happen 10 years ago, to show some real leadership again.

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

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: In the news today, it is being reported that the record temperatures for October in Nova Scotia are going to exceed the previous records by over 10 degrees. In fact, if you look at the 15-year average for temperatures for October, we're 4.5 degrees above the average. The last time on this day that the temperature reached the temperature that we have now was in 1963. Do you know who was President then? John F. Kennedy was President then - for about another month, unfortunately.

My point, Mr. Speaker, is that climate change is real. It is affecting our country, our province, and our part of the world. We have seen record flooding in American cities. We have seen more Category 5 hurricanes in one year than ever before in recorded history. They're talking about the World Series opening to 100-degree temperatures in the end of October.

Climate change is one of the biggest issues of our time. We all have to do our part. We have to do something that's meaningful. In the face of all of that real, provable, scientific evidence of climate change, imagine that Nova Scotia, which used to be a leader,

now has a minister and a government that brings forward an environment bill - and they actually label it an environmental bill - that doesn't have any environmental targets.

It doesn't set a target for greenhouse gas emission reduction. It doesn't set a target for sulphur dioxide reduction or nitrous oxide. It doesn't talk about mercury. It doesn't talk about protecting more of our forests or our bays or our harbours. It doesn't set a single new environmental goal. How can you call a bill an environment bill in the face of such overwhelming evidence of the challenge in our environment and not actually have any new environmental targets in the bill?

[4:30 p.m.]

This is an empty bill. It's not just us in Opposition who are saying that. There have been numerous media reports now, including in the *Chronicle Herald*, pointing out that the bill is a shell, that it provides no new information on where we're going in regard to environmental improvements, other than to empower the government through regulation to do something in the future. Well, Mr. Speaker, people do want the government to do something for the environment for the future, but they want to know what it is. This is one of those enabling bills that basically just empowers the government to do whatever it wants, which might be everything and it might be nothing, which makes it very laughable that in introducing the bill the minister said he wants to provide certainty to Nova Scotians about where we're going.

Well, all that the government has accomplished is to create more uncertainty. How can you tell Nova Scotia industry, Nova Scotia manufacturers, Nova Scotia job creators that you want to give them certainty, and then bring in a bill that actually sets zero targets? How can you provide certainty to Nova Scotia families about the cost of heating their homes, the cost of driving to work, what it will mean to the price of food among other things if the bill actually has no environmental targets? And for all those Nova Scotians who are proud of the progress that we've made, who want this province to keep going and do more, how can you tell them you're providing them with certainty when there is no target, not a single one on environmental improvements in this bill?

This is not an environment bill. It is a sham and it's doubly galling when it comes from this provincial Legislature, this particular one which used to be a leader in this area. So, shame on the government, shame on the government for wanting to look like they're doing something instead of actually doing something. Just like their counterparts in Ottawa, they want to look good, maybe take some selfies with an environmentalist, but they don't actually want to do anything for the environment.

Well, I can assure you I'm not just here to look good. We actually want to make sure - something I'm sure we'd could all agree on, you know I even got you laughing at that one and that's not easy, Mr. Speaker - we actually want to see something happen. We want to see this province take up its obligations and continue down the road that it's been



going down, but that is not going to happen if we have a bill that doesn't have a single environmental target in it.

What it does have though is a fixed price for carbon, the price that has been imposed by the national Liberal Government, the very price that a previous Minister of Environment walked out of a national meeting on because it was unacceptable to this government, unacceptable before the election, brought into law after the election, the exact same price, \$10 a ton on greenhouse gas emissions in year one, rising to \$50 in year five.

When you bring a bill to this House that does nothing but put a new and higher price on the everyday items of life, it is not an environment bill. It is a tax bill - and this is a tax bill, pure and simple. The only certainty that the government is providing to the people of Nova Scotia is that they have to pay that much more.

I don't know why they didn't just call it what it is - a bill to charge Nova Scotians more so the Liberals can pat themselves on the back and say that they did something. That would be the most accurate title for this bill - the "We Just Want to Look Good, You Pay-More" bill. That would be a good title, that would be a very clear, honest title for this bill because that's all it does; that's all it does.

And you know what? It's not like Nova Scotians are not paying already for the everyday things of life. The government acts like this is some new thing that's going to happen, that they're going to put a price on driving to work, they're going to put a price on heating your home. They ignore the fact that there's already a 15.5 cents a litre tax on gasoline at the provincial level, plus 10 cents a litre federal tax on gasoline at the federal level, that is 25.5 cents. When gasoline is a buck, 25.5 cents is federal and provincial excise tax. But wait there is more, there is also a 15 per cent HST on top of the entire price of gas, plus the federal and provincial excise tax. That is a tax on top of a tax.

No wonder that people are already concluding that for the Liberals, when it comes to the environment, all they see is a chance to charge people more for the basics like heating their home and driving to work.

They were not satisfied with a 25.5 cent tax plus 15 per cent HST. They want to make sure that you pay even more. Whether it does something for the environment or not is quite beside the point. They just want to make sure that you pay more. The member for Queens-Shelburne has brought and tabled in this House the evidence, the facts, from independent studies from Nova Scotian universities that tell us how much more.

I know that she has laid this before the House; 7 cents more on a litre of gasoline. Of course, I assume the HST will be tacked on by the Liberals on top of that, and another 8.85 cents a litre on home heating fuel. Thankfully the HST does not apply to our home heating bills or they would be tacking another 15 per cent on top of that as well.

Those are the essentials of living in a northern climate. They are the essentials of driving to work and heating your home. Only in Liberal fantasyland do they imagine that maybe people will cut back on their home heating fuel and they will cut back on driving and somehow, maybe, the environment will get better.

That is basically what they are telling us. The certainty is you pay more. The question is whether the environment gets better or not. They are perfectly fine with that. Well we are not perfectly fine with that. We want the certainty to be the environment gets better. We want the certainty to be how much will green house gas emissions go down, how much will sulphur dioxide and nitrous oxide and mercury content go down. We want to know those things, because they are important. And we want to know if they have the actual courage to make polluters pay, to charge them when they abuse our environment. But the fact is, they don't. Because they just want to feel good about this. They don't want to actually do something positive. Can you imagine that?

By the way, it is not lost on the people of Nova Scotia every time they fill up their car with gasoline, every time they drive to work or to the grocery store or to visit their kids, that this government and its Leader, the Premier, campaigned against that tax on tax on gasoline, said it's wrong to charge the HST on top of another tax, said they would fix that if they got into office.

You know what, Mr. Speaker, just like many promises that this particular Liberal caucus has made, and their Leader, they get in and they say, oh well, it's more complicated than we thought. Promising a doctor for every Nova Scotian. Four years later we hear the Minister of Health and Wellness say, well actually that takes longer than we thought.

Promising Nova Scotians that they would fix the tax on tax on gasoline. Then they say, you know what, that's more complicated than we thought. Well here is an idea, do not make a promise until you know you can keep it. That is what should be happening in all of these cases including this one, including the tax on tax.

It might have been easier to swallow this bill if the government actually fixed the tax on tax on gasoline, like they promised they would, at the same time as they bring in new measures to charge more for gasoline. But they have not done that, they have not done that. So on top of all those taxes that we already pay, they are going to add another 7 cents plus 15 per cent HST to the price of gasoline, in order to meet the one target they set in this bill, which is the price of carbon.

Now we have this bill, we asked repeatedly in this House, in debate, in Question Period, in committee - how much will emissions go down? The answer is, we don't know. We asked, how much will emissions credits cost Nova Scotia businesses that have to purchase them? The answer is, we don't know. We asked, would those emission credits be provided for free or not? The answer is, we don't know.

It's crazy that this is a bill, on third reading, with such basic questions unanswered. The government provides a list of emitters. After telling Nova Scotians they want to protect their pocketbooks, they put home heating fuel on the list, they put natural gas on the list, and the big question is, did they, or did they not, put Nova Scotia Power and electricity on the list? And so, we asked, does Nova Scotia Power count? And the answer is, we don't know. We asked, are they going to be given emission credits for free? The answer, we don't know. We asked if some day those emission credits are actually going to cost the power company money. They answered, we don't know. We asked, if it does cost the power company money, will they be allowed to pass that cost on to the ratepayers? They answered, we don't know.

Again, we should call this the "We Don't Know" bill; that's what we should be calling this bill. And yet, in introducing the bill, the Minister of the Environment says we want to provide certainty to the people of Nova Scotia what we're doing. And we asked, what certainty are you providing? And the answer is, we don't know. Mr. Speaker, what kind of bill is that?

Here's what we do know - when Nova Scotians come together and they set real targets on emission reductions, and real targets for our atmospheric emissions overall, real targets to protect our pristine bays and harbours, real targets in our forests, that they can get the job done without charging people more in taxes. We know that; we know it because we have 10 years' experience. Ten years ago, this year, this Legislature was the first one in North America to pass an Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act, and it set real targets on all these important things that will make our environment better - and every Party voted for it.

Slowly but surely, and sometimes painfully, our emissions went down; in fact, they went down to the point that we've already met the targets that the national government has set for our country. We are already there. But that's not good enough for the Trudeau Government that insists that we have to pay more - not do more, but pay more. So, when I hear the Premier say well, we are very concerned, and we've negotiated, that we'll get recognized for the efforts that we've already made, that is not right.

Because if that were true, this bill would not be before this House. If that were true, we would be recognized as having had accomplished what has been asked of us already, and not be asked anymore. Does that mean we shouldn't do more? No, of course we can always do more. But, we did not get recognized for what was already done, or this bill and the pricing that's in it would not be before this House. That's the problem.

I want to point out that the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act had two parts - the environmental goals, which we have examined I think in this House quite a lot in the last few weeks, and the part that the government forgets, the sustainable prosperity part. Because that original bill actually set economic goals as well - great, important economic goals to match up with the environmental goals, like, that the economy

of Nova Scotia will grow at the national average or better. That is a goal that that bill originally put into law.

So, every environmental target that was set, was set consistently with our economic goals of growing the economy at the national average or better. That's what Nova Scotians want to see. How can we match up our economic ambitions with our environmental ambitions and put them in law and then go and get them done?

[4:45 p.m.]

Here we have this bill, which not only doesn't have any environmental goals - an environmental bill without any environmental goals - but is silent on the economy as well. So we ask, has the government done an economic analysis on the impact of this bill on jobs? The answer is no. Not even "we don't know." It was just no.

We asked, can the government tell us what they think the impact will be on jobs? The answer is "no, we can't." We asked, did the government consider the impact on jobs in this province? The answer is no.

When you live in a province that this year has a growth rate of 0.9 per cent - well below the national average - where youth unemployment continues to be unacceptably high, and where the cost of living is among the most expensive in the country, that is not okay.

The government had a great example to go by - a successful example of how to bring emissions down, how to clean up the environment and set real job targets at the same time. They just blew past any new job targets - that's not even thought of - and then they bring in a bill without any emission targets. What's left? I guess the photo-op is left, and that's it on, arguably, two of the biggest issues of our time: how to create jobs and grow our economy, and how to clean up the environment and do our bit for global emissions.

I realize I am being somewhat critical of the government's bill in this case, but it's not like we aren't coming forward with solutions of our own. I am forever proud of the Environment Critic for the Progressive Conservative Party, the member for Queens-Shelburne, for her work in this area. (Applause) She gave a great speech earlier, and she gave a great speech in second reading on this bill, and her critique was spot on.

She has also brought forward new Progressive Conservative environmental legislation with teeth that actually does make the environment better. She has introduced to this House the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act of 2017 as the best way to actually meet our commitments to the global environment in the global community without charging people more. It is the natural next step on Nova Scotia's path to cleaning up its environment and doing its part. It is the perfect way to continue on this journey that we're all on together.

She actually does something that even the Trudeau Government in Ottawa has not done, which is to make the signature of the Prime Minister of Canada on an international agreement meaningful and not just fluff. I would prefer that the member for Queens-Shelburne be the Prime Minister of Canada than the one we have now, for that reason alone. (Applause)

We want our country's signature to mean something on international agreements. We want the signature of Canada on the Paris Accord to mean something, so that when the Prime Minister signs the Paris Accord, we take that seriously. I hope he had a little vacation at his Finance Minister's French villa after he signed that agreement, because it would have been worth the time to think through, "Now, how do I actually make this happen? How do we actually make that signature meaningful?"

Well, the member for Queens-Shelburne has a bill before this House that basically takes the Paris Accord commitments and breaks them down into Nova Scotia's share and updates the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act, now 10 years old, to set those new targets and put them in law here in the Province of Nova Scotia and get our emissions down so that we're doing our part for global warming and for climate change and for the environment, not only here at home but to be a leader in the world at doing that. That is what we should be passing here today.

We are against this bill. We are against an empty shell of a bill that does nothing for the environment, has no environmental targets. The minister couldn't answer basic questions about what it will mean in emissions, what it will mean for jobs. What we are for and will continue to push for, is for Nova Scotia to actually go down the road of meeting international and national commitments on the most successful route, by directly regulating with real caps, with real targets that are laid before this House and shown to Nova Scotians in the open light of day. In other words, being open and truthful with the people of Nova Scotia in a polite way, a professional and polite way, that they know what they're getting, but that is not what's happening today.

This government will be judged by what it does here today in the next few minutes but also they'll be judged by what they do with this bill once they've given themselves the power to do it all behind closed doors. I'll tell you this, I do not have a lot of hope that they're actually going to do a thing to bring down emissions once they pass this bill. Their hope is that Nova Scotians will move on and not notice that they passed an environmental bill that doesn't have a single environmental target in it and that when the lights go off and when the House is done, they'll be able to pat themselves on the back and the environment will be in the same state.

That is a real shame because we do want to see real environmental improvements by somebody who knows what they're doing. We'd like to see that, it's not going to happen today, that's the shame. That's why we're opposed to this bill and that's why we're going

to continue to push for actual, real environmental targets that are meaningful and we'll get the job done for Nova Scotians and for all of Canada. Thank you.

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

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for interrupting this important debate but I would like to bring the members' attention to the east gallery where we have two visitors. These two young people inspire me, they challenge me and they give me hope that our youth are definitely engaged in this political process and that our future is very bright with individuals like them at the helm. Rayanne Jewel, my outreach constituency assistant, and Grace Evans who was my summer student this year. I'd like to ask them to stand and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

The honourable Minister of Environment.

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to make a few comments on some of the questions and statements from the members opposite.

First of all, the patting each other on the back, which is only happening on the other side of the House - it's not because of the PC Party, it's not because of the NDP, it's not because of the Liberal Party where we are today. It's because of the hard work of Nova Scotians. They've invested significantly in our electricity sector, we know that's roughly 44 per cent of the entire emissions in the province. It's the No. 1 source. What the cap-and-trade legislation allows us to do is incorporate other sectors that have fossil fuels, which is what is taking place throughout the country and all over the world.

Some of the members fail to recognize that to date over 80 per cent of Canadians live under some type of carbon pricing plan and what we've signed onto is the PanCanadian Framework. I think the members probably know by now that the principles that are in that PanCanadian Framework, that are enshrined in that framework, come directly from the Paris agreement. I find it quite ironic that they would even mention the Paris agreement when they're not prepared to participate in Canada's collective action internationally as we reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

I hear about this regulatory approach that we want to continue to look at these hard caps and it was mentioned that we should look at caps for a number of different types of emissions when the reality is, we do have those caps for sulphur, for nitrous oxide, for mercury. We have those caps in place today. What this legislation does is put in place a cap for carbon, and that cap moves down and that is commensurate with the carbon pricing model that is put in place which starts again at the figures that the members opposite gave.

What is also interesting is that I'm glad they brought the numbers again to the House which are looked at as the B.C. carbon tax which, again, is ironic because they are actually endorsing a carbon tax. At least tacitly they are endorsing a carbon tax because the reality is that in 2018 the backstop the federal government has in place will put a price on carbon. It's incumbent on a government - any government in Nova Scotia, no matter what Party it is - to look at ways that we can negotiate with our federal partners. We're happy that they recognized the early work that Nova Scotians have done - not the PC Party, not the NDP Party - with policy formation. It's the cost of electricity that in my view has escalated beyond what it should have in that short amount of time.

Again, I've mentioned in second reading that under the NDP Government the power rates rose by 30 per cent, and under the PC Government prior to that they rose by 40 per cent. This is the first time I heard a plan from the PC Party in terms of how to look at greenhouse gas reduction. But if their plan is the regulatory approach, that is seen all over the world as being a higher-cost approach.

If we look at the comparison in terms of the emission-trading systems, this is why over 30 countries in the European Union have joined in an emission-trading system because it actually finds the lowest cost reductions in that system. This is why our biggest economies in the country and the biggest economy in the United States has looked at a trading system. We do expect to have greenhouse gas reductions so the system - by way of the free market, it is half of regulatory approach, half of free market approach - looks at which entities can find those low-cost reductions.

Another comparison closer by is the northeastern States. They have their own emission trading system in the electricity sector. Nine states, Mr. Speaker - they've reduced their emissions by 40 per cent with power rate reductions, so there is another way. It's more cost-effective and it will protect the pocketbooks of Nova Scotians.

I don't take that lightly in terms of what we want to achieve. There are going to be implications and we've clearly laid out which participants are going to be engaged in the start of the program. It's our fuel suppliers, natural gas, and some of our largest emitters. I believe that that pollution cost should be looked at and we should enable a transition period by way of the allowances that will begin with the program.

Other systems have started that way and we have the NDP saying that that is a subsidy, we're being too friendly to business - and we have the PC Party saying we're being too hard on business. Somewhere in between those two arguments I believe is in the public interest of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I know the members want to know exactly where the cap is. I believe it's irresponsible for us to speculate and conjecture where exactly that cap is. As the members know, we don't have the reporting. The first step - the most important part of our

regulations as we implement the program - is actually getting the precise information from those emitters, the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions.

Again, this is a transparent piece of legislation. I actually think the strength in the legislation is the flexibility. The members opposite believe that's a weakness, but given that we are in a pan-Canadian framework where other provinces haven't committed to what their plan will be, given that the markets are vulnerable to changes quickly, I believe that having the nimbleness in the legislation will allow us, if we need to, to look at other jurisdictions.

There are examples out there where there is trading amongst other jurisdictions. It was our federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change who asked for that Article 6 to be put into the Paris agreement to allow that. So we'll keep all options on the table; I think that's a prudent approach.

We are keeping the option open for auctioning, if auctioning is the appropriate way, but we always have to look at the balance of considerations - what does that mean? What does that mean for Nova Scotia businesses?

So, we are going to be part of the collective effort that Canada is moving forward with. I'm proud to bring this bill forward, and I close debate on Bill No. 15.

[5:00 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 15, the Environment Act. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

[5:00 p.m. The House resolved into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft in the Chair.]

[5:14 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Mr. Chuck Porter in the Chair.]



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

THE CLERK: That the Committee of the Whole House on Bills has met and considered the following bill:

**Bill No. 39 - Financial Measures (2017) Act.**

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

[5:15 p.m.]

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: That concludes government business for today. We will meet again tomorrow, Wednesday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. After the daily routine and Question Period, we will debate Opposition business. Following the moment of interruption, we will call Government Business: Committee of the Whole House on Bills on Bill Nos. 16 and 27, Public Bills for Third Reading on Bill No. 39, and also Private and Local Bills on Bill Nos. 13, 18, 24, 36, and 41.

I now turn it over to the Official Opposition House Leader for his business tomorrow.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: After the daily routine and QP, we will be calling Bill Nos. 25, 22, and 59 should time permit.

I move that we do now rise to meet again tomorrow between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to rise to meet again tomorrow between the hours of 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.

We stand adjourned.

[The House rose at 5:16 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 451**

By: Hon. Leo Glavine (Communities, Culture and Heritage)

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

Whereas, throughout their history, the Girl Guides of Canada has helped generations of Canadian girls become confident, courageous, and resourceful leaders through volunteerism, adventures, challenges, and experiences; and

Whereas, this year, the Aylesford Guiding Unit composed of Sparks, Brownies, Guides, Pathfinders, and Rangers is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary having been first established in 1942; and

Whereas, for the past 75 years, the Aylesford Guides has continuously developed its programming to create leaders in contemporary issues including cyber-safety, environmental sustainability, and anti-bullying initiatives;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Aylesford Guiding Unit on the occasion of its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and express their best wishes to the Unit Leadership as they continue to develop, foster, and support youth leaders in our communities.

**RESOLUTION NO. 452**

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Labour and Advanced Education)

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

Whereas Dimitri Neonakis created Dream Wings, a charity that gives children who are in medical, mental, or emotional distress, a chance to fly in a variety of planes; and

Whereas Dimitri has made a small gesture a great opportunity for the children and families to take a moment and enjoy one's self; and

Whereas Dream Wings has become a popular social media destination to read and share in the children's experience;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly acknowledge Dimitri Neonakis as a pillar in the community and a change maker in the lives of many families.

**RESOLUTION NO. 453**

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Labour and Advanced Education)

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

Whereas Georgi Seip was and continues to be a staple among the residents of Joseph Howe Manor; and

Whereas Georgi regularly tended to the gardens at Joseph Howe Manor for over six years allowing them to flourish; and

Whereas Georgi Seip will continue to be known as the resident gardener at Joseph Howe Manor;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly acknowledge Georgi Seip for her service and dedication to the gardens at Joseph Howe Manor.

**RESOLUTION NO. 454**

By: Hon. Labi Kousoulis (Labour and Advanced Education)

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

Whereas the Friends of Sable Island Society advocate for the protection of our beloved national park and provincial treasure that is Sable Island; and

Whereas the Friends of Sable Island Society hosted the second annual Sable Island Conference from October 20 to October 21; and

Whereas the Sable Island Conference contributes to a better understanding of the island and allows for the teaching of its vast contributions to provincial and national history;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly acknowledge the Friends of Sable Island Society's long-standing, noteworthy contributions to Canada's 43<sup>rd</sup> national park.

**RESOLUTION NO. 455**

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Health and Wellness)

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

Whereas on June 26, 2017, Dr. Laurence T. Yang was one of 52 new Fellows inducted into the Canadian Academy of Engineering for his distinguished achievements and long service to the engineering profession; and

Whereas Dr. Yang has been identified as a leader in the area of parallel and distributed cloud computing, as well as embedded and ubiquitous systems and big data; and

Whereas Dr. Yang has been a Professor of Computer Science at St. Francis Xavier University since 1999 and has become a mentor for not only his students but his colleagues around the world;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Dr. Yang on being named a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Engineering.

**RESOLUTION NO. 456**

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Health and Wellness)

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

Whereas Catharine MacDonald is a teacher in Antigonish who was awarded the Nova Scotia French Second-Language Educator of the Year Award from Canadian Parents for French; and

Whereas Catharine is currently a Grade 6 French immersion teacher at St. Andrew Junior School, who has taught either core French or French immersion over the course of her 28-year career; and

Whereas this award recognizes Catharine's teaching excellence both in and out of the classroom as she teaches children to speak French as well as become active members in the community;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Catharine MacDonald on this special recognition and thank her for helping Nova Scotian students become bilingual throughout her long and successful career.

**RESOLUTION NO. 457**

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Health and Wellness)

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

Whereas every April, municipalities across the province of Nova Scotia nominate a member of their community as their Volunteer of the Year; and

Whereas this year the Town of Antigonish nominated David Miller and Aïda Arnold as co-recipients for their contributions to the art community in Antigonish; and

Whereas Dave and Aïda are the founding members of the successful and growing Antigonish Art Fair and have played a key role in the town's Beautification Committee;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate David Miller and Aïda Arnold on this special recognition.

**RESOLUTION NO. 458**

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Health and Wellness)

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

Whereas every April, municipalities across the province of Nova Scotia nominate a member of their community as their Volunteer of the Year; and

Whereas this year the Municipality of the County of Antigonish nominated Linda MacDougall-Penner for her outstanding contributions to the Port Hawkesbury-Antigonish Swim Team; and

Whereas Linda has played a critical role in the swim team's communication and organization, so this award is well deserved;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Linda MacDougall-Penner on this special recognition.

**RESOLUTION NO. 459**

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Health and Wellness)

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

Whereas the Highland Bike Shop was the recipient of the Emerging Business Award on October 18, 2017, at the annual Business Gala and Awards Night hosted by the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce; and

Whereas this award is designed to put the spotlight on a new profitable business showing excellence in new or innovative product or service, quality of merchandise/customer service, job creation, growth potential, market served, and community involvement; and

Whereas the Highland Bike Shop has seized the opportunity to be part of the healthy-living trend and has grown to not only do bicycles sales and repairs but to include skateboards, snowshoes, and cross-country skis;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Highland Bike Shop on winning the Emerging Business Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 460**

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Health and Wellness)

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

Whereas Alva Construction was the recipient of the Ian Spencer Excellence in Business Award on October 18, 2017, at the Annual Business Gala and Awards Night hosted by the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce; and

Whereas this award is named in memory of Ian Spencer and recognizes successful business practises, strong responsibility, and community service; and

Whereas Alva Construction has been in business for 85 years with over 100 employees in a very competitive and challenging industry, but places a focus on quality assurance and safety;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Alva Construction on winning the Ian Spencer Excellence in Business Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 461**

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Health and Wellness)

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

Whereas Matthieu Fraser was the recipient of the Young Entrepreneur Award on October 18, 2017, at the Annual Business Gala and Awards Night hosted by the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce; and

Whereas this award is designed to recognize youth who have excelled in the development and enhancement of the economic infrastructure and contributed to the propensity and well-being of Antigonish through entrepreneurship; and

Whereas Matthieu is an avid cyclist who biked across the country in 2010 and realized good bike shops were essential to such a journey so jumped on the opportunity to buy the Highland Bike Shop despite the risks that all young entrepreneurs take;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Matthieu for identifying a need in Antigonish and winning the Young Entrepreneur Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 462**

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Health and Wellness)

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

Whereas Carrie Lynn Neary was the recipient of the Outstanding Customer Service Award on October 18, 2017, at the Annual Business Gala and Awards Night hosted by the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce; and

Whereas this award is designed to turn the spotlight on an employee who has demonstrated outstanding customer service to their customers; and

Whereas Carrie is known to be the heart and soul of the NSLC store in Antigonish for her incredible ability to assist customers in selecting products, sharing her knowledge, training other staff, and remembering her clients' preferences;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Carrie Lynne Neary on winning the Outstanding Customer Service Award as it is well deserved.

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**RESOLUTION NO. 463**

By: Hon. Randy Delorey (Health and Wellness)

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

Whereas OceanLab IT (Dragon Veterinary) was the recipient of the Export Recognition Award on October 18, 2017, at the Annual Business Gala and Awards Night hosted by the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce; and

Whereas this award recognizes the success of a business that has taken on the challenge of expanding its markets outside of Nova Scotia and has entered new markets for exporting its goods or services; and

Whereas this cutting edge voice recognition software allows vets to transcribe case notes by voice instead of typing with a highly advanced vocabulary and has now reached beyond Nova Scotia, with clients in the U.K. and Australia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate OceanLab IT (Dragon Veterinary) on winning the Export Recognition Award.