



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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First Session

THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2018

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2018

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

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs.

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. INCE: In the gallery opposite I have a community leader, Jeremy Nichole-Williams, who is the leader of a project for beautifying Mulgrave Park in the North End. I'd like everybody to welcome Jeremy. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs.

RESOLUTION NO. 758

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

Whereas local artist and Halifax native Jeremy Nichole-Williams has beautified the City of Halifax by teaming up with local arts charity Youth Art Connection to paint murals on the walls of the community to increase culture, inspiration, and pride; and

Whereas Mr. Nichole-Williams started the project to give back to the community, to inspire children, and encourage people who might not otherwise visit low-income neighbourhoods; and

Whereas Mr. Nichole-Williams teamed up with several community groups to start a mural festival in 2016 to help promote murals in the community;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jeremy Nichole-Williams for promoting culture and for being a positive role model for the community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 759

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia Archives developed partnerships with Select Nova Scotia, Taste of Nova Scotia, and Nimbus Publishing to create a cookbook entitled *Nova Scotia Cookery, Then and Now: Modern Interpretations of Heritage Recipes* to celebrate the unique culinary traditions of our communities, our culture, and our heritage, featuring 80 new interpretations of traditional recipes by 28 Nova Scotian chefs from across the province; and

Whereas the cookbook provides delicious ways to encourage Nova Scotians to use quality, locally-sourced ingredients that keep our farming industry strong while supporting the security of our food supply; and

Whereas in the first three months of the cookbook's release, over 2,000 copies were sold across the globe, receiving favourable reviews from publications and amateur chefs from around the world;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Nova Scotia Archives and their partnerships on the development of the *Nova Scotia Cookery, Then and Now* cookbook, and for creating successful new approaches to discovering a taste of Nova Scotia's diverse culinary offerings.

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 Acadian Affairs.

RESOLUTION NO. 760

HON. LENA DIAB: Monsieur le Président, à une date ultérieure je demanderais l'adoption de la résolution suivante:

Attendu que les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie, un série de plus de 3,000 événements et activités à travers le Canada en préparation de la Journée internationale de la Francophonie, seront lancés aujourd'hui et célèbrent cette année leurs 20^{ème} anniversaire; et

Attendu que cette initiative soutien le dialogue et les liens entre les communautés acadiennes et francophones de la Nouvelle-Écosse et d'autres communautés francophones du Canada; et

Attendu que des milliers de personnes à travers le Canada y compris les communautés acadiennes et francophones de notre province participeront à l'événement de cette année pour garder la francophonie dynamique;

Par conséquent il est résolu que les députés de l'Assemblée législative se joignent à moi pour féliciter les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie à l'occasion de leur vingtième anniversaire et pour inviter tous les néo-écossais acadiens, francophones, et francophiles à participer aux événements de cette année pour célébrer la francophonie de notre province.

Monsieur le Président, je demande l'adoption de cette résolution sans préavis et sans débat.

En anglais.

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

Whereas les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie, a series of the more than 3,000 events and activities across Canada leading up to International Francophonie Day, will be launched today and is celebrating its 20th Anniversary this year; and

Whereas this initiative supports the dialogue and connection between the Acadian and francophone communities of Nova Scotia and other francophone communities across Canada; and

Whereas thousands of people across Canada, including our province's Acadian and francophone communities, will participate in this year's event to keep the francophonie vibrant and dynamic;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie on their 20th Anniversary and in inviting all Nova Scotians, Acadians, francophones, and francophonie to participate in this year's events to celebrate our province's francophonie.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 72 - Entitled an Act to Reform the Administration of the Public Education System. (Hon. Zach Churchill)

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

The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction first?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. MARTIN: I would like to draw your attention to the west gallery and introduce members of Unifor/MWF Local 1, Koren Beaman, Vicki Berg, Jennifer Dartt, Sylvia Brown, Liz Cummings, and Amy MacLeod. Welcome to the people's house. (Applause)

Bill No. 73 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 246 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Labour Standards Code. (Ms. Tammy Martin)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

CLARKE, KALEB: DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH - INSPIRATION

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay homage to Kaleb Clarke who is an inspiration to us all and especially those youth who have diabetes. Kaleb is among the young people who were celebrated in November which is dedicated to Diabetes Awareness Month. Kaleb, who is 13, was diagnosed with diabetes two years ago. However, he does not let this affect his extremely active lifestyle. Whether playing hockey or baseball, he has several strategies to continue his involvement with his sports.

I extend my appreciation and congratulations to Kaleb for being recognized for his hard work and as an inspiration for those young people who do not allow diabetes to curb their involvement in an active lifestyle.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

HANSEN, SUZY: HRSB - APPRECIATION

MS. LISA ROBERTS: I want to voice my admiration and appreciation of Halifax Regional School Board member Suzy Hansen.

Suzy was elected in October 2016, bringing a unique and credible perspective to the board table as an African Nova Scotian, a mother of six children in our school system, as a lifelong resident of Mulgrave Park, and as a long-time community volunteer and, for the past several years, employee of Phoenix Youth. She is available to parents. She has organized outreach events, and she has been an advocate where and when needed.

Suzy spoke outside this House on Tuesday and made many good points, for example that there are recommendations in the Glaze report that would help students, but they are not the ones being fast-tracked. Of this government's emphasis, she said, "It's challenging enough for African Nova Scotians to run for politics, the obliteration of an entire level of electoral representation without consultation with the communities they serve demonstrates the government no longer wants their voices included in discussions about them."

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

DIGBY CARE 25 - DIGBY 4-H CLUB: DONATION - RECOGNIZE

MR. GORDON WILSON: I rise today to thank the Digby Care 25 for continuing to contribute to worthwhile causes in our community and to congratulate the Digby 4-H Club for being the latest beneficiary of the Digby Care 25's generosity.

The Digby Care 25's donation of \$2,790 will help the 4-H Club reach their goals to build a new 4-H barn at the Digby County exhibition grounds. The barn project was chosen by the Digby Care 25 over two other worthy proposals. The fact that the 4-H group was chosen indicates that the 4-H continues to encourage our youth to be leaders in the community.

I want to recognize these youth for having big dreams and the Digby Care 25 for helping them and others to achieve their dreams.

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

CROMWELL, ELIZABETH: ORDER OF CANADA AWARD - RECOGNIZE

MS. KIM MASLAND: I rise today to recognize a constituent from Shelburne County who was among 86 new members to receive Canada's highest civilian honour, acknowledging outstanding achievement, dedication to the community, and service to the nation, the Order of Canada.

As one of the founders of the Black Loyalist Heritage Society, Elizabeth Cromwell has also received the Canada 125 Medal, the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, and honorary degrees from Mount Saint Vincent University and Dalhousie University's Schulich School of Law. The crowning glory of her achievements is the establishment of Birchtown's Black Loyalist Heritage Centre, overcoming 25 years of obstacles in the making.

Elizabeth Cromwell will be receiving this well-deserved distinction for her contributions to black heritage preservation and education in Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE - PAID LEAVE: NECESSITY - ATTENTION

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: On this first day of March, the month in which we celebrate International Women's Day, I rise to bring attention to intimate partner violence and the need for paid leave for victims who suffer it. In Nova Scotia, one woman in 12 faces violence from an intimate partner, and in 2014, there were 2,404 victims of police-reported intimate partner violence.

A constituent of mine suffered emotional and some physical abuse by her partner for several years. She was repeatedly told she was not good at anything she did, that she looked bad, and that she wouldn't be able to survive without him in her life. As the abuse progressed and her children were exposed to it, Ms. Beaman was pushed to a breaking point.

On the day she left her partner, she walked out of her house with the clothes on her back and nothing else. She had no money, no place to live, and no clothes. In this state, she had to go to work and pretend like nothing was wrong. Had she had access to paid leave from her work, leaving her abusive situation would have been easier to do and sooner. In the ensuing days, she had doctor's appointments, court appointments, and child care scrambles. Missing work to do all of this put her job at risk and caused her to lose significant income.

I urge everyone in this House to consider the impact of intimate partner violence and to understand that paid leave is essential to their recovery and well-being.

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

WALLACE, ANASTASIA - IN MEMORIAM

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour and reflect on the life of Anastasia Wallace, a beloved teacher from Monastery, Nova Scotia. She passed away January 25th, at the age of 91.

Anastasia, or Ann, as she was known popularly locally, dedicated her whole professional life to the community of Monastery. She taught in Antigonish at Avonside, East Tracadie, Grosvenor, and then retired as Vice Principal of Tracadie Consolidated in 1983, after 37 years of teaching. She was also a skilled writer, and her keen interest in local history resulted in the publication of books about local communities, including Monastery, Erinville, and Merland. Her volunteer work with St. Peter's Parish, the Catholic Women's League, Tracadie Seniors Club, and Antigonish Palliative Care is more reason that she is held in such high regard.

Mr. Speaker, although she was the last surviving member of her immediate family, her legacy will be remembered by the many people whose lives she touched with her teaching, writing, and acts of kindness.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: I'd like to introduce some young folks that we have here in the gallery, they're the next generation of politicians. I would ask them to stand, Daniel MacKenzie, Riley Hill-Pettipas, Michelle Coffin, Brett Martin, and Tristian Shaw. (Applause)

I'd also like to introduce the longest-serving member of the Town of Amherst Council, Mr. Terry Rhindress. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

AMHERST REG. SENIOR CLASS: FLORIDA STUDENTS - COMPASSION

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Senior Class at the Amherst Regional High School. These young people are sending a signed Nova Scotia flag to the students in the Florida tragedy. Since the students cannot be

there to march with them, they are sending their support. They want the students in Florida to know that they are with them. Their hope is that this will start a strong connection through distance. These are passionate and compassionate students, and we are proud to have them in our community.

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

**VIRTUE, TESSA/MOIR, SCOTT/MACINTOSH, PAUL:
FIGURE SKATING SUCCESS - RECOGNIZE**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Women's History Month, which begins today, by shining a light on a Canadian Figure Skater, Tessa Virtue, who, with her partner Scott Moir, won two gold medals in Ice Dancing and Team Figure Skating this 2018 Olympics in South Korea. These wins brought their Olympic medal count to five medals, and have made them the most decorated Figure Skaters in the history of the Games.

I would also like to congratulate one of their coaches, Paul MacIntosh of Truro, who was their first skating coach, and who got them to the national and international levels, to their very first international competition, and Junior World Championship. As well, he got Kaitlyn Weaver and Andrew Poje to their first World Championships as well.

As Paul said, "Coaches should always teach with energy and commitment during every training session, you don't know if you are teaching an athlete who is looking for exercise and personal challenges or maybe even the next Olympic Champion. Athletes of all abilities deserve your best."

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

MENTAL HEALTH: LITERACY - IMPORTANCE

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, we know that mental health is a complex and important part of our own personal health, and that of our communities. In February, many shared posts on social media to fight stigma, raise money, and continue the conversation around mental health.

I hosted an information session on the topic in my constituency. Attendees gathered at St. John the Baptist's Church in Armdale, to listen to a number of experts and service providers who were on hand to discuss their approach to mental health care, and answer questions. We were fortunate to welcome representatives from the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia, the Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team, St. John Ambulance, Kids Help Phone, and SchoolsPlus. I can tell you that it was a very informative evening for everyone.

Fostering greater mental health literacy is essential for our efforts to change societal attitudes and become better sources of support for the people of our lives. I'd like to sincerely thank all the representatives who offered their time and expertise.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

ICEWINE FESTIVAL (N.S.) - SUPPORT

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, the Nova Scotia Icewine Festival is an annual event highlighting the local wine, ice wine, and cuisine produced in Nova Scotia. This year, the festival will be hosted by Lightfoot & Wolfville Vineyards.

Although the festival started last weekend there is still time to get tickets for March 3rd and March 4th. Eight wineries from the Annapolis Valley and a couple of cideries will be represented as they offer tastings of their red, white, ice wines, and sparkling wines that each produce.

I invite my colleagues to join me in the beautiful Annapolis Valley this weekend to support and enjoy the wares of these Nova Scotia entrepreneurs as we celebrate the Icewine Festival.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

LAW AMENDMENTS COMM.: MEMBERSHIP - BEHAVIOUR

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak to my fellow members about our behaviour and about our democracy in Nova Scotia.

The Law Amendments Committee is really a unique opportunity to hear from the people. To govern well we need to tap into the wisdom, knowledge, and perspectives that are outside this Chamber and, indeed, outside of the Government of Nova Scotia in all its branches.

Yesterday my colleague for Dartmouth South used Twitter to encourage teachers and parents to sign up for the Law Amendments Committee. Some, I am sure, appreciated the information and encouragement, but I was distressed to see several people comment that they would not return because of how they feel they were treated a year ago - one specifically asked if members would please put down their phones and tablets and actually listen.

I hope all members will show great courtesy to citizens who care for our students.

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

CAMERON, DWAYNE: EXEMPLARY SERVICE MEDAL - CONGRATS.

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate paramedic Dwayne Cameron of Prospect on being awarded the Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal for his outstanding service to Nova Scotians.

Presented by Lieutenant Governor Arthur LeBlanc on behalf of the Queen and all Nova Scotians, the medal recognizes the vital contribution of the men and women who are always there to respond in a medical crisis. The Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal was created by Her Majesty the Queen in 1994 and is part of a national recognition program for people who work in high risk jobs that enhance Canada's public safety.

I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Dwayne on his achievement and wish him well in the future. Thank you.

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

SAMPSON, FRANCIS: VOL. EFFORTS - ACKNOWLEDGE

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Mr. Francis Sampson from Sydney River, who recently won one of the 2017 Special Olympics Canada National Awards at a ceremony in Toronto. Francis was the recipient of the Jim Thompson Award for Volunteerism.

Francis Sampson has been involved with Special Olympics for more than 15 years, holding volunteer positions ranging from regional co-ordinator to fundraising chairman of Special Olympics Cape Breton. He has also been the chef de mission and part of the mission staff for many games, and is said to have played an important role in the establishment and sustainability of the Special Olympics in Cape Breton, where his daughter Lynette has excelled.

I stand today to congratulate and thank Francis Sampson for the many hours he dedicates to Special Olympics in Cape Breton, and for his other community involvements.

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

MERCHANT, JAN: SQUARE ROOTS - COMMEND

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Jan Merchant, the franchise manager of Square Roots in Fairview.

Square Roots is a local organization that helps those in need by collecting imperfect fruits and vegetables from producers in the Annapolis Valley region. After collection,

Square Roots sells these bundles for a maximum of \$10 - depending on what the customers can afford. They have recently expanded their organization to also include locations in Cherry Brook, Dartmouth, and Eastern Passage.

In collaboration with Killiam Properties, Jan was able to expand her business by using the Glenforest Apartments Community Room. This central location allows many in the community to benefit from this wonderful initiative.

I ask the members of this House to join me in commending the hard work of Jan Merchant and Square Roots for helping families in our community.

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

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS: DEMOCRATIC VOICES - SILENCED

MS. ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, for decades elected school board officials brought the community's voice to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development through democratically elected community members - members like Mary Jess MacDonald, Francine Boudreau, and George Kehoe, who represent residents in my own constituency of Cape Breton-Richmond, along with Anne Peters, Barbara McCarron-Quirk, Chelsea Burke, Jamie Sampson, Jim Austin, Richelle MacLaughlin, and Rosalee Parker. They will now join the other school board members across the province whose democratically elected voices have gone silent. Their knowledge, their wisdom, and their experience discarded to the sidelines with one simple stroke of the pen.

Current Mi'kmaq representative, Paula Paul of the Paq'tnekek First Nation and Joanne Reddick representing the African Nova Scotia communities of the Strait Regional School Board, two women who represent communities who for years did not have a voice on educational matters.

[1:30 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, I and most Nova Scotians value the direct link that our democratically elected school board members had in making decisions in our schools, which directly had a positive impact on our students.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

FOOTE, AVA: HOCKEY CANADA AMBASSADOR - RECOGNIZE

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, Hockey Canada will honour a Pictou County hockey player on March 2nd when they announce they will name one of their ambassadors. Ava Foote, a Subway Selects player lost most of her right hand above the knuckles in a

household accident last June. She is now back on the ice after three surgeries and a lengthy visit at Halifax IWK Hospital.

Foote was determined to play hockey again. She also enjoys swimming, gymnastics and horseback riding. In order for her to play hockey, she received a special modified glove from Hockey Canada. Foote has inspired everyone with her desire to compete and she is determined to be the best hockey player in the world. Ava believes it is achievable and she intends to fulfill her dreams.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

SPRYFIELD COMMUNITY ASSOC.: VOLUNTEERISM - CONGRATS.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the incredible work of the Spryfield Community Association. The association is made up of a hardworking group of volunteers committed to promoting and improving the community of Spryfield. The association was very busy last year identifying and advocating for needed services in our community. They successfully advocated for a sidewalk in the 500 block of Herring Cove Road and construction is due to begin in 2018.

The association also hosts free outdoor films at the Urban Farm of Spryfield, which is open to the general public. They also highlighted the community's history and walking routes through their pathfinding project, and recently the association has partnered with other groups to create a master plan for our community.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Abe, Crysta, and the entire Spryfield Community Association for all their hard work and dedication to our community. They recognize how great Spryfield is and they are always looking for opportunities to make it even better. I wish them continued success and look forward to working together to continue building on their strengths and identifying our needs.

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

**COLCHESTER-EAST HANTS HOSPICE SOCIETY:
END CARE LAUNCH - COMMEND**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to applaud the efforts of the Colchester-East Hants Hospice Society, in partnership with Dalhousie University, for launching End Care, navigating, connecting, assessing, resourcing and engaging adults with serious illness.

With an increasingly aging population and many Nova Scotians living with serious, chronic illnesses, End Care promises to improve lives through a compassionate community approach with volunteers helping to navigate through access to community services and to

provide at-home support. Additionally, End Care volunteers will help to decrease isolation and increase productivity of program participants.

I commend the Hospice Society on its proactivity in fulfilling this growing need in both our rural and urban communities and thus improving quality of life for those who are chronically ill.

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

KENNEDY SCHOFIELD FIRM: FUNDRAISING EFFORTS - RECOGNIZE

MR. HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the good work of the law firm Kennedy Schofield, a local business committed to enhancing the quality of life in the vibrant communities of the St. Margaret's Bay area. Partners Jennifer Schofield and Tracey Kennedy decide to support one local Bay area charity each.

Last year the firm committed themselves to fundraise for the Animal Rescue Coalitions, to help them in their work to rescue and rehome abandoned, sick and injured animals. Everyone at the firm worked together to meet their goal. They sold used books in the reception area and sold animal ornaments, as well as homemade dog biscuits at the annual Christmas on the Bay event. Over a one-year period they raised \$1,800 for the important work of the Animal Rescue Coalitions. Now they will turn their efforts to a new, one-year fundraising goal for another worthy charity in the beautiful St. Margaret's Bay area.

I ask members of this House of Assembly to join me in commending the firm of Kennedy Schofield lawyers for their recent successful fundraising project and for their continuing commitment to supporting the Bay area's families and community life.

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

**SCOTT, CATIE - MILLWOOD HS:
N.S. INTERNAT. STUDENT PROG. - CONGRATS.**

MR. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Catie Scott of Millwood High School. The Grade 11 student has been selected by Nova Scotia International Student Program to attend a leadership conference in Campeche, Mexico in March.

Ms. Scott along with 20 other Nova Scotian students will be visiting Mexico on a scholarship to learn Spanish, appreciate the Mexican culture, and participate in a service learning project by providing help to underprivileged children in Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish Ms. Scott and the other students participating in this program all the best wishes and a safe trip. Thank you.

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

BROPHY, BARB: BASEBALL N.S. AWARD - CONGRATS.

MR. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Barb Brophy of Hammonds Plains. Barb is an active member of the community in both baseball and hockey. She can be found either at the field or the rink where she spends countless hours. She volunteers either as a team parent, fundraiser, or any number of jobs that need to be completed. Barb's dedication and hard work earned her recognition at last year's Baseball Nova Scotia Awards night in October as Volunteer of the Year.

I'd like to ask all members of this House of Assembly to join me in thanking and congratulating Barb Brophy on receiving this award and for her continued dedication as a volunteer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TEACHERS: CONTRIBUTIONS - IMPACTS RECOGNIZE

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, with education so prominently in the news, I'd like to recognize and honour two generations of teachers. Forty years ago, Mr. Murray Angus was my political science teacher at Dartmouth High School. He challenged me to speak up and consider being a voice for change. I thank him for this and his spirit and ongoing support. I would also like to recognize Ms. Michelle Coffin, a political science professor at Saint Mary's University, who is up in the gallery today.

Both Mr. Angus and Ms. Coffin are raising our youth to be more politically aware, and we know that students such as those we've already acknowledged - Tristan Shaw, Riley Hill Pettipas, Brett Martin, and Daniel MacKenzie - are benefiting from this education. We need all of those teachers to continue doing their great work. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**MAHONE BAY FATHER CHRISTMAS REINDEER FUN RUN:
SPONSORS/PARTICIPANTS - THANK**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, December 2nd, 247 participants gathered for a nighttime fun run/walk through the streets of Mahone Bay as part of the Mahone Bay Father Christmas Reindeer Fun Run.

Participants were encouraged to dress in costume. Many sported reindeer antler headpieces and red noses as they dashed through the streets. The Fun Run is a fundraiser for the Lodge That Gives, which provides Nova Scotians travelling to Halifax for cancer treatment a special place to stay. This year the Reindeer Fun Run raised a total of \$3,054, which was presented to Gillian Zinck, manager of the revenue department for the Canadian Cancer Society, Nova Scotia Division, by Nancy Petrie representing sponsor Atlantica Oak Island and the Reindeer Run, and Karen Pinsent representing sponsor Amos Pewter and the Father Christmas committee.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you and all members of this House of Assembly please join me in thanking the sponsors and participants of this year's Reindeer Fun Run for their contributions to the Lodge That Gives.

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

ROYAL CDN. SEA CADETS (BADDECK) - COMMUN. CONTRIBUTIONS

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to stand in my place today to recognize the members and leaders, both past and present, of K147 Baddeck Royal Canadian Sea Cadets. The corps has its headquarters at the Baddeck Community Centre, which is provided to the group free of charge by the Baddeck Volunteer Fire Department. In recognition of this, the cadets decided to help the fire department by bagging groceries for donations at the Victoria Farmers Co-op and raised close to \$500, which they in turn donated to the Baddeck fire department.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of this House join me in recognizing K147 Baddeck Royal Canadian Sea Cadets for their community-mindedness and appreciation by giving back to the community and wish them the very best in the future. Thank you.

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

FILIPINO LANGUAGE & CULTURE CTR. - EFFORTS COMMEND

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the amazing work of the Filipino Language and Culture Centre located in my riding. The language and culture centre was started to help Filipino children born and raised in Canada to get in touch with their roots by discovering the rich culture of the Philippines and learning the Filipino language.

It held its first pilot session in March 2017, and the response from the parents and the Filipino-Canadian community in Nova Scotia was overwhelming. It resulted in six more monthly sessions conducted with an average of about 35 children attending each session. I was delighted to attend and speak at their first-ever graduation ceremony this past November.

I would like to commend the Filipino Language Centre for helping the Filipino children to learn about their culture and I look forward to supporting their work in the years to come.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

EAST DART. FOOD BANK: COMMUN. VOLUNTEERS - THANK

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, every Thursday morning the dedicated volunteers at the East Dartmouth Food Bank help ensure no one in Dartmouth East goes without food. Located in a small white building on the side of the Woodlawn United Church, these amazing community volunteers provide a vital service to those in need. Food insecurity is a growing problem in our society, and it is because of great organizations like the East Dartmouth Food Bank that we ensure everyone ends the day with food in their stomach.

I ask all members of this House to acknowledge and thank the East Dartmouth Food Bank for their years of feeding Dartmouth.

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

WOMEN'S MONTH: TEACHERS - SUPPORT

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, last February, Bill No. 75 caused the winter of our discontent for teachers and now this year, frustration seems to be the word of the season. What do we do? Do we simply wait for this government to be voted out of office? Do we hope that they suddenly come to their senses? I think we'd be waiting a long time, so, no.

Coming from a family of educators means I will always have a genuine concern for what's best for students and teachers of Nova Scotia, and so do the province's teachers. They care about their students, they want every single student to have the support they need to succeed in every single school across our province, and many of them are women. This Women's Month, I want to take my hat off to the women, to the teachers, of Nova Scotia and say our hearts and our fists are up in the air with them.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

BAMBRICK, DAVID: COMMONWEALTH GAMES (2018) - BEST WISHES

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker I rise today to congratulate Gaspereau Valley athlete David Bambrick on earning a spot on the Canadian Track and Field team that will compete at the Commonwealth Games in April in Australia. This opportunity to represent

Canada on the international stage in the Para Shot Put Event is the culmination of nearly a decade of hard work and dedication to his sport, and adds to an already impressive list of athletic achievements, including medals from the Canada Games and the Canadian Track and Field Championships.

I invite all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in wishing David Bambrick the very best of luck in the 2018 Commonwealth Games. I know he will be an exceptional ambassador for his community, this province, and this country.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

KAHN, SARAH: HORATIO ALGER SCHOLARSHIP - CONGRATS.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, Sarah Kahn is a happy Grade 12 student at Northumberland Regional High School and she just won a \$5,000 Horatio Alger Scholarship, which will help her become a pediatrician. From thousands of applicants, she was one of only seven Nova Scotians to receive this scholarship. Sarah lives in Westville and is completing the International Baccalaureate program. Her career goal is to work for Doctors Without Borders.

Life has not always been rosy for Sarah, who remembers how bullies hurled rocks wrapped in snowballs at her. As a young daughter of a Pakistani-born father, some classmates saw Sarah as an outsider. Sarah is on track to achieve her goals, and I offer my sincere congratulations and best wishes for her success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

EVENTS LUNENBURG CO.: NATIONAL FEMALE MIDGET HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP - CONGRATS.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, the Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre has the honour of hosting this year's Esso Cup, Canada's National Female Midget Hockey Championship. The committee and Events Lunenburg County worked tremendously hard to secure the successful bid that will see some of Canada's most elite female midget hockey players show their skills in a tournament being held April 22nd to 28th. I had the good fortune to meet the Metro Boston Pizza Female Midget AAA team, who will represent Nova Scotia in the tournament. To say they're excited would be an understatement.

I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank Events Lunenburg County, for once again working to secure such an important event, to the many volunteers who are stepping up, stepping in once again to ensure its success, and wish the Metro Boston Pizza Female Midget AAA team the best of luck in the tournament.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

[1:45 p.m.]

DOUCET, GERRY: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotia's first Acadian Minister of Education, and proud son of Grand Étang in Inverness County, Gerry Doucet made a difference for many here in our Nova Scotia Legislature. Let us remember him as a young man just 26 when first elected, who was not afraid to step out from what some might have seen as the limitations of his rural community, and came as one person said, "within a whisker of becoming our Premier."

Gerry had finished a successful 11-year political career at an age where few would be thinking of running for office. Gerry was a natural leader, and was not short of ambition. Upon leaving politics he started CIGO, a community radio station in Port Hawkesbury. Now known as The Hawk, the station opened at a time in 1975 when the area was booming with industrial activity. The timing was perfect and the initiative was a success. That station can be credited with supporting traditional music and many Acadian musicians over the years.

Mr. Speaker, here's to Gerry Doucet. May we remember him fondly and extend our condolences to his family. (Standing Ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

BIB 'N TUCKER: STORE CLOSURE - BEST WISHES

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to share with the House a bit about an iconic Bedford business that wound down recently. Bib 'n Tucker owner Jane Cooley entered into a partnership with Valerie Beaton, who opened the Sunnyside Mall location back in 1994. Valerie has been a hands-on owner. She and her staff are always helpful and kind to shoppers. They love seeing our children grow, and long after the children had outgrown their clothes, they'd stop in to visit staff.

I had a chance to stop in to reminisce with Val a few days before the Sunnyside Mall shop closed. She had heard from people who had been shopping at one Bib 'n Tucker location or another for the past 42 years, folks who appreciated the relationships that had been built up with families over many years.

Mr. Speaker, Bib 'n Tucker was a part of our community. The store, the owners, and the staff will all be missed, and we wish them well in their future endeavours.

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

BUCHANAN, AUSTIN: SAINT JOHN SEAWOLVES - CONGRATS.

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, one might not think that a young man from a small high school in rural Nova Scotia would stand much of a chance of playing university basketball, especially if they're only 5-foot, 10-inches, but Lockeport Regional High School graduate Austin Buchanan is doing just that this year.

Austin is playing point and shooting guard for the UNB Saint John Seawolves. He is the first player in a decade from Lockeport Regional High School to play university-level basketball. Austin's love for the game, hard work, and commitment combined to make his dream come true.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Austin on his accomplishments and wish him all the best as he moves forward in both his basketball and academic ventures.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

DARTMOUTH FAMILY CTR.: COMMUN. SUPPORT - HONOUR

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: As we enter into Women's Month, I would like to take a moment to honour the work of the Dartmouth Family Centre, an organization in Dartmouth North that provides supports to children and parents in our community through a variety of programs.

Through the dedication of the staff, led by Roxanne Manning, the Dartmouth Family Centre offers programs that include parent & child playgroups, respite child care, an enhanced home visiting program for parents of newborns, a prenatal program, and IWK women's wellness clinics, where women can visit with social workers and registered nurses.

The Dartmouth Family Centre was a place of welcoming and rest for me when I frequented it with a newborn baby and a busy toddler. My toddler could play and learn from the amazing teachers at the centre, while I could sit and chat with other parents, mostly moms, who were there for support in whatever way they needed it. In an area where many families, often led by women, find it difficult to have enough to eat, to pay the rent, and to feel included in community life, the Dartmouth Family Centre provides a warm, welcoming place to gather, to learn, and to find a supportive community to connect to.

I'm deeply grateful for what they provided me and my family, and what they do for so many women and families in Dartmouth.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

MILLER, CONNOR: CEC COUGARS HOCKEY TEAM - BEST WISHES

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, Connor Miller from Lower Debert, Colchester North, is a Grade 12 student at Cobequid Educational Centre in Truro. He is the assistant captain of the CEC Cougars hockey team, and has a strong hockey background. First playing in the West Colchester Minor Hockey Association, he later played atom AAA and peewee AAA, and major bantam for the Truro Bearcats.

Known for always putting his best effort into every shift, he leads his team in scoring, and according to his coach, Miller is one of the best high school forwards in the province. He excels at stick-handling and has some excellent moves on the ice. Miller's leadership abilities have been an asset to his team, and his high regard for his teammates is an indication of why the team has worked so well throughout the season.

Miller plans to attend trade school after graduation, and I am sure that the focus and work ethic that he has shown on the ice will ensure him success elsewhere. Congratulations, Connor.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

TURNBULL, BLAYRE: WINTER OLYMPICS (2018) - SILVER MEDAL

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, each time Olympian Blayre Turnbull, from Stellarton, stepped on the ice for Team Canada's Women's Hockey Team in Pyeongchang, two of her biggest fans were glued to their TV screen. Her grandparents, Leona and Sam Turnbull, also from Stellarton, realized that their granddaughter was realizing an unbelievable dream - regardless of what time of day or night, they were awake to watch their granddaughter and Team Canada compete against other teams at the Olympics.

Leona and Sam were overjoyed to see Blayre reach the pinnacle of her career, competing against the best female hockey players in the world.

Blayre has returned home proudly wearing a silver medal.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

KIDS FIRST FAMILY RES. CTR.: COATS FOR FAMILIES - THANK

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, the Kids First Family Resource Centre offers free programs and services to families in Antigonish. Their programs are all focused on families. For example, some of the programs include prenatal education, breastfeeding support, parent and tot drop-in, and car seat installation, among many others.

A special initiative, which they have done for the last six years, is called Coats for Families. It provides new and gently used winter coats and snow pants to those in need. Last year Kids First donated 75 coats and 60 pairs of snow pants to families in Antigonish County. One of their biggest supporters is the Knights of Columbus - it's a natural fit for the organization as they have a global initiative called Coats for Kids.

Mr. Speaker, an initiative like Coats for Families can have a profound effect on the lives of so many. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank Kids First for the constant support they offer the families in Antigonish, including my own. My wife and I value the support offered when we returned home to Antigonish with our young family nearly a decade ago.

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

NORTH PRESTON GREEN HANDS: ACHIEVEMENTS - CONGRATS.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the North Preston Green Hands, a community group of youth ranging from the ages of 6 to 26, who are actively involved in gardening in their community. These dedicated young people prepare, plant, maintain, and harvest a community garden and, in the process, learn responsibility and teamwork. They also learn the lifelong skills of self-sufficiency and hard work.

The North Preston Green Hands held a Fall harvest celebration, featuring a meal that included fresh vegetables straight from the garden, and did an excellent job in the presentation.

I applaud and congratulate the North Preston Green Hands on their many significant achievements and wish them continued success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

BRUCE, CYNTHIA: ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY BD. APPT. - CONGRATS.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a woman in my riding of Kings North who is fulfilling her dream of promoting accessibility to all those in need. Cynthia Bruce, the first Ph.D. in Education graduate from Acadia University studied inclusive education as her dissertation. She was appointed as one of the first members of the provincial Accessibility Advisory Board.

I wish to congratulate Ms. Bruce and wish the other members of the advisory board well as they embark on this important work.

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

TLC ANIMAL SHELTER (DIGBY): VOLUNTEERS - THANK

MR. GORDON WILSON: Volunteers are so important to our communities. The volunteers at the TLC Animal Shelter in Digby, including Dorothy Andrews, who has run the shelter for the last 30 years, care for the many cats and dogs that are temporarily housed at the shelter. Many of the volunteers have dual roles, caring for animals and trying to ensure that the shelter will have the funds needed to continue to operate.

The TLC Animal Shelter is a small, independent, no-kill shelter, dependent on donations to pay for its operations. In our community, their efforts do not go unnoticed. In September, the shelter was the recipient of a contribution by the group, Digby Care 25, money that will be used to maintain their building. The shelter's benefactors are gracious, but money is often tight.

For all the work and sacrifices they make to care for unwanted animals, I would like to thank and recognize the volunteers of the TLC Animal Shelter - especially Dorothy Andrews.

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

**HANNA, ASHLEIGH/29 SYDNEY KIWANIS AIR CADETS:
WINTER COMFORT KITS - THANK**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Ashleigh Hanna, from Howie Centre, for once again thinking of the less fortunate at this time of the year. This is the third year Ashleigh Hanna, who is 14 years old and a Grade 9 student, has gone about providing winter comfort kits for those in need.

This year she was joined by her friend from the 29 Sydney Kiwanis Air Cadets. They put out 200 bags with another 200 to go, to the surrounding communities. These kits include hats, mitts, and scarves to keep the homeless warm during the winter months. Ashley forgoes Christmas gifts in order to ensure that others are being looked after.

I stand today to thank Ashley Hannah and her friends from 29th Sydney Kiwanis Air Cadets for being true Cape Bretoners. We are all proud of your commitment and your compassion.

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

O'HANDLEY, WANDA: SUNSHINE MOVEMENT - GRATITUDE

HON. LLOYD HINES: I rise today to recognize a wonderful new initiative started by Wanda O'Handley of Canso Nova Scotia.

The Sunshine Movement is a new group of volunteers from the Canso and Guysborough area. Their focus is to bring happiness to the lives of others through small acts of kindness and contributions to the community. So far, they have made Valentine gifts of baked goods, crafts, knitted comfort dolls, newborn hats, sewn mastectomy pillows, seatbelt covers, and delivered them in person to the surrounding hospitals and nursing homes. Keep in mind, they have only been active since January of this year.

The positivity and compassionate hearts of my constituency will never cease to amaze me. My deepest gratitude to this movement. I can't wait to see the amazing projects in their future.

I will leave you with the words of Wanda: a simple act can change the way people see and view the world, and it starts with us!

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

PELLEY, JANET - TRURO LIBRARY DIR.: RETIREMENT - CONGRATS.

MR. LARRY HARRISON: I rise today to acknowledge the dedicated service of Janet Pelley, who retired in February as director of the Truro Library.

Janet's career spanned the creation of the Elmsdale and Tatamagouche Libraries, saw the demise of the bookmobile, and welcomed the Mount Uniacke Library into the regional system. She was part of the transition from manual card catalogues and book stamping to electronic data records, joining the organization when the Truro Library was only eight years old. The culmination of her career was the recent opening of the new library, which is truly based on community as well as on books and literacy.

I would like to congratulate Ms. Pelley on her retirement and wish her all the best in the next chapter of her life.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

SCHOOL HEALTHY EATING PROG.: VOLUNTEERS - THANK

HON. LENA DIAB: Children who eat well-balanced and healthy meals have better health and academic success.

That's why I was proud to see our government commit to nearly doubling its support for the School Healthy Eating Program. With an almost \$2 million annual investment, all public school students across Nova Scotia will soon be able to start each day with a healthy breakfast. Some schools will also be able to expand their current Healthy Eating Programs to include snacks beyond breakfast. That's an initiative I'm proud of. I'm

also proud of all the hard work that Nourish Nova Scotia has put into supporting our school nutrition programs through funding, leadership, and resources.

These programs depend on parent and teacher volunteers too. I want to thank them all. Indeed, I had the opportunity to attend, at École Chebucto Heights Elementary, and see the good work and smiling faces of all involved. Merci.

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

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: I would like to introduce former Member of Parliament Scott Armstrong to the gallery today. (Applause)

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

HFX. WEST BOYS SOCCER TEAM: TOURNAMENT PLAY - CONGRATS.

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: I would like to recognize the Halifax West Boys Soccer team for winning the Kings-Edgehill Fall classic soccer tournament for the third year in a row. The team not only successfully competed in several local tournaments, but also made the trip to Québec City where they finished with three wins and one tie. They also can be commended for defeating Citadel High, allowing them to win the Capital Region Championship.

The Halifax West Boys Soccer team are notorious not only for their skills on the field, but also their commitment to the community. This is thanks not only to the players but also the dedicated parents and coaching staff. I ask the members of this House to join me in congratulating the Halifax West Boys Soccer team and coaching staff for their successful season.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I would just like to remind all members, while we have a couple of seconds here, that member statements are one minute. I have been a little lenient today and the previous day on Member Statements. Tomorrow, we'll tighten it up a little bit.

[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. - GLAZE REPORT: BOARD ELIMINATION - CONCERN

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Premier. Earlier this year, the government announced that it would be adopting all of the recommendations from the Glaze report and immediately moving forward with 11 recommendations.

Among these is the recommendation to eliminate all the English-language school boards and centralize decision-making within the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. It does require that the democratically elected school boards be disbanded in favour of inaccessible department officials.

The skepticism is justified. It echoes this government's decision to amalgamate the regional health boards into the much-discombobulated Nova Scotia Health Authority.

My question is, why does the Premier insist on subjecting the education system to the same failed experiment that has thrown the health care system into a crisis?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to thank all those hard-working educators across the province.

She knows that we have heard from parents, we have heard from teachers, and we have heard from administrators that the current structure wasn't working. This was about providing a structure that works. The bill that is introduced today ensures that we have site-based management and principals and vice-principals who can do the job they want to do, which is manage the schools and ensure that the quality of the education that all of us want for our children and that they want for our children will be in place there.

We're going to continue to work with those educators to make sure that we transform the administrative side of education so that we then can implement the inclusion report that will be coming. Our budget will reflect our commitment to that report.

MS. MACFARLANE: That answer is obviously a pattern that we have seen. It's all too familiar.

There were concerns about health care, and this Premier pointed the finger at other agencies, and with the stroke of a pen, amalgamated the health boards. Not long after, we had a record number of Nova Scotians without a family doctor, patients dying in hallways, and health care professionals screaming for this government to wake up and notice that the system is absolutely in a crisis.

The Premier has turned his eye to other agencies. This time it's the school boards, and he is blaming them for the problems. Will the Premier please acknowledge that his plan to centralize the education system is marching our students down the same path that has created the current crisis in our health care system?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member should read the report. It's not centralizing. It's actually giving site-based management back to principals and vice-principals. It's the very thing that successive governments have heard from administrators for a decade or more.

The fact of the matter is that central offices are making decisions for schools. Quite frankly, what we have done today, Mr. Speaker - I hope with the support of the Opposition - is enable principals and vice-principals and education leads on sites to make decisions for their students and for their school community. It's part of this report that the school advisory councils be enhanced to give that local voice, the input from parents and community leaders - not those from neighbouring communities or neighbouring school communities but those from the existing school communities - to ensure that the kids in those communities get the education system base that they deserve.

MS. MACFARLANE: That's not the narrative that the majority of Nova Scotians have, really. It is that our teachers and educational professionals have not waited for a crisis. They have been sounding this alarm for a long time.

Mr. Speaker, they are trying to alert the Premier to the dangerous impacts of centralization. They are asking the Premier to come forward with a plan that doesn't put government on one side, the teachers on another side, and unfortunately, the parents and students right in the middle.

In order to hear from students, parents, teachers, and school board members, will the Premier commit to a full round of public consultations specific to the Glaze recommendations before they are implemented?

THE PREMIER: I want to tell the honourable member that the minister has travelled this province talking not only to teachers but also to principals and to SACs.

Unlike that Party, we're going to fix the challenges facing this province. For too long, we have gone out and asked for reports and let them sit on a shelf. We're acting.

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

PREM. - GLAZE REPORT: LOSS OF LOCAL VOICES - CONCERN

MR. GARY BURRILL: Nothing about the government's modified plans for the Glaze report announced this morning does anything to address the dismay there is across Nova Scotia about the loss of local elected school board voices and their replacement with a super-centralized bureaucracy in Halifax.

Mr. Speaker, given how badly his super-centralization has worked out for patients in health care, can the Premier explain how eliminating local voices will make any meaningful improvement for kids in schools?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I want to encourage the honourable member to read the report and have a chance to look at the bill. As a matter of fact, what happens is we're giving more decision making to education leads in schools and, quite frankly, we're asking community members to continue to work on the SACs across this province, which many have been.

What we're going to provide in this bill is an opportunity for some funding for them to make decisions that impact the individual children and the learning environment they are in. At the same time administrators will manage and lead the schools across this province from an educational point of view, to ensure that it reflects the reality of the communities they are in.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, what I am speaking about is elected local voices. It is difficult to understand why the government should have such a difficult time to fathom why this is a matter of such concern to people across the province - elected local voices.

Consider Jennifer Raven from the Halifax Regional School Board. Through her efforts, amongst other things, every morning now in the Halifax area schools there is a land acknowledgement and there is the first report on racism and discrimination that has been initiated in Halifax schools. Ms. Raven reports in the media today that she is afraid her work is being tossed aside.

Why wouldn't she be afraid that her work is being tossed aside? That's exactly what's happening to her and the other members of the school boards.

THE PREMIER: Is there a question?

MR. BURRILL: Why would Ms. Raven not feel tossed aside, given exactly the treatment the Premier and his government have given to her and other members of the school boards?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to thank not only Ms. Raven but all school board members across the province who have been working on behalf of students in this province. The fact of the matter is, the administrative model has not worked. We've heard from teachers and we've heard from administrators that the current structure was not working.

We hired someone to come in to do a report. They provided a path forward. Mr. Speaker, one of those recommendations was the elimination of school boards in a fractured system across this province. We've embraced it.

There were other recommendations that we took out, and we talked to school communities, we talked to administrators, we talked to teachers. They have been adjusted to reflect some of the concerns that we had.

We believe we have in place now, and we will after this bill passes, an administrative model that will allow us to implement the recommendations that will come from the inclusion report that will really impact students in classrooms across this province. I am looking forward to working with educators to ensure we do just that.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, it is precisely the impact and the lack of benefit on kids in classrooms that is at issue. I was moved by a recent email from a young teacher, Rhea Thibault. She writes: I am not strong enough to endure the hate that the government continually spews at me. I am so proud of what I do and accomplish in the class, but I can't support my students if the government doesn't allow me to do my job to the best of my abilities.

Mr. Speaker, the education changes being proposed do not do one thing for the situation of kids in classrooms that Ms. Thibault is writing about. So here is the question: how dare the Premier present wiping out local voices as though that were an answer to the desperate challenges experienced by the teachers of Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member and I want to communicate directly to Ms. Thibault.

This piece of legislation today will eliminate all the barriers between the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and her classroom. I want to ensure Ms. Thibault and all teachers across this province that this government has heard what they said about their classroom. When the recommendations on inclusion are announced, our budget will reflect our commitment and we'll have an ongoing commitment with teachers across this province to address the very issues they've talked about, which is inclusion. This bill will give us a direct path to their classroom to work directly with them.

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

PREM. - DOCTOR SHORTAGE: NET GAIN/LOSS - MAGNITUDE

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. One hundred thousand Nova Scotians without a family doctor. My family is actually within that 100,000 - 100,000 Nova Scotians need a family doctor.

Yesterday I asked the Premier how many doctors Nova Scotia had lost since the Fall and he told me how many doctors Nova Scotia had gained since the Spring. I believe that amount was around 100.

Can the Premier tell the people of Nova Scotia if the province experienced a net gain or a net loss of doctors in the last year, and the magnitude of that net gain/net loss?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question.

What I said yesterday, we had 100 new doctors since April. I think the Minister of Health and Wellness corrected me, I think it's 110. We're going to continue to work with communities across the province. I want to thank the Minister of Immigration who has brought in a new pilot program that will allow us to bring medical professionals right into our system. We'll continue to work with Doctors NS to address the challenges facing some communities and I'm looking forward to continuing to move this province forward.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, maybe the Premier can table that list of 110. That's an exact number, that's great - where are they? Nova Scotians have real unaddressed health care needs. They will sleep better when they are certain they have access to the primary health care provider they both require and, more importantly, deserve. The gain or loss of doctors isn't the only figure that will tell the story of our health care crisis, a more important figure tells us whether the people are getting the care they need.

My question to the Premier is, how many Nova Scotians have been removed from the family doctor wait-list in the last year?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I don't know in the last year, but I think since about April, it's been about 8,000.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

EECD: BILL NO. 72 - CONSULTATION

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Over the last two days in this House, the minister has insisted that his focus is on all students. However, his government's disappearing of the democratically-elected school boards, and their dedicated African Nova

Scotian and Mi'kmaq representatives, will do nothing to improve the situation for our kids in classrooms, and will not address what parents, teachers, and students have been calling out for.

Can the minister point to a single provision in this hastily-compiled, enormous, omnibus bill - not some future plan or future initiative - that will make one difference for my children, and other children, in classrooms?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I can name several. Fixing the administrative structure, which has led to different achievement outcomes from one region to the next - that is a problem this will help fix. Having more resources go from central offices into classrooms will help. Having a rural education strategy to meet the needs of those in the extreme areas of our province will help.

Enhancing the voice of African Nova Scotians and Mi'kmaq in the department with executive director positions that will be permanent and focused on the achievement gap that we have been unable to fix, despite the fact that we've had representation on our school boards, will have a direct impact. Empowering our teachers to have more say over course materials, curricula, giving our principals the freedom to be without conflict of interest to focus on the needs of our kids.

All of these things will directly impact our kids for the better. (Applause)

MS. CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the self-serving applause, I heard nothing on that list that has been requested by teachers, students, or administrators.

What we've learned from the elimination of local health authorities is that centralizing decision-making has not improved patient care, or resulted in greater focus on health and wellness. What it has done is left communities fending for themselves without services that meet local needs, and has created constant questions about who is accountable for decisions. Now we're getting ready for the same issues in our education system.

Given what is at stake, and our experience in health care, why won't the minister pause this bill to consult with local communities, rather than dictate to them - which is my interpretation of what's happened so far - about what is needed in classrooms?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, in fact the objectives of this report, of this legislation, I believe are reflective to the primary concerns that we have heard. This will help us implement an inclusive education policy that will better improve the classroom complexity challenges teachers have been dealing with.

It's so interesting that for a year, I've been hearing from the Opposition that's told us this system is in crisis, the education system is broken. Now that we are on the verge of

having the single greatest reforms that have happened in this province since history in education, they have become defenders of the status quo.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

[2:15 p.m.]

JUSTICE - CANNABIS RETAIL PLAN: TASK FORCE ADVICE - IGNORE

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. After months and months of delay and silence, in December, we finally learned about this government's plan to sell marijuana to Nova Scotians. Imagine our surprise to learn that the Minister of Justice chose to ignore explicit advice from the Health Canada Task Force on Marijuana Legalization. That task force said, "Jurisdictions should avoid and strongly discourage the co-location of retail cannabis and alcohol or tobacco sales wherever possible." I will table that.

The minister took that advice under advisement and proceeded to set up marijuana boutiques in existing provincial liquor stores. My question for the minister is, what independent peer-reviewed analysis did the minister conduct to allow him to throw out Health Canada's explicit recommendations on retail sales of marijuana?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, that report was actually a group assembled federally - not Health Canada, but a group assembled federally. What my colleague has omitted is that the report said, if you are going to co-locate, ensure you place these safeguards: no co-location in the same space, so separate facilities - we're doing that; as far as training available to staff, it's important that they understand; signage that speaks to the challenges of co-use.

These are the types of things that the report actually identified, that if a government chose to co-locate, ensure you place these safeguards. We plan to do that, Mr. Speaker.

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

Nova Scotians are very worried that selling alcohol and marijuana in the same store could lead to increased cases of impairment while driving. Encouraging the combination of alcohol and marijuana could also lead to unpredictable impairment effects. The threat to public safety is so serious that all U.S. states that have legalized marijuana have banned co-location. Nova Scotia is alone among Canadian provinces in selling marijuana through existing liquor stores.

My question for the minister is, will the Minister of Justice admit that his is a flawed approach, and commit to reviewing the decision to co-locate marijuana and alcohol in the critical interest of public safety?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, one of the strengths of the Nova Scotia Liquor Commission is their social policy and the extensive training that they have undertaken in the sale of a regulated product.

They are the environment that best positions Nova Scotians to protect the health and safety of our youth and to mitigate the illicit use of the cannabis substance. We believe we are on the right track. We have had constructive feedback that this is the right direction to go.

As a matter of fact, I met with the president of MADD Canada this week, and the president of MADD Canada has endorsed our model over and above the models of every other province in this country.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

H&W - INCOME TAX ACT (FED.): PROPOSED CHANGES - EFFECTS

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, this week we saw the tabling of the federal budget. Last session our caucus stood up and acknowledged and raised awareness of flaws in proposed changes to the federal Income Tax Act. We didn't need a weekend at a chalet in Provence to know that it was going to hurt small business.

The federal government has backed off on some of those changes, but we know that professional incorporations are still going to be targeted. In our province, 75 per cent of physicians are fee-for-service - or 75 per cent of them are incorporated, which probably suggests they are fee-for-service. They're already paying more tax in this province than other provinces. We could lose them.

Has this government considered the need to increase fee-for-services? I direct this question to the Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as we continue our work with the federal government, as the member knows, we've had conversations with the federal Minister of Finance. I did, and the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board had those conversations as well.

The work that goes on as fee-for-service initiatives within the family physician space - for physicians when they are billing for their services being provided on behalf of Nova Scotians and the primary health care system.

MR. MACMASTER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I didn't really hear an answer there.

This is a serious problem. Many of our new doctors, especially, are on salary, and it won't affect them, but more of our doctors are on fee-for-service. When they're doing

their income taxes this time of the year, they're comparing what they're paying in this province for income tax and what they could be paying in other provinces. This could be another nail in the coffin of many of those doctors, because they may choose to move elsewhere.

It's a federal change, but it has impact for our province, both for retention of doctors and also for taxpayers. If this government, in response to the federal changes, has to raise those fees for service, that means Nova Scotians are going to be paying more for their health care services.

Has the minister completed an analysis of what the potential cost to the taxpayer might be?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as the federal government's budget just came down a couple of days ago, no analyses have been completed yet but certainly we work with the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, and his department and staff, to analyze all details and aspects of the budget and how it would apply or impact the Province of Nova Scotia, not just for our health care services but for all programs and services that we offer throughout the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

H&W - PARAMEDICS: #CODECRITICAL - CONCERNS

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, have you heard of the latest Twitter campaign? It's #codecritical. It is being done by our paramedics who are desperate for this government to hear their voices. They are tweeting #codecritical to try to get the government's attention because of the unsafe situations around our province.

Last Friday evening, the safety of emergency health services in the northern region was in jeopardy. There was one ambulance between New Glasgow, Truro, and Springhill. The paramedics' union has said that this is becoming more and more common, and there is a huge part of Nova Scotia without adequate coverage.

Does the Minister of Health and Wellness disagree with the paramedics' #codecritical, or does he share their concerns that these off-load delays for ambulances are contributing to the health care crisis in Nova Scotia?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the question. Indeed, I believe like all members in the Legislature here - and I know we have some former paramedics who are here on the floor with me, from several parts of the province. I'd first of all like to recognize the great work that our paramedics provide on behalf of all Nova Scotians.

The concerns being raised by paramedics, in particular the union representing paramedics around off-load times and the impact that has on availability of services - indeed that's something I've asked staff to prepare a report and some recommendations for me, to see what steps we can take to improve our efficiency in that area.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: It's time for this government to listen. There are too many unsafe situations. We need to look at what is the source of this problem. There are no hospital beds so our emergency rooms are full, backlogged with admitted patients lying in the hallways and sometimes dying.

It's time for this Minister of Health and Wellness and this government to take these problems seriously and help find solutions. My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, it's one thing to recognize #codecritical, but what is his department actually going to do to solve this problem so that our ambulances are not waiting up to 11 hours to unload patients to the emergency department?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned previously to the last question, indeed I did listen, I do listen. I've asked for a report and some recommendations from staff to look at exactly those challenges that the member has highlighted, and what can be done to help improve the situation. That's part of what we do and what we expect within our health care system, both within the Department of Health and Wellness but also with our partners and the health authorities - the NSHA and the IWK - and our other partners, like EHS providing ambulance services.

It is by working together, Mr. Speaker, that we can come forward with solutions to the challenges that we face.

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

H&W: QEII REDEVELOPMENT PROJ. - LONG-TERM CARE BEDS

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, yesterday when asked about the QEII redevelopment project and how it deals with the long-term care beds in Nova Scotia and its aging population, the Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness told the Public Accounts Committee that questions around long-term care are entirely separate from the hospital redevelopment, leaving me to assume that there will be no new nursing home beds as part of this health system overhaul, which almost doesn't make any sense, but regardless.

Can the minister explain why, at a time when nearly one-third of our acute care beds at the Dartmouth General Hospital are filled by people waiting for long-term care beds, why there are no new plans to add nursing home spaces in our health care system?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the question and the interest in the ongoing QEII redevelopment project, Mr. Speaker. This is an ambitious and

important project for the province. It is one of the largest public infrastructure projects this province has embarked on in several decades towards our important health care system.

The question asked and the purpose of redevelopment is to focus on the services that are being provided in the existing facility, how we respond to the needs of the community for those services being provided at that site, and how we're going to distribute that at sites across the province. As responded at Public Accounts, I'd indicated that was not a long-term care facility, so that's not part of that redevelopment project.

MS. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, how can we look at overhauling a health care system when we're not looking at one of the crucial problems, which is long-term care beds?

Positive thinking won't stop Nova Scotians from growing old; optimism won't change our demographic situation. We are going to need nursing home beds whether the government likes it or not. Reality isn't always rosy; sometimes it's negative. Home care is a crucial service, but to build the entire continuing care system on it doesn't make any sense. We all know seniors who need more than home care can offer. Like it or not, reality is reality.

Mr. Speaker, does this Minister of Health and Wellness really believe that we do not need new nursing home beds?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as the member cited in her remarks, an effort, a significant effort is being made in the province, and has been in our first term in government, focused on our home care policy based on a Home First process. That's a phase-one initiative. The first point was to target and focus on providing the care for people in their homes, which is preferred, and provide good care for them. Once that initiative is under way and rolled out, that allows us to get a better assessment as to what the actual care requirements would be within the long-term care facilities. That's part of the ongoing work of our continuing strategy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

H&W: SENIORS' PHARMACARE PROG. - FORMULARY EXCLUSIONS

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, every week I have more than one senior contact me because they cannot afford their medication even though they pay into the Nova Scotia Seniors' Pharmacare Program.

One gentleman, for example, was on a drug called Xarelto. It's a blood thinner, and his family physician and his cardiologist want him on this drug. He has been denied and told that he has to go - think about this, there's no common sense - he has to prove that he needs this drug and, to do so, he has to go off of the drug, take a risk of having another heart attack or stroke to prove he actually needs the drug.

Can the Minister of Health and Wellness please explain why the formulary excludes types of medications such as this and puts patients at risk?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's question. Really what this question delves into is the process by which drugs are assessed and selected to be or not selected to be added to the provincial formulary. It goes through a very extensive process focused on clinical reviews that get conducted at the national level, and recommendations come forward with these drugs after that extensive review and to make recommendations as to the clinical circumstances and whether to list with or without conditions. I suspect in the specific case that's being raised by the member that it does tie to conditions that should be met before being considered for coverage. That would likely be the case in this particular one, but I assure her that it actually goes through an extensive review and for consideration by clinical experts.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Yes, so he has been told, like I already mentioned, Mr. Speaker, he has to actually go off this medication that his cardiologist has put him on, and does not want him on Warfarin, because it's a superior drug in order to prove that he needs the Xarelto, keeping in mind Xarelto means you do not need to have any lab work and your physician does not have to monitor your INR levels weekly. I would encourage the Minister of Health and Wellness to look more closely at these kinds of medications and not just look at the cost of the drug, but look at the cost of the lab and physician services, the overall cost to the patient and the health care system.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Health and Wellness commit to review these excluded drugs most commonly prescribed to determine if the formulary should possibly be updated?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, the member made a question or a suggestion that we review the drugs or the total cost side for drugs. As I mentioned in my first response, the very first step in assessing and determining whether drugs are considered to be added to our formulary is a clinical one. It's an assessment of a particular drug and the performance of that drug based upon its actual efficacy. That is, the actual benefits and success rates based upon clinical assessments of health care professionals. That's the first step, when compared to other types of drug treatments, whether or not it is superior is a first step. That is probably the most important step, even prior to considering financial aspects.

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

TIR: CAPE SABLE ISLAND CAUSEWAY - UPDATE

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I thought it was apropos to wear my Barrington Municipality tie today as I ask this question.

My question today is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal regarding the Cape Sable Island Causeway. For a number of years, residents in the area have expressed concerns that erosion is threatening the structural integrity of that causeway. I raised this question, I believe, in the Spring of last year, or the Fall of this year, so it's something that I have come to the House with on a number of occasions.

Department staff were soon out addressing that situation, and I want to thank the minister for his response. My understanding is that the department has completed some drilling to determine the soundness of the causeway. Can the minister provide an update on the findings to date, and the current status of the causeway which opened on May 1, 1949?

HON. LLOYD HINES: I really appreciate the question, especially in drawing the House's attention, and the attention of Nova Scotians, to the wonderful community of Cape Sable Island, which is one of Nova Scotia's unique, iconic communities and indeed, stands out in Atlantic Canada.

As the member mentioned, in 1949, the solution to transportation was to take on that unstoppable force, which is Mother Nature. In the instance of that causeway - and I thank the member for bringing this forward - we met with the community and we met with the local councillor. We have dispatched our people down there to view this very seriously, to determine what the solution is going to be. We haven't got the actual report back yet, but I'm expecting it in March.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I want to thank the minister for his attention in this matter. For the people in Clark's Harbour, the Hawk, Clam Point, and the rest of the residents of Cape Sable Island, the causeway is their only link to the mainland. While they would welcome work on the causeway, the disruption is something that they would certainly prefer to plan for.

Can the minister share any plans or next steps for the project, that will allow me to assist those residents in planning for any disruption in travel that they might experience?

MR. HINES: Depending on the results of the report, and the extent of the remediation that might be required, we would commit to doing a public meeting in the area to explain what's going to happen. It's only normal that you would do that.

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

TIR: MIRA GUT BRIDGE - UPDATE

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of TIR as well. Last summer, we had a major failure of some infrastructure in the community of Main-à-Dieu. It's known as the Mira Gut Bridge. The Mira Gut Bridge is

between the communities of Main-à-Dieu and Port Morien, and it's a major transportation link on the Marconi Trail. The bridge itself was about 150 years old, and it finally failed.

A couple of days ago, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal stood in this House and spoke with great warmth about the beauty of Main-à-Dieu and how everyone should visit there. Last year, when I asked him this question, he told me that at that time, an in-depth engineering study is currently under way as to how to fix the bridge. I wonder if the minister could provide an update on that in-depth engineering study.

HON. LLOYD HINES: Indeed, we do have a commitment to that repair. The House should understand that that was a railway bridge at one point, when it was built, and it was converted to a highway bridge later on. So it's a bit of a hybrid in terms of what's happening. The key area there is the involvement of the federal government in terms of the transportation access on the water through there. We're working with them, and that will feed into the information that we will need for the design, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MACLEOD: Thank you for the answer. It is my understanding that NAV CANADA has some input into how this takes place, and the height, and the type of bridge that needs to be built. My question is, could you describe to us, for the people of the area, when the proposal for NAV CANADA was submitted, so that people can understand why the timeline of fixing the bridge is so long?

MR. HINES: I will get that information for the member. I'm not sure what stage it's at. I talked to my people this week and they are working with NAV CANADA to design the kind of access that is going to be required because there are fishing boats that go through there.

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

ENVIRON. - NORTHERN PULP: CLASS 2 ASSESSMENT - COMMIT

MS. LENORE ZANN: My question today is for the Minister of Environment. This week we learned there has been yet another spill from a broken pipe at Northern Pulp, this time of ash slurry. I'll table that.

Last year the mill failed three emissions tests - I'll also table that - and in 2015, the mill spilled millions of litres of toxic effluent onto Pictou Landing First Nation's land, which I actually saw myself, and took pictures. These are just the recent incidents, Mr. Speaker. Without a rigorous Class 2 assessment I can understand why Nova Scotians are skeptical about Northern Pulp's new plan for a pipe in the Northumberland Strait.

My question for the minister is, will the minister commit today to a Class 2 environment assessment so that more environmental damage is avoided, before it is too late?

HON IAIN RANKIN: I want to thank the member opposite for the question. As I said last session in this House, the project for the new effluent treatment facility at Northern Pulp qualifies for the Class 1 assessment. That decision was made.

We continue to engage our federal colleagues and they will be involved in the process. In terms of how the project unfolds, it is not registered yet.

I want to thank the member for highlighting the compliance action that the Department of Environment takes. I want to thank the inspectors for going out and issuing the directive. It's something that this government takes very seriously, and we will continue to do so.

MS. ZANN: Well I'd like to be able to thank the minister for stopping the pipe action, if he could. Nova Scotia's fishers and First Nations people are all uniting to say clearly that what this Liberal Government is doing is just not enough. The Department of Environment likes to point to the voluntary community consultation that Northern Pulp is doing, but given the mill's history, community members have been skeptical, and now that process has broken down completely.

So, with fishers saying that they will be on the water blocking any construction if this pipe is approved, so the government could address this impasse, Mr. Speaker, with a Class 2 assessment, or by simply saying, no pipe.

Mr. Speaker, if the minister won't commit to a Class 2 environment assessment, can he guarantee today in this House to all Nova Scotians, that a pipe pumping a billion litres of pulp mill effluent into the Northumberland Strait won't harm the residents, the fishing, and our tourism industry?

MR. RANKIN: Let's be clear why we are here. We are here because we need to clean up Boat Harbour. Successive governments have not addressed that issue. Four times commitments have been made by the Province of Nova Scotia that that facility would close. This government intends to meet that commitment and it does require a new effluent treatment facility, so I am not prepared to say, no pipe.

It's easy to say that you are on both sides and if you want the mill to close, then you should just go ahead and say it. This project is an important project for the Province of Nova Scotia, and we will keep our commitment. It's the Number one example of environmental racism in this province and we will meet that commitment.

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

FISH. & AQUACULTURE: JORDAN BAY SITE - DAMAGE EXTENT

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. The minister likes to boast about all of the aquaculture regulations he has implemented as Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. On multiple occasions, both inside this House and in the media, the minister has claimed there was minimal damage at the Jordan Bay site, only 50 salmon died and none had escaped.

I'm not questioning the minister's statements but I want to see, fishers want to see, and the community wants to see, the information he is basing his comments on. At the end of the day we want to be satisfied that we know the truth. Will the minister do his job, use his ministerial discretion and table all the Jordan Bay inspection site reports, from January 5, 2008, up until today?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Thank you very much. We will be tabling a report on exactly what it costs the department to follow up on erroneous reports of floating salmon in the harbour, salmon piled up on the beaches, and all these things.

Again, as I said the other day, we put the helicopters up twice to review this place and took photographs of the area. There was none. It's a repeated story, over and over again. It costs the department thousands and thousands of dollars to investigate things that aren't real.

MS. MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for the response. Unlike the minister, I put on my boots on January 19th, and I walked that coastline. I didn't get in a helicopter. I have photos that I will table for the House. That doesn't look like minimal debris to me.

The aquaculture industry is still growing. It's going to be vital for our rural communities. That's why we need to be as transparent as possible and do things right. We don't need government secrecy against the people in the community who are on the ground, not flying around in helicopters.

There are pictures of ghost nets on the shore, feeding tubes all over the place, and salmon pens torn open, and claims of dead fish loaded on a truck ready to be discarded. My question is, how can the minister dismiss the concern of the community when they are the ones taking the pictures and walking the shorelines?

MR. COLWELL: Thank you again for the question. Indeed, we had enforcement staff on site through the whole process. The company cleaned up the debris that was on the coastline, as they were supposed to do, and as under the Act they have to do. Unlike any other pollution, or any other things that go on the shore of any harbour in this province, that's the only industry that has to clean it up. It's the only industry that we have the ability to enforce.

When you talk about debris - I was in Digby, and I never saw sign of you or anyone else there. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. (Interruptions)

Order, please. I'd like to remind the honourable minister not to refer to members opposite directly.

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

MR. COLWELL: I withdraw that, honourable Speaker. I went to Digby for the cleanup in the harbour, and there were indeed a couple of abandoned fish pens there that had been there because of a bankruptcy. That day, including those, we took several tons of product off the beach; 95 per cent of it was from commercial fishing industry.

We have no authority to get it cleaned up. We cleaned up anyway. The Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia and Clean Nova Scotia organized it. The mayor of the area was there at the time, and the fishing industry helped us clean it up, which we want to thank them for.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

H&W: PHYSICIAN RECRUITMENT - PLAN

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, in November of last year, Dr. Vojtech *Gregus* retired after trying to sell his family practice in Dartmouth for two years. Another doctor in the same practice retired at the same time. The departure of these two family doctors left more than 3,000 people without access to primary health care.

My constituent Alina Zuchavich is now at a loss. She is in a desperate situation, Mr. Speaker. Her family of five, including her 82-year-old mother with extensive health challenges, has nowhere to turn. Ad hoc visits to walk-in clinics and emergency rooms are not providing a sufficient standard of health care for the Zuchavich family.

My question through you, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health and Wellness: will the minister work with my office in Dartmouth East to find this family the primary care physician they so desperately need?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question asked by the member. We recognize the challenges of those Nova Scotians who don't have a primary health care provider, and we are working with our partners in the Nova Scotia Health Authority and the IWK with the recruitment initiatives. We are also partnering in unique ways with other departments, like the Department of Immigration, to help establish new

streams for international recruitment to provide those primary health care providers. We're also working to expand collaborative care practices.

For the member opposite and this specific case he is referencing, if he wants to reach out to my office, we will certainly endeavour to work with him to the best of our ability, but we can't force physicians to take on specific patients.

[2:45 p.m.]

MR. HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the minister's response. As the minister is aware, during Budget Estimates last year, the Collaborative Care Centre in Dartmouth East, with two new nurse practitioners, was highlighted by this government. These nurse practitioners have been at capacity with patients since last summer. A new clinic in Dartmouth South has been so inundated with family doctor inquiries that it has stopped answering the phone. Residents of Dartmouth, quite frankly all of Nova Scotia, deserve a better standard of primary care than what this government, in the past five years, has been able to deliver.

My question is, when will the minister and the Premier act with a sense of urgency, and clearly communicate a plan to Nova Scotians that will attract and retain more doctors to our province?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, indeed, we are acting. We came in in 2013 to establish a provincial health authority that allows us to assess and collect information in a way we were never able to do before, to ensure that Nova Scotians from one end of the province to the other receive access.

We now know, based upon establishment of the 811 Need a Family Practice list, as much as people like to criticize or complain about the size of the list, at least now we know as a province where the needs actually are for primary care needs. In fact, historically people have thought that the only needs for family physicians were in rural Nova Scotia, where we actually now know that about 40 per cent of the need is actually in the Halifax-Dartmouth region. Now we're able to actually focus on the need that nobody knew this province actually had prior.

We're collecting the data, making the decisions and acting in the best interests of all Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

H&W: COMPLEX MEDICAL CASES - MANAGEMENT

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the minister who now knows the need exists, just like we find out every single day. Imagine having a serious

underlying medical condition and contracting bronchitis and needing urgent medical care. You call your family doctor's office, it's closed due to some computer upgrades – this is what happened to a young lady who reached out to me this week. Thankfully, she was able to get the medication she needed by visiting a walk-in clinic. Now, needless to say, with her complex underlying medical condition, she was nervous to get prescriptions filled from a doctor who didn't have her full medical history.

My question for the minister today is, how are complex medical cases being managed for patients who don't have a family doctor?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. He made reference to the computer upgrades, the technology upgrades, taking place at the physician's office, the regular family physician that constituent had. That highlights the fact that we have a number of technological initiatives with family physicians to upgrade their systems, but also throughout our entire health care system, to standardize our health records, to have one patient, one record, that can be shared both with our primary care practices, the family physicians through the system and accessed into our hospitals and specialists to ensure the patient history and medical information is available where they need it, when they need it by the professionals providing that care.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it sounds so rosy, doesn't it? It just all sounds so rosy. But to make matters worse for this patient, she needed to get a form filled out so she could access her paid sick leave. The walk-in clinic wouldn't fill it out. By the time her family doctor's office reopened with the computer upgrades - three weeks to get an appointment. She's on bed rest, she's very sick already, she can't work because she's too sick and she can't get the forms filled out to get paid. Here's the kicker, this young lady works for the very health care system that we're talking about today, with people with very weak immune systems. So, if a health care professional with a family doctor can't get a form filled out, what hope does somebody who doesn't have a family doctor have?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I again thank the member for the question. As I've highlighted previously, we are working with our health care partners, with the Nova Scotia Health Authority, the IWK. Again, partnering with other departments in ways that has never been done before, to establish new immigration streams to increase our recruitment efforts for international physicians. We're expanding our incentive programs for tuition, expanding it across the province. All these initiatives to help . . .

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 65.

Bill No. 65 - Psychologists Act.

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

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I move that Bill No. 65, the Psychologists Act, be now read a second time.

I'm very pleased to stand today to talk to you about amendments to the Psychologists Act. Psychologists are an important part of Nova Scotia's health care system, delivering important mental health and addictions and other services across the province. We want our psychologists to have a strong voice in the health system with opportunities to enhance and advance the profession with the highest standards. Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, the amendments strengthen the public protection mandate of the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology, bringing the regulation of the practice of psychology in line with other self-regulated health care professions.

Amendments to this Act are the result of a collaborative effort between the Department of Health and Wellness and the board, which is the regulatory body governing the practise of psychology in the province. Authority for self-regulation was granted to the board through the Psychologists Act, which was passed in 2000 and proclaimed into force in 2002. Mr. Speaker, the board has requested amendments to the legislation now to modernize several key elements. There will be more to come in the years ahead, but we are moving forward with these amendments first. I'll outline them for you and for the benefit of my colleagues.

First is the introduction of a purpose clause or a mandate for the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology. The current Act does not contain this information, and it should. Just like other self-regulated health professions, this amendment clearly outlines that the board's prime directive is to regulate the profession in the public's best interest.

Second are changes to the manner in which board members are appointed and the length of their terms. Mr. Speaker, with these amendments in place, psychologists registered with the board will have an opportunity to elect five of the eight members of the board of examiners. There are three other board members, and they are to be appointed by Governor in Council. Also, the term of appointments will be reduced from three years to

two, although directors can still serve to a maximum of six consecutive years. This will allow the board to recruit members willing to volunteer their time for a shorter term as well as those open to longer-term commitments.

Third is the introduction of greater flexibility and options when it comes to licensing its members. Currently, the Board of Examiners in Psychology can place a condition on a licence in cases where there are concerns identified regarding competence, capacity, and character, but the board cannot deny a licence based on these same criteria, though this is a standard practice in virtually all other self-regulated health professions. These amendments will ensure this board has the same authority. Mr. Speaker, this is an important part of the board's mandate in protecting Nova Scotians' rights to safe, competent, and ethical care.

Finally, these amendments include the addition of a specific registration of appeal permissions to address registration denials, to support transparent objectives and impartial and procedurally fair registration reviews.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, these amendments are both straightforward and necessary to bring the regulation of psychologists in line with other health professionals and to strengthen and clarify the board's role in protecting the interests of Nova Scotians. These changes will give Nova Scotians confidence in the care they receive by psychologists in Nova Scotia and give licensed professionals an even stronger voice in regulating their profession.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill No. 65, the Psychologists Act. Psychologists are important members of our health care delivery team. The demand for psychologists in hospitals and in our community-based settings has dramatically increased, and clinical health psychology has become one of the most important disciplines in health care. The wait-list for mental health services in Cape Breton alone is 363 days, just two days short of a year.

Psychologists play a major role in understanding how biological, behavioural, and social factors influence health and illness. Psychologists help people to modify their behaviour and lifestyle so as to prevent and recover from health problems. Psychologists are equipped with training, skills, and knowledge to treat their patients through difficult times.

With the mental health system in crisis, we need to support our psychologists now more than ever. This bill will bring psychologists in line with other self-regulated health care professionals, and we like it because it was stakeholder-driven.

However, I would like to caution the government about some language that concerns Nova Scotia's psychologists. They are worried about the use of the word "character." They feel that that definition of character is very subjective and it's a term that is open to moral judgment that could have a huge, lasting impact on someone's career.

Mr. Speaker, this is how all bills should be created, in collaboration with the professionals that they affect. My PC caucus and I support this amendment to the Psychologists Act and we look forward to hearing from stakeholders during the Standing Committee on Law Amendments.

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

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: I'd like to discuss the amendments to the Psychologists Act and present or table a letter that we've received from the psychologists, sharing a few of their concerns, one of which being their ability to retain representation on the board. Although we are not completely opposed to the bill, we do have some amendments we would like to proceed with and for the government to review, and we look forward to dealing with those through Law Amendments Committee.

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

MR. HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to speak in support of Bill No. 65, amendments to the Nova Scotia Psychologists Act. As you and members of the House will know, psychology is a regulated profession under the Psychologists Act. The term "psychologist" is a title protected by our laws that govern the practice of psychology in Nova Scotia.

Pursuant to Section 22 of the Psychologists Act, one must be registered with the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology in order to use any title or description of services containing the words "psychology," "psychologist" or "psychological" to practice or offer to practise psychology, or to hold himself or herself out in any way to be entitled to practice psychology.

Mr. Speaker, the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology, which henceforth I'll refer to as the Board of Examiners, has itself requested these amendments to the Psychologists Act, the purpose being to modernize key elements of the Act.

Psychologists examine the behaviour of children and adults, diagnose psychological and emotional disorders and provide consultation and therapy. Psychologists are required by law to deliver competent, ethical, and professional, services. They are accountable to the public through the Board of Examiners and must meet rigorous professional requirements and adhere to prescribed standards, guidelines, and ethical principles. They must also follow requirements for maintaining competency throughout their career.

As outlined by the minister, the first and perhaps most important amendment is the introduction of a purpose clause, which clearly outlines the Board of Examiners' primary directive to regulate the profession in the best interest of the public.

Mr. Speaker, the Board of Examiners protects the public by regulating practitioners of psychology in Nova Scotia. As noted by the minister, the amendments advanced here today strengthen the public protection mandate of the Board of Examiners of Psychology, bringing the practice of psychology in line with other self-regulated health care professions.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all members of this House to support the speedy passage of Bill No. 65. Thank you.

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

[3:00 p.m.]

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues on both sides of the Legislature, representing all Parties, for sharing their comments on this bill; I appreciate the input at this stage.

Everyone seems to look forward to this bill proceeding through the legislative process so I'll delay no further and just move to close debate on second reading of Bill No. 65.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 65. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 70.

Bill No. 70 - Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act.

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

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 70, entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 1 of the Acts of 2003, the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act, be read for a second time.

I would like to take the opportunity to share some changes we will make to the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act. Before I get into the details of these amendments, I would like to highlight a few examples of the progress we have already made through the Apprenticeship Agency.

For instance, many of you have seen the agency's ads that are currently running. They are helping to raise the profile of apprenticeship and skilled trades as a viable career path. I'm pleased to report that last year, 93 students spent their summer working with certified journeymen and are a step closer to a career in skilled trades. We're also reducing barriers to completing an apprenticeship. We recently removed the tuition fees for apprentices returning to the classroom for their technical training. This is a savings of up to \$900. Harmonization of 10 trades in the Atlantic region is now complete with six more expected in the Spring of 2019. Thirty trades will be harmonized nationally by 2020. These are just a few of the recent examples of progress being made. This legislation is another example.

Industry stakeholders rely on effective enforcement to ensure a level playing field and provide confidence to consumers that work is being done safely by individuals who are trained and certified. The agency established the Compliance and Enforcement Advisory Group, made up of representatives from unions, non-union employees in rural and urban areas of the province, as well as small and large businesses. Many have expressed that they have worked hard to build a business but are disadvantaged when others continue to undercut them by not using trained and certified people for the same work. It has been a key issue, particularly for small- and medium-sized businesses. Nova Scotians who invest the time and resources to become trained and certified are frustrated when unauthorized individuals are doing their work for less pay and, in some instances, passing themselves off as being certified or being an apprentice.

We're lucky that most industry stakeholders follow the Act and are committed to growing the skilled trades through hiring qualified and certified professionals. But there are always those very few who will try to beat the system, and that's what this bill addresses, the very few. Hiring unqualified workers to do a job they are not properly trained for not only puts the workers at risk but also causes a disadvantage to other employers that are hiring trained, qualified professionals and paying them proper compensation. Because of this, stakeholders have asked us to level the playing field and ensure there is a fair and safe environment for all apprentices. This bill will give us the tools.

The proposed amendments are responsive to the industry recommendations primarily across the construction and motive power sectors. Those are the two sectors that have compulsory certified trades under the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act. This means you need to be a registered apprentice or certified journeyman or have some other form of permission to be working legally in that trade. This bill will give us the ability to enable enforcement officers to inspect employers at any time work is being performed. Mr. Speaker, this is significant because currently our Act only allows us to inspect between

the morning and 5:00 p.m. If work is being done outside of those hours, we do not have the ability to inspect.

This bill will prohibit interference with an officer and providing that officer false information. It will provide a duty to assist the officer when conducting an inspection, clarify the authority of the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency when issuing compliance and enforcement orders, make breach of an order issued by an enforcement officer subject to an administrative penalty, ensure employers and associations that register apprentices and dispatch workers on behalf of employers enforce these provisions, and raise the maximum penalty to \$10,000 for the first offence and \$50,000 for the second offence. We will capture data about pre-apprentices to position the agency to better support their transition to apprenticeship. This will also enable continuous improvement of programs based on outcomes.

Mr. Speaker, it's clear that the government is committed to working with industry to strengthen the province's apprenticeship system and make it an attractive post-secondary option for our youth. These changes will contribute to a stronger trade system in the province, better protect the skills and safety of those who work in the skilled trades, and support our youth in connecting with apprenticeship opportunities here at home. We look forward to developing the regulations with our industry partners over the coming months. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotia tradespeople contribute tremendously every day in our province to our economy, and also to our safety. When the work they do is done safely it impacts our safety. That's why our caucus has so strongly supported the idea of increased vocational training in our schools. For our province to grow and prosper, we need these people to maintain our existing infrastructure and also to build the necessary infrastructure to handle our future growth. They build homes, hospitals, roads, bridges, ships, community centres, rinks, and many more things.

There is a shortage of tradespeople in our province. This is especially disappointing with youth unemployment hovering around 19 per cent - the highest in the country. We should make every effort to make sure that being able to train in a trade is an option for people and that it is encouraged for people who have an interest.

This bill will provide the tools that are necessary to address the need to ensure that people who work in the trade sector are safe. I think that's important because if people who are not properly trained are working on these projects it could compromise safety. It is also intended to level the playing field for those who have obtained proper certification. For people who have gone out, received the training and become certified, it's important that the effort is respected and not undercut by people who are not getting the training and are

trying to circumvent the training and the safety to earn wages in these positions, when those positions should be going to people who have received their training.

Mr. Speaker, I also think about organizations. There are many organizations operating in good faith, hiring people who have the training, as they should, yet perhaps there may be some other organizations choosing not to do this, perhaps to save money, and may be compromising our safety in the process.

Mr. Speaker, our Party supports this bill because it will go after people who may say they have a certification when they don't. We need to make sure that individuals don't get work over those who choose to earn the proper credentials.

Mr. Speaker, we also think about the risk - consider the risk posed to individuals who are hiring people they believe to be accredited tradespeople to do work on their projects only to find out too late that they may have hired someone who hasn't been certified.

This bill, Mr. Speaker - I think I'll save some of these points for future reading, but we also recognize stakeholders have come forward to the government to ask for these changes. We would like to caution the government that rules are only good if they are enforced, and we understand that some stakeholders are concerned there are not enough compliance officers to enforce what we are trying to put into legislation here.

We do look forward to hearing from all stakeholders during the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, and we look forward to passage of this bill to get to the Law Amendments Committee.

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, as the Advanced Education spokesperson for the NDP, and here in the NDP caucus, we welcome these updates to the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act. We did a lot of work on this when we were in government and we know that these are also changes that the Mainland Nova Scotia Building Trades Council and industry partners are very pleased with. Tradespeople, contractors, unions all want to see better enforcement of apprenticeship rules and trades qualifications in order to ensure a level playing field. We feel these amendments clarify the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency's authority and improve the tools that it has available in order to pursue compliance.

Whether by supporting those who have made a mistake, or by enforcing meaningful repercussions for repeat offenders, we'd like to see more of this kind of legislation from this government. Meaningful enforcement is crucial across the board, for all employment

standards, health and safety standards, consumer protections, and environmental standards as well. Enforcement will help workers, employers, and consumers alike.

These amendments also create the option for individuals in pre-apprenticeship training programs to register with the agency. This helps the agency support those individuals, credit them for the work they have done, and track how many find work in their trade. This data is very important to make sure that Nova Scotians are actually being encouraged into trades where there's a labour demand and we aren't helping create oversupply. I'd also like to say it's nice and encouraging to see more women getting into this field as well.

Last year, the government announced it was investing to end tuition fees for apprenticeship programs, and the NDP welcomed that move as a positive step. This is an important opportunity today to say again that this must be a step towards eliminating all tuition fees at Nova Scotia Community College campuses. Eliminating tuition fees at the NSCC is really the right thing to do to move us towards being a high-skilled, high-wage, low household debt province, and remove barriers to success for working people from low-income and marginalized communities.

With that, I'll take my seat and I'll be adding more comments for third reading. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I was wondering if I could just ask for unanimous support to pass the bill through to third reading.

With those few comments, it's great to hear the Opposition supports this bill. I think it's an important bill, I think it's a fair bill, and I think that it protects not only the apprentices who are doing the work, but as the member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River mentioned, it also protects consumers who are purchasing these services, to know that they're purchasing it from someone who is certified.

With those few words, I would like to close debate on Bill No. 70.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 70. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 52.

Bill No. 52 - Motor Vehicle Act.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Government House Leader for calling Bill No. 52 today.

I'm glad to have the opportunity to speak for a few moments on the need for this piece of legislation. It's been something that I've had a lot of interest in for many years. We're looking back almost 14 years ago that I first introduced a piece of legislation to amend the Motor Vehicle Act that would require drivers to slow down when they come upon an emergency scene or a fire on our 100-Series Highways across our province. At that time, it wasn't well received, and it took some time to make sure that people within government, and definitely outside government, to recognize the importance of what was really and truly behind that piece of legislation in 2004.

There were many people who supported me, many paramedics who worked hard to try to bring forward changes that reflect improving safety for workers in Nova Scotia. We know we've done a really good job, and governments over the years have done a really good job at trying to improve safety, especially for highway workers. We know that the public was fully supportive of that and unfortunately, it often came at the expense and the deaths of highway workers, who were trying to do the repairs, and build the infrastructure that we have now, that we all use on a daily basis.

So that piece of legislation in 2014 would require motorists to slow down when you come across those accident scenes or fires. Unfortunately, I had to re-introduce it three other times. So, a total of four times over six years to try to get the message across that we need to take seriously the environment that our first responders work in when they're responding to emergency calls on the side of our highways.

[3:15 p.m.]

I was very proud, extremely proud, Mr. Speaker, to say that our first bill as a new NDP Government, Bill No. 1 in 2009 - interesting enough, it was on my birthday, November 5th - that we introduced the changes to the Motor Vehicle Act that would require motorists to slow down, and it passed at that time. Since then, there has been, especially more recently, some discussions around - and interesting enough since it passed almost seven to eight years ago - some discussion more recently on that law, and is it the right law? Should the speed limit be at what it is?

I engage and respect people's opinion on all sides of it, but I have to say, Mr. Speaker I stand behind the bill that I introduced in 2014, and then of course the government bill, and then the changes that we've seen more recently within trying to improve the legislation.

What Bill No. 52 would do is include tow operators. Often, when first responders, emergency vehicles, fire, police, ambulances show up at an accident scene on our 100-series highways, and our roadways, those tow operators are there working alongside first responders. I've worked with so many of them over the years, and they're an important part of the team that responds to those accidents, and to those emergencies. Unfortunately, those operators were overlooked when that piece of legislation was first brought forward.

The first six years, government wouldn't even entertain looking at supporting first responders, and I knew that it would be more difficult as we move on, to add to that piece of legislation. But I think we realize - I hope government and the members of the Legislature realize - that it is an important piece of legislation. Even though there are some criticisms out there - and more recently, the reason why there is criticism is that the police officers in our province are starting to enforce that legislation, Mr. Speaker. It's been seven years or eight years, and ignorance of the law is no excuse not to be penalized if drivers continue to pass through accident scenes or emergency scenes at a high rate of speed.

The controversy and the criticism is usually around the kilometers and the setting in the legislation. I've heard recently it's currently at 60 kilometers per hour. If you come across an accident scene, an emergency vehicle on the side of the highway, you're supposed to slow down to an open lane, and reduce your speed to 60 - and you're supposed to do that safely. The criticism is, we can't slow down from 110 to 60, it's too slow, we're going to cause another accident.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of any reported injuries from motorists who have abided by the rules, and tried to slow down, but I can tell you, many people don't slow down. People get caught up too much in what the posted limit is. The truth behind this legislation is that motorists need to slow down on the highways when you come across an accident scene, where emergency vehicles, and hopefully, tow operators are. You need to slow down. Speed on our highways is causing too many deaths, too many injuries, and I

don't care if it's 70 kilometers an hour or 50 kilometers an hour, we need to slow down. Nova Scotians need to slow down when they come across an accident scene, or any emergency scene on our highways, Mr. Speaker.

This amendment to this piece of legislation will include tow operators. I hope that people take the time to go out into their communities and meet the tow operators who work every day. They work long hours. They work strange hours. They are there to help protect your property and lend support.

When you have a vehicle go by you on a highway at 110 kilometers an hour, 120 kilometers an hour, or 130 kilometers an hour, it's a scary scene, Mr. Speaker. It's a scary scene. Anybody who criticizes the need for this legislation, all I ask is for them to put themselves in the boots and the uniforms of the men and women who respond to our emergencies, who respond to our requests for assistance on the side of the highway, often late at night. Put yourselves in their shoes and figure out if you would feel okay if a vehicle passes by you, within feet, within inches, at 100 kilometres an hour. I would say you would probably change your mind.

More recently, I know there has been a little bit of media on it, that maybe we should look at changing the speed limit, Mr. Speaker. I hope that the government recognizes that there can be some criticisms of the legislation, but by no means do I think we need to be looking at increasing the speed around this piece of legislation. People need to slow down. I don't believe that in Nova Scotia we have had any deaths caused by vehicles passing those emergency scenes, but we have seen it close to home, in New Brunswick, across Canada, and throughout the U.S.

Today is not the time to say, let's increase the speeds on our highways. Even at 60 kilometres an hour, if you're standing there with a pair of work boots, a jacket, and trauma pants on, and you're hit by a vehicle, you're probably going to be injured pretty severely. You're most likely going to be killed. To say we need to move it to 70 kilometres an hour, 80 kilometres an hour, or 90 kilometres an hour, to me, doesn't have any weight at all.

I commend the government for calling this bill. I know that there may be some input from the department when we get to Law Amendments Committee. I welcome that. But I really, truly think it's time for us to re-engage Nova Scotians and say, you need to slow down on our highways. We have men and women who are working there every day. It's their office. You wouldn't accept a vehicle running through your office at 100 kilometres an hour. You shouldn't expect first responders and tow operators to accept that either.

I congratulate the government. I thank them for calling this. I look forward to engagement over the process here as we hopefully move this forward to include the amendments that are in this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

HON. LLOYD HINES: I thank the member for Sackville-Cobequid for Bill No. 52. The member clearly illustrates the good strategy of persevering in getting legislation through the House. I think our department agrees, essentially, with much of what is in the bill, and that proves that perseverance pays off.

Tow truck operators are often forgotten in the equation that involves the unfortunate scene of an accident. They're often battling cleanup. They're the last ones there. The current legislation does not provide protection for that particular group. They are certainly vulnerable, so we hope to be able to add that to reduce the risk and ensure the safety of the tow truck operators.

The side benefit of the discussion about this legislation - as the member indicated, it does date back seven or eight years. It really was forgotten until recently. Particularly with the unfortunate death in New Brunswick, it came to the fore, and it got tremendous amount of attention, which increased public awareness of it. Often as a side benefit that helped it.

Maybe it was in a bit of an obscurity there, which wasn't doing any of us any good. It's a real consideration. It's going to call on drivers to be more attentive to what they're doing. Even with that, at all times drivers must take into consideration weather and safety issues. There's a difference between if you are on a twinned highway or if you are on a non-twinned highway, in terms of the evasive action you would have to take and the presence of oncoming traffic and all those kinds of things. The important thing is that we avoid placing the lives of the first responders in jeopardy.

In terms of the public conversation, Mr. Speaker, we're glad for the discussion that has occurred around this. We actually reached out last month to stakeholders to begin to consult in the process. I think what we'll do - I'd like to table those letters - is invite those stakeholders specifically to come to Law Amendments Committee and be heard there.

We feel this is a good piece of legislation. It's fine-tuning something. It's taking the wisdom of the Act a little bit further along. We look forward to discussing this in Law Amendments Committee going forward.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président. I just wanted to stand up for a few moments and thank the government for bringing this bill forward. My colleague for Sackville-Cobequid did work very hard to make sure that this bill - in its first form, of course - made it to the House of Assembly to be passed as a law in this House.

I would say, as an ex-firefighter and being in a situation where we did have a firefighter hit on the side of the road, you've got to really understand the importance of getting people to slide over, move over, slow down.

Art Dulong is a good friend of mine - survived his ordeal, but was hit in the middle of the road when we were responding to a fire one day. It was a Halloween evening, and people down my way like to burn tires and things in the middle of the road. It did subside after Art got hit, because I think everybody understood the danger of doing such stupid things. I still think we have a lot of work to do here, though.

As far as adding in another safety worker, not only for those tow trucks that are there at scenes of accidents, but the ones that are there just simply picking up a car that is broken down on the side of the road - they are still working. They still have their flashing lights on. If you have ever stood at the side of a road when somebody is going by at 110 or 120 kilometres an hour, it's really fast. It might not seem like that when you are driving your car, but it certainly is when you are standing there trying to do your work.

I think adding in tow truck drivers is extremely important. They do find themselves out there at weird times of the day, weird times of the night in the pitch black, and people driving in the middle of the night. This is what happened to us. The driver honestly - as much as there was a big red fire truck with all kinds of lights flashing and a fire in the middle of the road, the driver did not see any of it, because it was that time of night and she was just driving home and she did not notice it at all. So slow down.

We also need to make sure that people understand - I don't know how many times now I've come up to an RCMP officer pulling someone over, or an accident on the side of the road, and both sides are still going 100 miles an hour. They are going 100 kilometres an hour, not slowing down, because they don't know that the rule is there.

If the RCMP are cracking down, if HRP is cracking down, if the CBRM police are cracking down, good for them. People need to learn what the law actually is and actually follow it. So thanks to my colleague for Sackville-Cobequid for adding this piece to it. We look forward to the amendments that might be coming from the government in due time.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West. (Laughter)

MR. CHUCK PORTER: I don't know what that's about. Always taking some kind of grief.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker - I think. I am pleased to rise this afternoon for just a couple of minutes in support of this piece of legislation. As someone who worked on the street for a long time - about 17 years, almost - as a paramedic, along with the honourable member who has put this bill forward, on more than one occasion, on the side of the road, on a

whole lot of different times of the day - dark, light, rain, snow, you name it, we've been out there.

[3:30 p.m.]

You would really think it would be a common-sense piece where if somebody saw something happening on the side of the road, or in front of you, you would just naturally slow down. Yes, you should be watching because it's curiosity. People do that, we understand that. You're interested in what's going on, and you might stop and you might not, to render assistance. You may slow down or you may not. It's interesting being out there in that situation, when you really think that your focus is on the incident, the patient, the people – it's interesting to see how many people just keep on going at the same speed and don't slow down at all. They might see you, and they might not, even for some who might say are a little shorter – you certainly can't be missed on the side of the road.

In the early days, I think back to the Arsenault days, we never really had what we would call a uniform that stood out. Not like today, when everything is streamlined, in all fairness, so people recognize the emergency response teams, whether they're fire, ambulance, police, or whoever they are out there. So, things should have improved over the years, not gotten worse.

We were only one piece, as has been mentioned. The guys in the tow trucks out there doing a job after we're gone, but the vehicle might still be there, and these people are still zooming by. The police, maybe they're there, maybe they're not. Most times they were there, but it didn't seem to matter. The other thing we used to get a lot of was media. The TV crews would all be there, depending on where you were located. If you were somewhere here in the Halifax Regional Municipality, or they happened to be coming back from another story, then you added another dimension to this whole thing. It really gets interesting.

It's very cluttered is where I'm going with this, everything is busy and as people who are doing a job out there, whether you're police, fire, paramedics, you're not really thinking about the traffic nor should you have to think about the traffic. That is not your initial job out there. It's the same as that tow truck driver, or whoever is out there, they shouldn't have to worry about that, they should be able to go out there and do their job safely, and make sure they go home every night, or every morning, whenever they're working. Every day. So should every emergency responder, first responders, whether they're a volunteer or otherwise. That is the most important thing.

This is a good piece of legislation coming forward. Four times, I think the honourable member said it took to bring it. More than that maybe even. Well I'm glad he kept going. I honestly don't care how long it has taken, I'm glad it's here. We're having a conversation today, and debating this bill for Second Reading, and I know it will maybe have amendments as it moves through, but I'm glad to see the minister rise and I know

others are quite interested in this topic as well. Certainly I think everyone in this House is supportive as I look around the room today.

As I said, as someone who has been out there on the side of the road in not-so-favourable conditions, it's nice to see this going through, and to recognize the importance of those people out there on the roads doing that job today. I'm glad I'm not one of them today, but I'm thankful for all those that are out there. With those few words, I appreciate the opportunity.

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

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, first I'd like to start off by thanking the government and the minister for helping move this bill through the House, because it is truly a very important bill, and I know my colleague for Sackville-Cobequid has been determined to make this happen and rightfully so.

When we talk about the individuals that this bill will help, I think about my own area and the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. We have 33 volunteer fire departments who respond to different issues around the communities. All of those people are volunteers. They're leaving the safety of their homes to go out to help others who are having challenges within their own lives. By passing a law like this it adds a little more security, a little more safety for those individuals. As mentioned earlier, the tow truck drivers are out there trying to make a living, and they're trying to make sure that at the end of the day, what we all want is for people to get home safe.

It brings me back to when this province brought in the legislation for seat belts. Seat belts took a while for people to get used to and one of the challenges of this law is getting people to understand it. The way that we, as a community, and as a province, got people to understand the seat belt legislation was, we actually educated our children. In the schools, we pounded it into the children to understand how important it was for mom and dad to buckle up before they moved their car. When it comes to using this type of communications to drive home how important it is to slow down when you see the flashing lights, I think that our children can be a big part of that, and it would give them something to focus on.

Mr. Speaker, again, I'm very pleased to be able to stand here in my place and thank the government and thank the member for moving this forward. I look forward to being able to support the bill as it moves on.

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

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I appreciate the opportunity to speak just for a few moments on this bill. First I would like to acknowledge again the member for Sackville-Cobequid, not just for this piece moving through but for the original legislation. It was

mentioned even earlier today the number of paramedics and former paramedics who are currently colleagues here on the floor of the Legislature and recognized the work that they did throughout their time as a paramedic - and also all of the paramedics who are serving Nova Scotians day in and day out, and also first responders, whether they're RCMP, volunteer or paid, fire professionals firefighters.

Just to bring it down to a personal level, as a citizen, as an individual, the expansion, like many representatives, citizens, in rural parts of the province, I have a lot of family members in the volunteer fire community providing volunteer fire services. I know that this is going to be well-received by them, by my family members. On the tow truck side of things, my father drove a tow truck for many years. While he's retired now, I know he has had a few scary incidents in the past.

Again, I really appreciate this legislation and the support that it provides for all of those people who work on the sides of the roads.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: I will be brief, but I do want to acknowledge my colleague from Sackville-Cobequid for bringing this bill forward and my colleague from this side of the House for supporting this particular bill.

We had tragic incidents in the last session that brought this matter back to light. At that time, I had discussions with my colleague from Cumberland North as well as my colleague from Pictou West. We just felt that there was a greater need to bring more awareness and attention to this particular issue. As a result of those discussions, I had engaged the minister on a number of occasions for this very purpose. I think it's very appropriate that the discussions and the non-partisan approach to this particular bill are seen by all Nova Scotians to ensure that they realize and recognize that each and every one of us in this Legislature fully supports and endorses our emergency first responders.

To use my colleague's comments, that's a team effort roadside - fire services, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, utility vehicles, RCMP and municipal police services, our EHS. And our tow truck operators - as my colleague said, quite often, they are left on the side of the road to ensure that the vehicle itself is looked after.

One thing I would ask, in the wording of the bill, is that the legislation not be restricted to tow truck operators or tow truck vehicles responding to a collision but to ensure that it is capturing the services that that particular tow truck is providing in response to vehicles that are broken down, individuals who have become impacted by mechanical reasons to ensure that that bubble of safety is there and available in each and every set of circumstances.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to have had the opportunity to rise and speak. I have been there, as my colleagues have. I know that environment. It is their office space. This is an appropriate update to the bill. I fully endorse the comments of each and every one of my colleagues.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, I just want to acknowledge members opposite for their support of this, and it is inspiring and encouraging to see us work together for such an important bill and, as he mentioned, there was a gentleman RCMP officer who was killed in the line of duty, and it's heartbreaking to see when someone is there to help others and they lose their life in service. And even though it's not related, it is related - my father was foreman for the Department of Highways and had pulled over during an ice storm to speak to one of the operators and was struck by a car, and he jumped last minute so broke both his legs, but if hadn't jumped he would have probably been killed on-site.

Recently, I was driving into Halifax and listening to a talk radio show and there was a lawyer on and he was debating, giving all the reasons why he didn't support this bill and one of the reasons - he was speaking very poorly of police officers for ticketing people, and it made me angry because I thought people are motivated by money and if they know they're going to be ticketed and get fined, that often is how we change behaviour - and, to my colleague's point, if that's what it takes, then great. That's what I encourage police officers to do, enforce this. But, again, I just want to say thank you and it's encouraging to see us bring this forth and work together.

MR. SPEAKER: Just before I recognize the honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid, while we're all in the collegial sharing mood, I'd be remiss - although it's not proper for the Speaker to comment on legislation but I, too, grew up in a family of first responders on a volunteer basis in our community, as well as my father was a tow-truck owner/operator for nearly 30 years and I was in the co-pilot seat of the truck for many occasions on the side of a highway. So, I will limit my comments to say it is refreshing to see a piece of legislation such as this come forward. (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I think you should deserve a vote on the bill when we bring it forward.

But, honestly, I do appreciate all the comments and definitely I think at the time when I got this piece of legislation written up I didn't think I could get it passed and it was done maybe quickly, and after tabling it I did recognize that we do need to change the

language in it to reflect the job that tow operators do have, and that they're not always accompanied by an emergency vehicle or responding to a fire or accident. So, I welcome that.

I think our role here definitely is to ensure that we bring forward public policy that reflects trying to ensure that the men and women who go to work every day have the opportunity to go home, and this is truly a safety piece of legislation.

I, too, heard some of the comments that my colleague just mentioned and I just shook my head - and I made sure I didn't call in because I might have said something that I might have regretted. But I do want to say to those people who may have been ticketed lately, just take a moment and put yourself in the shoes of those people who are on the side of the highway and I think that will overcome any negative criticisms on this legislation.

I hope Nova Scotians embrace it for truly what it is, and that's making sure people get home at the end of their shift when they're out helping their fellow Nova Scotians. So, I appreciate it. Thank you.

I close debate on Bill No. 52. (Applause)

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

The motion is carried.

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

[3:45 p.m.]

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 66.

Bill No. 66 - Volunteer Services Act.

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

MR. KEITH BAIN: I move that Bill No. 66, an Act to Amend Chapter 497 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Volunteer Services Act, be read for a second time.

I'm pleased to stand today and speak on this bill. It's one of great significance to all Nova Scotians, to all members of this House - the PC caucus especially - and to me personally.

I would like to begin with some facts provided by the Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation. In Canada, 35,000 to 45,000 people die of sudden cardiac arrest each year.

An automatic external defibrillator, or AED, is a device containing sophisticated electronics used to identify cardiac rhythms and to deliver a shock to correct abnormal electrical activity in the heart. An AED will only advise the individual using the device to deliver a shock if the heart is in a rhythm which can be corrected by defibrillation. For every one-minute delay in defibrillation, the survival rate of a cardiac arrest victim decreases by 7 per cent to 10 per cent. After more than 12 minutes of ventricular fibrillation, the survival rate of adults is less than 5 per cent. But if an AED is immediately applied to the victim of cardiac arrest due to ventricular fibrillation, the likelihood of survival is high.

This bill responds directly to the recommendation from the Heart and Stroke Foundation which says that governments should “Establish provincial regulations or legislation to ensure immunity of the overseeing physician and responders from liability, excluding gross negligence or willful misconduct.” This bill speaks to the protection of volunteers, good Samaritans, and organizations whose AEDs may be used. We believe this to be an important first step.

In addition to removing the fear that using an AED would make a person possibly liable, it does something else, something we strongly believe in. We hope that it will encourage more access to AEDs and that they will be accessible through Nova Scotia’s public registry. If anyone would like to explore and learn more, their web site is: www.saveslives.ns.

Why does it matter? I have my own story, which many of you know, and there are many, many others. For example, in 2014, 28-year-old Michael Fowlie collapsed while cycling along Purcells Cove Road in Halifax. It took paramedics 8 minutes and 40 seconds to arrive, but by then it was too late. His father found out in the tragic months that followed that an AED may have saved his son’s life and that there was one nearby. Had the 911 callers known where it was, they may have saved Michael Fowlie’s life.

As mentioned, time is of the essence. Were it not for the quick actions of my fellow colleagues in the PC caucus, I wouldn’t be here today to speak on this bill. So I encourage all members of this House to keep up their CPR training, to find out where the nearest AED is located - there are two in this Legislature - to support growing access to AEDs, and to support this bill. (Applause)

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: I want to thank the government for calling this bill and thank the member who just spoke. We’re glad that he is here able to debate, introduce, and advocate for good public policy and changes to legislation. I hope that the message behind this legislation gets out to the public because it is about trying to save lives. Not to repeat

what my colleague just said, but he hit it right on when he talked about the importance of early use of a defibrillator on cardiac arrest and those who need that device, Mr. Speaker. It does save lives.

I know a lot of emphasis over many, many years had been around compressions and breathing and CPR for people who have had a heart attack or who are in cardiac arrest. Through all of the training that I have received, you recognize that, yes, that is useful. It is helpful, but it's limited in the viability of that patient or the success of having that patient respond appropriately to CPR. They teach you that it really does take energy to get that heart to start beating again. That's exactly what defibrillators do - they try to get that heart back to a normal sinus rhythm so that the function of your body can continue, and to move that blood through so that you can kind of come out of that episode that you're in.

I do hope that this legislation, if it goes through the process and it passes, is a tool to educate Nova Scotians. Especially in more recent years, I think it's pretty hard to enter a public space, a facility, without noticing the AED signs and the defibrillators in our communities all across Nova Scotia. It's amazing to see that. I would hope that this may encourage people, even if they don't have that CPR first aid training, to use these automated defibrillators. You just need to break the glass, take the machine out, and turn it on. It walks you through, very easily, how to attach the pads and how to energize the machine so that you can hopefully succeed in bringing that person back to be able to live, Mr. Speaker.

Good Samaritans are what we need. We need to make sure that Nova Scotians know that even if you don't have that training, you can help immensely. Even maybe eight minutes, which is a quick response time, we see that sometimes that's not quick enough. If a bystander with no training can at least put the pads on someone and turn the machine on, they could save a life. I think that all Nova Scotians would want to do that.

I hope that the awareness around this does encourage the use of the registry, promote it, encourage organizations and facilities that have the machines to register them. One day, hopefully, it will be as easy as calling 911 and being told there's a defibrillator 600 metres from where you're at - please send someone to get it and attach these pads to that individual.

Again, congratulations to the member. I thank the government for calling this legislation. I hope it gets full support of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of the Voluntary Sector.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I want to thank the member for Victoria-The Lakes for bringing forward this piece of legislation, which comes under my department, in the Volunteer Services Act. I also want to thank the member for Sackville-Cobequid for a little bit more of the medical side of what an AED is, what function it carries out when a person is in cardiac distress.

I also believe in making sure that people who do use it, who come forward in that critical moment of an incident, are protected should there be some reason where a legal matter may come into play. I think it is important that they have protection and that the organizations that will have AEDs also get that kind of protection.

I think this bill may need a little bit of tweaking in terms of the Law Amendments Committee, but this absolutely has the right direction, and government will be supporting this piece of legislation.

I just wanted to draw the attention of the House for a moment to a person observing in the gallery today, one of our security people, Richard Giroux, who, while I was Health and Wellness Minister, not only asked but kind of commanded that I make sure that we get an AED here at Province House. So thanks to Richard, we are well-equipped here at Province House. (Applause)

I don't want to go on too long. I know some other members may want to speak to this. I don't even know why I use that phrase anymore. But also, I think members are perfectly correct, that hopefully it's going to create that great awareness to invest in AEDs, but also to have people who can do CPR - proper CPR, which has changed as well quite dramatically from when it was first introduced, that the public could assist somebody in cardiac distress, and that many of us do get trained in that regard.

I'm not sure if it's still the case, but at one time I guess Seattle was the best place in the United States to have a heart attack - they had so many people trained in CPR and so many AEDs available for use. We do have a lot in the province, but as the member for Sackville-Cobequid said, we don't know where they are. If they are not registered, well, then it becomes a useless piece of equipment.

I'm hoping this legislation will really promote us to become one of those very conscious areas of having CPR, having AEDs, especially where there are many people who are congregated. In fact, just in the last number of weeks, I had a call from a church in my community, where they've had two incidents in a very short period of time.

I think this bill has great merit. I look forward to supporting it and seeing it move on. With that, I'll take my place, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: This is going to be one of my favourite days in the Legislature. I am one of the caucus members who assisted our beloved member for Victoria-The Lakes when he collapsed in our caucus office. (Applause) As health professionals, we get trained that we are to respond, and we are obligated to, but no one else is.

I just want to remind you all of the times when we were told not to pull the fire alarm. I had somebody come and do a talk at our school, and they made every one of us pull this pretend fire alarm. We have been so conditioned not to do something that she wanted us to overcome that hesitation.

The last thing we need is somebody seeing that AED package sitting there and then being afraid to be the first one to step forward. When our member collapsed at our caucus office, we were all in the room. There were four of us who just got up and went over. Queens-Shelburne, Northside-Westmount - who is not here today - Cumberland North, and Argyle-Barrington, all of us went into action. We knew what to do. But I will tell you, I've had to do this many times, and they are not all successful. The last time it wasn't successful for me, the child was already gone, and she was only five months old.

When we went into action the member's heart stopped. Statistically speaking, as soon as that happened - I know this member and I, who are both physiotherapists, both looked at each other, and we knew he was gone. We just had to continue doing CPR until the paramedics came and confirmed that. Then, by some miracle - and that's the only thing I can call it - he woke up with a vengeance (Applause) It took five of us, including this one here, to hold him down. So don't mess with this man, I'm telling you that. Honestly the shock on my face and this member's here was like we had seen a miracle.

[4:00 p.m.]

The other part, though, is it took the ambulance 18 minutes to get there, and when we got to the hospital we were very fortunate he was taken right in, put right on a ventilator. All of those circumstances are the reason why he is here today. Had we had an AED, we might have raised the odds considerably. I can tell you for the baby that lived in the house next door to me, there were 25 people standing outside the house when somebody pounded on my door and said, come, there's a baby in trouble. Had even one of them known there was an AED eight houses away, down at our Lions Club, that baby might still be here. But those volunteers didn't know what to do, they didn't know where to go. We can change that today, and I'm so excited at the full-Party support.

There is another person who had a heart attack who didn't make it, and that is my father, who was the original love of my life. When I was only 25 years old, he developed leukemia. Fortunately for me, he was in the hospital when he had his heart attack. People there tried to rescue him, and they knew what to do. I have tremendous peace of mind because I know they did absolutely everything they could. It just happened to be his time, which, as an accountant, it was Tax Day. I like to see that as a sign that he was sending us a message: I'm ready to go. I have a good sense in my heart that everybody did everything they could. I know an awful lot of other people who do not have that peace of mind, there is something else that could have been done, and with this legislation we can make that much more likely.

I'm going to encourage us all to vote with, perhaps, the amendments that need to be brought in to make it completely passable, but I thank everybody for their support for this legislation and I thank the member for Victoria-The Lakes. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

MR. CHUCK PORTER: I'm pleased to rise for just a few minutes to speak to this very important bill. Again, as someone who has been there and done that, shall we say, on more occasions than I would care to share, there are in fact a number of success stories in that, and it just goes to show the absolute importance of not only having an AED somewhere handy, but to be educated on how to use it.

As the honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid spoke, they are pretty easy to use, they will direct you. If you can turn it on, the rest is pretty easy from there. So, it is important to get these things out there, but it is more important to let people know where they are at. That will certainly make a huge difference.

As was described by the member putting the bill forward, the member for Victoria-The Lakes referenced a number of different steps and important time frames. That's true in statistical data but that's not always true; every case is a little bit different. I remember going 11 minutes to a call one time, 11 minutes on a response time. As far as I know, that gentleman is still alive today, so there's a lot of miracles out there that happened, if you want to call them that.

Now the honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes was described a few minutes ago as a miracle. He's a Leaf fan so it's just going right along, Keith, with the season, which is a wonderful thing. (Laughter) But, in all seriousness, it is great that you had the members there that day that needed to be there. They looked after your care, and that's super, and we're all pleased to see you sitting in that seat.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I am going to take my seat.

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

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, again a piece of legislation coming forward to the floor of the House, where I believe there's consent amongst all members, that this is a good piece of legislation to move forward.

A lot of conversation about the importance of these devices, but also the role of individuals. As I believe the member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage made reference to, the device sitting on the wall saves no lives, so taking down barriers to help people feel comfortable and confident in making use of these devices is what will ultimately lead to saving lives.

However, I would like to pick up, and I'm going to put on my ministerial hat for just one moment. The member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage did make reference in one of the stories that she shared - if only the individuals had known that there was an AED just eight doors down at the Lions Club, a community building. That mirrors opening remarks the member for Victoria-The Lakes mentioned about a situation where a father learned after a young adult passed away, that there was an AED not too far away. In fact, that individual has done a lot of advocacy around AEDs.

I just wanted to highlight that earlier this year, late in 2017, that the province did launch an AED registry. I want to take this opportunity - as this legislation is on the floor of the House - to let all members here in the Legislature know and please go back to your communities. If you know that there are organizations, professional or volunteer organizations which have AEDs, or that may look at implementing or purchasing AEDs, they should also register those AEDs. They can do so by going to savelivesns.ca to learn more about this registry, Mr. Speaker.

Indeed, share it with your constituents. Let them know that they can register through that registration. It provides 911 operators an idea of where AEDs exist, so that if someone is calling in, if they don't know what to do or where to go, they can direct people to the nearest AED.

In addition to that, there are plans to expand those services and improve technology to actually alert people who have the AEDs, if they voluntarily register, to be notified automatically if a call comes into 911, so that someone doesn't have to go find it, it can actually be deployed to the site.

So, a lot of advances here, this legislation is one piece. I just want to take the time to thank the member for bringing it forward, thank my colleagues for really continuing to support it, and to highlight again the savelivesns.ca website as part of the registry, and encourage people to get out there and register those AEDs.

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

The honourable member for Victoria the Lakes.

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all the speakers for their words in support of this bill. It gives me an opportunity too, to thank everyone in the Legislature for the care and concern they showed after my incident, we'll call it that.

You know, it's ironic, Mr. Speaker, that just a few days before I had my incident, I brought up AEDs for caucus discussion. I think there's obviously a guardian angel, or the devil didn't want me, it was either one. (Laughter) Anyway, I hope - I know for a fact it was the guardian angel.

So, Mr. Speaker, I commend the government for allowing this bill to be brought forward. There's a lot of good things that can come as a result of this bill - just the education of people who don't need to fear using an AED, and as the minister mentioned, the importance if there is an AED in the community, that it be registered for the benefit of everyone that lives close by.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I move that we close debate on Bill No. 66.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 66. Would all those in favour of the motion please say, Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government business for today. I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow, Friday, March 2nd, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Following the daily routine and Question Period, we'll move to Second Reading of Bill No. 72, an Act to Reform the Administration of the Public Education System.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to adjourn to rise tomorrow, Friday, March 2nd, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

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

[The House rose at 4:10 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 761**

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Custio Clayton of North Preston, a 2012 Olympian boxer, in December 2017 won the World Boxing Organization international welterweight title; and

Whereas he also claimed the WBC Continental Americas welterweight and the IBF international welterweight titles in 2017; and

Whereas the World Boxing Organization international title will move him from 15th-place ranking to the top 10;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House recognize and congratulate Custio Clayton for his tremendous success and determination to excel in boxing at the international level.

RESOLUTION NO. 762

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Steve Giles, former Orenda Canoe Club paddler, won a bronze medal at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, Australia; and

Whereas he was recently recognized for his achievements with a ranking of No. 9 in the Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame's Top 15 poll; and

Whereas he has served as a role model for athletes in the Orenda Canoe Club and, indeed, the world.

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House recognize and congratulate Steve Giles for his many athletic achievements and positive influence on young people.

RESOLUTION NO. 763

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Pastor Kirby Spivey of the New Beginnings Ministries (NBM) became the second pastor in July of 2012; and

Whereas as Youth Advocacy and Mental Illness are two causes close to his heart, and he collaborated with other pastors to found the Save Our Sons/Sisters Mentoring Society (SOS) to improve the lives of our young people; and

Whereas he also developed the Youth Growing in Christ (YGC) as a safe place for young people to build friendships and learn respect for themselves and each other;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House recognize and congratulate Pastor Kirby Spivey for his tireless efforts to improve the lives of others in our community.

RESOLUTION NO. 764

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas North Preston Green Hands, a community group of youth ranging from six to 26, are actively involved in gardening in their community; and

Whereas these dedicated young people prepare, plant, maintain, and harvest a community garden; and

Whereas these young people learn responsibility and teamwork as well as self-sufficiency and hard work;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House recognize and congratulate the North Preston Green Hands on their Harvest Celebration and tremendous achievements and for serving as an inspiration to the young people of the community.

RESOLUTION NO. 765

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Tyler Simmonds is a tireless advocate for those individuals suffering with mental illnesses; and

Whereas he openly discusses his personal struggle with depression and anxiety as a means to encourage young people with similar health issues to get treatment; and

Whereas he spoke at the We Day event in September 2017, which is held to celebrate youth doing good work in the community and individually;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House recognize and congratulate Tyler Simmonds for his dedication to improving the mental health of young people.

RESOLUTION NO. 766

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Dr. Chadwick Williams of East Preston completed his medical degree at Dalhousie University in 2004 to continue studying internal medicine in Calgary and Gastroenterology in Los Angeles; and

Whereas he returned to Nova Scotia to be close to his home community and to practise at the Woodlawn Medical Clinic and the Dartmouth General Hospital; and

Whereas he provides compassionate care to area residents and is a role model to youth in his home community;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House recognize and congratulate Dr. Chadwick Williams for his tremendous success and making a positive difference in the health and well-being of many Nova Scotians.

RESOLUTION NO. 767

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Mr. Douglas MacCabe of Lake Echo died on February 15, 2018, and will be sadly missed by his family and many friends in the community; and

Whereas he was a talented and successful artist who loved to share his skill with his many students; and

Whereas he was a founding member of the Citizens on Patrol (C.O.P.) in Lake Echo;

Therefore, be it resolved that the members of this house recognize Mr. Douglas MacCabe for his many successes, and for making a positive difference in our community.

RESOLUTION NO. 768

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 the body of Leading Aircraftman Hollis Eugene Howard from Aylesford, who served in the Second World War, was found in 2015 after being missing for 75 years; and

Whereas in 1938, Leading Aircraftman Howard enlisted in the Royal Air Force and was posted in the No. 10 Bomber Reconnaissance North Atlantic Squadron in Dartmouth, where he was among the missing after being forced to parachute drop into the snow-covered Québec wilderness, in the dark, frigid weather in 1940; and

Whereas in 2015, the family received information indicating a soldier who was laid to rest at Mount Hermon Cemetery in Québec City identified as Leading Aircraftman Howard and a rededication ceremony was held to formally acknowledge his final resting place in 2017;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in paying respects to Leading Aircraftman Hollis Eugene Howard for his service in the Second World War, and offering our heartfelt compassion to the family.

RESOLUTION NO. 769

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

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

Whereas Jessica Best-Grant, resident of Berwick, is featured in a national cystic fibrosis campaign, sharing her personal story with the disease and raising awareness of Canada's ongoing commitment to finding a cure; and

Whereas cystic fibrosis is a life-threatening genetic disease that causes the body to produce an abnormally thick buildup of mucus in the lungs, pancreas, and other organs that result in lung damage, bacterial infection, digestive problems, and respiratory failure, affecting one in every 3,600 children born in Canada; and

Whereas Mrs. Best-Grant hopes by sharing her story will also encourage fellow cystic fibrosis patients, adults and children alike, to discover their passions and focus on the things that bring them joy;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jessica Best-Grant on sharing her incredible story, being an inspirational role model, and raising awareness of individuals living with cystic fibrosis in the community, province, and country.

RESOLUTION NO. 770

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 former Valley journalist Heather Killen celebrated the grand opening of her bookstore, Shelf Life Used Books, in Berwick on November 24, 2017; and

Whereas Ms. Killen has translated a long-standing love of books and reading into a locally owned business supporting the Town of Berwick; and

Whereas locally owned businesses can offer uniqueness, personalized service, product diversity, and economic advances to create prosperity in our communities;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Heather Killen on the grand opening of her bookstore, and in extending best wishes for a successful local business.

RESOLUTION NO. 771

By: Hon. David Wilson (Sackville-Cobequid)

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

Whereas Sydnee Pearce is an 18-year-old resident of Lower Sackville who has been practicing Taekwon-Do since the age of four; and

Whereas Sydnee has competed throughout Canada, and as far away as Jesolo, Italy, in May 2015; and

Whereas Sydnee is one of five members of Hiltz Taekwon-Do in Lower Sackville who represented Canada at the ITF Taekwon-Do World Championships in Dublin, Ireland, from October 9 to 16, 2017, where she placed 3rd in her patterns division;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize Lower Sackville's Sydnee Pearce for her accomplishments in Taekwon-Do and wish her success in her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 772

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Environment)

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

Whereas Sandra Hennigar of Prospect Bay is very involved in St. James United Church in Goodwood, which is a point of Crossroads Pastoral Charge, and Sandra is a trustee, chair of council and chair of the Pastoral Care Committee; and

Whereas as chair of St. James Council Sandra sits on the Crossroad Council and is St. James' representative at Halifax Presbytery; and

Whereas volunteers are the heart and soul of our communities, and the dedication of individuals such as Sandra ensures that our local churches are vibrant and valued institutions open to all;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Sandra for all she does for St. James United Church and the community at large.