



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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### First Session

**TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 2018**

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House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 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 begin the daily routine.

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I want to take our colleagues back to Question Period on March 21, 2018, a question from my colleague, the member for Dartmouth South concerned about the lack of response from the Department of Justice specific to data around close confinement. We responded through the Department of Justice to my colleague's office on November 3, 2017, in response to those concerns, and I want to table that document for the record of the House.

Mr. Speaker, as well on March 29<sup>th</sup> my colleague, the member for Pictou East in Question Period spoke about the lack of response from the Department of Justice to her on a specific issue that my colleague brought to the floor. The Department of Justice responded to my colleague on March 14<sup>th</sup>, and I want to table that document for the record of the House as well.

MR. SPEAKER: The documents are tabled.

As Speaker, and pursuant to Section 18(4) of the Auditor General Act, I am tabling the April 2018 Report of the Auditor General, entitled Follow-up of 2014 and 2015 Recommendations.

The report is tabled.

## **STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

### **GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw the attention of the House to the east gallery where we're joined today by three very special guests - all our guests are special, but I want to recognize three of them. They are with the Canadian Cancer Society and The Lodge That Gives: Carol-Ann Oster is here as The Lodge manager; Andrea Harnish is the booking coordinator; and Christopher Clements is here as a resident of The Lodge.

I would ask the House to give them a warm welcome. (Standing Ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Before I read the resolution, I want to share with the House that I had a great opportunity to have a conversation with our three guests and expressed our appreciation, my appreciation, on behalf of all Nova Scotia families who are touched by cancer and who have had the great experience of being embraced by The Lodge. On behalf of those families I want to say thank you.

To Christopher, who is here with us as a patient, I talked to him about the Relay for Life event where many of us get to go to and how inspirational it is to be there and see so many yellow shirts because that means we're winning the battle.

Christopher, your presence here today continues to remind us that that ongoing battle is before us but collectively, by working together, we will make sure that we meet that challenge. Your continued presence in putting a face to cancer is an important part of our collective journey.

So, on behalf of all of us, accept our warm appreciation. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1122**

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

Whereas every day many Nova Scotians and their families are impacted by cancer; and

Whereas this April is Daffodil Month, and once again Nova Scotians across the province will be donating their time and money to the Canadian Cancer Society; and

Whereas this year the Canadian Cancer Society is celebrating 80 years of impact in the fight against cancer;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly recognize the hard work of the Canadian Cancer Society and their volunteers who work to eradicate cancer and improve the quality of life of those living with cancer, and urge all Nova Scotians to make a donation of their own during the month of April.

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 Agriculture.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your indulgence, I would like to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. COLWELL: With us today in the east gallery is Thian Carman. He is the youngest registered farmer in Nova Scotia. He is a lifelong 4-H member, has recently



enrolled in the Agricultural Campus at Dalhousie University in Bible Hill, and with him today is Laura Sharples, Thian's grandmother. Thank you so much for coming today. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1123**

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

Whereas agriculture is the backbone of our provincial economy, and ensuring that new generations of Nova Scotians pursue farming as a career is important for maintaining the jobs and economic activity it contributes to our rural communities; and

Whereas Thian Carman became the youngest registered farmer in Nova Scotia and is currently enrolled in study at the Agricultural Campus at Dalhousie University in Bible Hill and, as a person with a disability, he is challenging stereotypes and proving that agriculture is an occupation open to anyone who is willing to undertake the hard work that it requires to succeed; and

Whereas Thian Carman has demonstrated a lifelong passion for agriculture through his participation at 4-H and receiving a 4-H Canada Leadership Excellence Award of Distinction in recognition of his commitment to the importance of agriculture;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in thanking Thian Carman for his dedication, commitment, and passion pursuing a career in agriculture and wish him continued success as a young farmer in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1124**

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

Whereas Fred and Elizabeth Fountain of Halifax have been strong supporters of the arts in Canada and gave a significant gift to the National Gallery of Canada which is home to the most important collections of historical and contemporary Canadian art; and

Whereas their gift will allow the National Gallery of Canada to enhance national outreach programs, further their programming, and aid in the future success of the gallery and other art institutions across the country; and

Whereas Mr. Fountain is an honorary Governor of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and both have been life members since 1989, making generous contributions to the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia through acquisition programs since 1992 and supporting the advancement of Nova Scotia's artists at a national level;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Fred and Elizabeth Fountain and thanking them for their generous contributions and support to arts and culture in Nova Scotia and across the country.

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 Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would like to make an introduction if I could.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. COLWELL: In our east gallery as well today, we have Dick Stewart and his wife, Diane. I would ask them to rise and get a warm welcome from the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1125**

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

Whereas the success of Nova Scotia's fishery depends on hard work and individual efforts of people like Richard (Dick) Stewart who has been helping the province become the largest seafood exporter in Canada for the past three years in a row; and

[1:15 p.m.]

Whereas Dick Stewart has been an active participant in the fishery, both as a harvester and as an organizer, representing interests of the harvesters and groups with which he is affiliated, also recognizes his contribution with an award of excellence at the 20<sup>th</sup> Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture Conference, recently held in Halifax; and

Whereas for 39 years, Dick Stewart has served as the manager of the Atlantic Herring Co-op, a position that has allowed him to use and share his unequalled knowledge of the fishing industry to affect positive change and growth in the fishery, and the communities where he and his members live and work;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in expressing gratitude to Dick Stewart for his decades of dedication and service to the province's fishing industry and the contribution he has made to his 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 Fisheries and Aquaculture.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1126**

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

Whereas the Sackville Rivers Association is celebrating 30 years of environmental stewardship on the Sackville River and surrounding watersheds, serving its community through protecting and restoring fish and fish habitat, and raising awareness about the environment of the Sackville River Watershed; and

Whereas the Sackville Rivers Association has successfully undertaken salmon and trout habitat restoration, reconnected fragmented habitat, supported provincial restocking programs and advocated educational programs such as the River Rangers, Fish Friends, and Learn to Fish; and

Whereas the Sackville Rivers Association has recently been awarded the Nova Scotia Salmon Association Affiliate of the Year award which recognizes work for its network of dedicated volunteers on projects such as the Sackville Greenway Trail, Atlantic salmon restoration, and promoting environmental stewardship in urban settings;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate the Sackville Rivers Association on their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and their important work to support the environmental health of the Sackville River Watershed and surrounding communities.

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**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, if I may make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. FUREY: Joining us today from Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Canada, I want to introduce Andrew Murie, and I'd ask my good friends from MADD Canada to rise when I call their names: Andrew Murie, CEO of MADD Canada, Susan MacAskill, Chapter Services Manager, Atlantic Region, and Anissa Aldridge, member of the National Board of Directors.

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

**Bill No. 108 - Entitled an Act to Provide for the Regulation and Sale of Cannabis. (Hon. Mark Furey)**

**Bill No. 109 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 246 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Labour Standards Code. (Ms. Tammy Martin)**

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

#### NOTICES OF MOTION

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish on an introduction.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as you may recall from last week's resolution, yesterday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, was World Autism Awareness and Acceptance Day. Earlier today the mayor, on behalf of the city, raised the flag at Grand Parade in recognition.

I would like to draw the attention of members to the east gallery where I would like to introduce two special guests whom I would ask to rise when I acknowledge them - Robyn Bradshaw, who is the development officer for Autism Nova Scotia, and Brian Foster, the operations director for Autism Nova Scotia.

I would like to ask my colleagues to give our guests the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

#### JEWISH COM.: PASSOVER - JOY

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, people of the Jewish faith are currently in the midst of celebrating the festival of Passover. Passover commemorates the liberation of the Jewish people from slavery in ancient Egypt and celebrates their freedom as a nation under the leadership of Moses. Passover, or Pesach, is observed by avoiding leaven because the Israelites had to flee before their bread could rise. It's highlighted by Seder meals that include four cups of wine, eating matzah and bitter herbs and retelling the story of Exodus.

It's a multi-day holiday that began at sundown last Friday and will end at sundown this Saturday. Today I wish Nova Scotia's Jewish community a Spring fresh with new promise and a Passover full of joy. In other words, Chag Pesach Sameash. Thank you.

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

### **PARRIS, EDDIE: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, the CBRM community lost a great champion with the passing of Eddie Parris. Eddie Parris was a former steelworker and spent over a decade as a Whitney Pier alderman representing Ward 5 in the former City of Sydney council. An amazing musician, Eddie performed with well-known artists and was later in life known as the leader of the Inspirational Singers entertaining at events throughout the municipality, including a performance in front of Queen Elizabeth II.

Eddie was proud of his heritage and a strong defender of cultural diversity representing the African Nova Scotian community, both locally and across the province. Parris was honoured for his leadership and love of music in 2016 when the CBRM presented him with the Tom Miller Human Rights Award, named after his close friend. Eddie was proud of his home and his loss will be felt by many across Cape Breton. Eddie was an inspiration to those of us who strive to serve and assist our communities, and I believe all members of this House can appreciate and learn from his tireless and selfless work.

It will be sad for many who will no longer hear his powerful voice lead the Inspirational Singers, but his music and community leadership will never be forgotten.

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I would draw everybody's attention to the west gallery where we have a young woman visiting us, a very special young woman from my constituency of Truro, Mya Luddington and her father Tim Luddington, and also her aunt Callee Frances Robinson. Let's give a warm welcome to them today. (Applause)

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

**LUDDINGTON, MYA:  
ATHLETIC/SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENTS - CONGRATS.**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, Mya Luddington is a dedicated and talented student at École acadienne de Truro. She has been recognized for her academic performance, and also she is involved in sports and has been recognized for her many, many sporting achievements in track, soccer, archery and, recently, she made the junior girls volleyball team that will compete in the upcoming Acadian Games. Mya was also recently honoured for her contribution to women in sports at a ceremony held at Mount Saint Vincent where she met female Olympic athletes who very much inspire her.

I request that all members of the House of Assembly congratulate Mya for being an outstanding role model to young women aspiring both to excel academically and in sports. Félicitations, Mya.

Je demande l'adoption sans avis et sans débat. Merci.

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to remind the honourable member this is Statements by Members and not Notices of Motion.

The honourable member for Kings South.

**AUTISM AWARENESS & ACCEPTANCE MO. - PARTICIPATION**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, the month of April is Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month and yesterday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, was World Autism Awareness Day.

On Saturday, I attended an Autism Awareness Barbecue in Wolfville, organized by Harrison Czapalay. This weekend Wolfville was shining blue as many homes, businesses, and even U. Hall at Acadia added blue lights in the trees and windows throughout the town.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that Nova Scotians are an open and generous society, but there's always more work that we can do. I rise today to draw your attention to autism, and for us to think about how we, as a society, can be more inclusive, understanding, and accepting. Autism Nova Scotia asks us to use #ShineBlueNS to show our support online and to shine a light on autism.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all members of the House of Assembly to participate in Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY: INCLUSION - RECOGNIZE**

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day which took place yesterday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>. This important day is an opportunity to celebrate the unique talents of those individuals who are living with autism. Raising awareness and knowledge of autism is important for everyone in our society.

This day is a great opportunity to focus on acceptance, and welcome those living with autism in our society and recognize their many amazing skills. Groups like Autism Nova Scotia and the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance have done so much to make workplaces and school systems more inclusive.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the day when complete inclusion is the norm.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY: ADVOCATES - GUIDANCE**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to acknowledge World Autism Awareness Day. I am so pleased to see the attention that autism awareness, supports, and first-voice concerns are receiving.

Due to the diligent efforts of Autism Nova Scotia and the families they represent, including the Sutherland family, who have been very public with their plight to secure appropriate resources to support their son Callum, the public consciousness is slowly being raised about the particular realities of children, adults, and families living with autism.

As the proud aunt of a beautiful, eight-year-old autistic boy whose parents are fierce advocates, I am all too aware of how far we have to go to ensure that autistic individuals are able to fully participate in their schools, communities, and workplaces. I take solace in the hard work of advocates, especially those first-voice advocates who are speaking with a louder voice than ever before about what it means to be autistic.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all members of this House to open their ears and hearts to the truths being spoken by first voices, families, advocates, and experts, and to let them guide our actions. We, and all orders of government, still have a long way to go.

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

**BUSINESS IS JAMMIN': BBI PILOT PROG. - CONGRATS.**

MR. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Business is Jammin', a not-for-profit program aimed at empowering Black youth through entrepreneurship, facilitated by BBI, the Black Business Initiative.



The pilot program was started in Upper Hammonds Plains where participants were taught how to write iCode+, with the goal being to expand their technical knowledge and encourage the pursuit of post-secondary education. The pilot program was started with the support of Saint Mary's Enactus Team, and due to its success, the RBC Foundation began working with BBI in the Fall to reach more Black youth in the Halifax area by expanding the program. The ultimate goal is to connect Black youth with jobs and careers in the information technology sector.

I would like all members of the House to join me in congratulating BBI and Enactus Saint Mary's for their success with Business is Jammin' and wish them continued success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

[1:30 p.m.]

### **DUNN, MICHAEL: MARATHONS - BEST WISHES**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I have no appetite for pain or punishment and no matter what any therapist thinks, I never saw the lonely, long-distance race as a metaphor for life. My son Michael decided two years ago that he wanted to run a major marathon on every continent. By most standards, there are seven continents.

In 2016, he completed two marathons, one in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the continent of South America, and one in San Francisco, North America. He travels to Italy on Thursday to run a marathon in Rome on April 8<sup>th</sup>, the European continent. He is presently inquiring about a marathon in Antarctica, the southern-most continent, in sight of the South Pole.

I'd like all members of the Legislature to join me and wish Michael great success. The blisters on his feet are temporary, but the glory of being a marathon runner is permanent.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

### **BERESFORD, SUSAN - PHARMACIST: COM. SERV. - RECOGNIZE**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Susan Beresford, a pharmacist at the Kinburn PharmaSave in Mahone Bay.

Susan Beresford was at work one morning when Susan Lantz came in to pick up some prescriptions. Ms. Beresford noticed that something was wrong with Ms. Lantz. She was slurring her words, and one side of her face was drooping. Ms. Beresford brought Ms. Lantz into her office, sat her down, and told her that she needed to go to the hospital, that

she was having a stroke. Physicians at the hospital confirmed the diagnosis and began treatment.

Ms. Lantz is happy to be alive and credits Susan Beresford for saving her life. Ms. Beresford said she became a pharmacist to help her community, and she is just happy she was there and able to help at that time.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you and all members of this House of Assembly please join me in recognizing Susan Beresford for helping Susan Lantz in a time of need.

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

### **BIG GAUGE SHOOT: TEAM SUCCESS - CONGRATS.**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: I wish to congratulate and recognize the prowess of a local team of sportsmen who captured top honours at the Nova Scotia Rifle Association final Big Gauge Shoot in Lunenburg recently.

Paul Rodd of Brookfield was one of four participants from the Nova Scotia Highlanders Military Rifle Association, which scored 3,575 out of 4,000 points, leading their closest competitor by 30. Mr. Rodd was also the highest-scoring individual shooter, scoring 1,593 out of a possible 1,600. Team members Al Roland of Truro and Barry Langille of New Glasgow earned second and fourth place. Gary Rutherford of Truro rounded out the team and contributed to the overall win.

I'm proud to congratulate the team for a job well done.

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

### **CAN. 150 SESQUICENTENNIAL AWARD: RECIPIENTS - CONGRATS.**

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate three remarkable individuals from my riding who were recognized for their significant contributions to our community.

Jordan Grant, Sandra Starratt, and Maureen Manuge were recipients of the Canada 150 Sesquicentennial Pin from Halifax West MP Geoff Regan. Jordan was recognized for inspiring young people to get excited about fitness as a coach at Halifax West High School, Sandra for overseeing Halifax West student government, and Maureen for being an active member of the Halifax Northwest Trails Association.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate these individuals on their award, and I thank them for being positive role models in our community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**MARGAREE FORKS FIRE DEPT.: 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIV. - ACKNOWLEDGE**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, let us acknowledge the Margaree Forks fire department for 60 years of service to its community.

At a dinner of celebration in October, Fire Chief Bobby MacLeod announced they will be purchasing a new fire truck, a sign they are in good financial position with the support of their community and the auxiliary, which have raised so many thousands of dollars over the years.

Nothing says community more than a volunteer fire department. Margaree Forks started service in 1967 because people were concerned about the damage caused to a local business. So much has changed over the past 60 years - fire alarms in every home, safer building materials, and all the new technology used by these brave volunteers. Today, they are expected to do more as a firefighter, whether it be as a first responder or with other training they have acquired.

The Margaree Forks fire department sprang from humble beginnings, but the members still have the same spirit of the people who founded the department 60 years ago.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

**N. RIVER FIRE BRIGADE: 45<sup>th</sup> ANNIV. - RECOGNIZE**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, the North River Fire Brigade held its 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary banquet on March 10<sup>th</sup>, in their newly renovated fire hall.

The hall now has space for their trucks, which will allow the purchase of a new heavy response truck that will replace their old emergency van. Along with the additional workspace, a new radio centre was added, equipped with a digital responder-tracking system called IamResponding. These new additions are needed to keep up with the ever-increasing demands placed on all of our volunteers.

The 45-year milestone was celebrated with a reception, with brigade members, former county mayor Christine Blair, and myself as MLA for Colchester North present. I am always honoured to be included as part of their yearly celebration, but particularly as part of this milestone celebration.

The yearly banquet is an excellent way to recognize and honour the members of all fire brigades for their hard work, dedication, and hours of training and service to the residents of their communities and surrounding areas. They illustrate the true meaning of volunteerism.

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

**HEART MIND BODY: COM. FITNESS - RECOGNIZE**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Today I rise to acknowledge that there is a new, in-home personal training studio in Cow Bay named Heart.Mind.Body.Fitness Counselling. The studio is owned and operated by Maryke Meyer. Maryke relocated to Cow Bay from Ontario in November 2017. She is now excited to continue providing her services to the Cow Bay-Eastern Passage community.

Maryke is very passionate about health and wellness and provides personal training, online support, and nutritional support. These are just a few of the diverse programs she offers: a 14-day kick-start; women with weights; fit for life; and she also specializes in active aging and women's fitness.

Working within the fitness industry since 2012, Maryke has a great wealth of knowledge to share. Today I would like the House to join me in recognizing Maryke for her inspiration of fitness, and we welcome her to our community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

**BELL, ANDREW: 2018 ARCTIC GAMES - CONGRATS.**

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, the 2018 Arctic Games took place at Fort Smith and Hay River, Northwest Territories, from March 18<sup>th</sup> to March 24<sup>th</sup>. The games, held every two years, showcase winter sports like snowshoeing and speed skating, indoor sports like badminton and basketball, as well as traditional Arctic sports.

One competitor representing Nunavut hails from Conquerall Bank, Lunenburg County. Andrew Bell competes in the Arctic Sports category of the games and has won three of Nunavut's 14 medals - winning gold in both the one-hand reach, the triple jump, and silver in the two-foot-high kick.

I'd like to take the opportunity to congratulate Andrew and Team Nunavut for their success at this year's Arctic Games. What a unique opportunity for a native Nova Scotian to participate. Thank you.

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

**MINERS MEM. PLAYGROUND: SUCCESSFUL RELOCATION - THANKS**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the Save the Miners Memorial Playground Committee.

The closing of St. Joseph School in 2016 left the building empty and a \$100,000 playground with no one to use it. A committee of parents and grandparents took up the call and raised \$30,000 to move the playground to Jubilee Elementary School. After a number of hiccups, the playground has found a new home and a large number of very happy elementary students.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those who played a role in saving the Miners Memorial Playground. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

### **AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH: ACCEPTANCE - ENCOURAGE**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to express how glad I was to join colleagues in this House, as well as Mayor Mike Savage and Deputy Mayor Wayne Mason and others, for the flag raising at Grand Parade to mark Autism Awareness Month this morning.

I was particularly struck by the comments of the chairman of Autism Nova Scotia, Ian Sutherland, who expressed the wish that together we move from autism awareness to autism acceptance and how this will require making our communities more welcoming and inclusive.

Mr. Speaker, I am struck by how similar this wish is to others I have heard expressed by disability advocates, seniors, and newcomers. Specific ideas for making our communities more welcoming to people with autism are out there and being adopted by organizations like Symphony Nova Scotia and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

I look forward to such efforts and understanding becoming more widespread, to the benefit of us all. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

### **100 WOMEN WHO CARE: ANTIGONISH CHAPTER - BEST WISHES**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, if you believe that one person can make a difference, just imagine what can be done when 100 people, in particular, 100 women, get together.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to a new volunteer group in Antigonish. The Antigonish Chapter for 100 Women Who Care is holding its inaugural meeting in April where they will award a local non-profit organization with \$10,000.

Mr. Speaker, 100 women, four times a year, are asked to donate \$100 to a good cause - a local organization doing good work in the community. Four times they will meet to hear presentations, vote for the winner and, at the end of the meeting, make a sizable contribution to a local group.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my fellow members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Sheri MacGregor and Yvonne Landry, along with the many other women who are volunteering their time and money and doing great work. I wish them the best of luck and look forward to seeing the impact of their donations in Antigonish. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**AMHERST A'S MINI-GIRLS BASKETBALL:  
U12, DIV. 5 PROV. CHAMPS. - CONGRATS**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize today the Amherst As Division 5 girls team and their coaches, Fred Gould and Leigh Johnson.

The girls earned a gold medal for the provincial championships this past weekend. They played three games, and with their coaches and their hard work they brought home first place. Hard work and dedication to their sport paid off greatly and these talented girls came home proud with their gold medals.

It's a true pleasure to congratulate the team on their winning season and wish them the best in the next year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

***THE WEEKLY PRESS: COM. NEWSPAPER - APPRECIATION***

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, while it is true that most people get the news from the Internet these days, in East Hants we have another option that has stood the test of time and the trials of print media.

Our community newspaper, *The Weekly Press* has been operating in Enfield for over three decades. It began with an editor who wore the hat of reporter, receptionist, salesperson, and editor. Now each of these jobs is covered by separate individuals but the spirit of the paper has remained dedicated to bringing the local news of the area to the people. Events of entertainment, sporting, business, news, and community are covered. People rely on the paper for in-depth details for those events. Local column and editorial contributions are also a popular feature.

While the Internet might offer a more global perspective, having a publication brings a real sense of community to the area it serves. I'd like to offer our appreciation and gratitude to the dedicated team, the local voice of East Hants, *The Weekly Press*.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**CNIB: 100<sup>th</sup> ANNIV. - CONGRATS.**

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, on March 21<sup>st</sup>, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. In late 1917, with Canadian soldiers returning from the Great War with eye injuries and the Halifax Explosion leaving 850 people fully or partially blind, Canada was facing an increase in blindness. It is because of that that seven Canadian individuals, including Halifax's own Louis Wood, came together and founded the CNIB.

For 100 years, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind has changed lives and celebrated remarkable progress. From creating employment opportunities to awareness and advocacy, the work they are doing is important and necessary. I would like to congratulate the CNIB on a century of change and wish them nothing but success as they embark on their next century.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

**BOATES, JANET: CAN. HOOKED RUG ARTIST OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.**

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Janet Boates of Nicholsville on being honoured as the Canadian Artist of the Year by the Hooked Rug Museum of North America.

With an artistic background in painting, Janet began to practise rug hooking just under a decade ago and has been committed to the craft ever since, creating detailed images with fibres instead of paint. As the Canadian Artist of the Year for 2018, 14 select pieces of Janet's artwork will be displayed at the Hooked Rug Museum of North America throughout the year.

As the MLA for Kings West, I would like to congratulate Nicholsville resident Janet Boates on her success as an artist, for achieving recognition for excellence in her field, and for her contributions to creative communities of Nova Scotia.

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

**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER: COM. VOLUNTEERS - THANKS**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the ecumenical group of people responsible for this year's World Day of Prayer being held at St. Joseph's Church in North Sydney. The World Day of Prayer has taken place in North Sydney every year since the 1950s. This year's theme will be All God's Creation is Very Good.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the women involved for the hours of organization to make this year's event possible.

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

**MON. CANADA: FEATURED, CDN. QUILTERS' ASSOC. EXPO. - THANKS**

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, as part of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada, communities across the country planned celebrations and special projects to mark this milestone birthday. One of the most creative and beautiful projects, a quilt named Mon Canada, was on display at the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Expo-Couvertes at Sacré-Coeur Church in Saulnierville.

The quilt, a project of the members of the guild, features the church at Grand Pré surrounded by important symbols from our area. Prior to the exposition, the quilt was one of many shown as part of an exhibition celebrating Canada's birthday at the Canadian Quilter's Association quilt show in Toronto. I was able to drop in and see all the quilts. They're beautiful, but I must admit that Mon Canada is a special example of the crafts of this group.

I would like to thank the guild for creating Mon Canada, a quilt that will be admired for many years to come, and for promoting the craft of quilting in our area. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**CAMPBELL FAM.:  
GROWERS, BOSTON CHRISTMAS TREE: ACKNOWLEDGE**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, let us acknowledge the Campbell family of Blues Mills for donating the Christmas tree given to the City of Boston this past December.

On the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the charity offered by the people of Boston in response to the Halifax Explosion, our province presented a tree from the Campbell family property in the constituency of Inverness. This wonderful tradition dates back to the first tree given in 1918, and the annual tradition began in 1971.



Bob and Marion Campbell have a property full of beautiful trees as a result of the care they were given years ago around the time they purchased the property. This year's tree was a fine specimen and it displayed proudly on the Boston Common.

[1:45 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

### **REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT: WELCOMING SPIRIT - ENCOURAGE**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I wish to acknowledge today the real heartache of many members of the Sudanese, Eritrean, and Ethiopian communities, as a possible resolution for refugee resettlement from, and settlement in Israel, appears to have been scuttled.

Just one constituent of mine, and a dear friend, has several family members who are caught in limbo in Israel. Mr. Speaker, in my first session in this Legislature, many members spoke about the positive reverberations from the upsurge in private refugee resettlement efforts throughout our province. I urge us today to keep our hearts open to the many new Nova Scotians who wish to extend a further welcome to family members who are in precarious situations around the world, and to look for ways to support them.

Though we tend to think of economic factors first when it comes to immigration, in fact, people bring people, and people keep people, and we all benefit if our population grows, and our neighbours' distress can be lessened through family reunification.

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

### **GUYSBOROUGH CO. TRAILS ASSOC.: NEW BRIDGE - THANKS**

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tip my hat to the hardworking volunteers of the Guysborough County Trails Association. They have recently completed construction of a new bridge on the portion of the Trans Canada Trail that runs near Salmon River Lake, known to locals as the Hippy Camp.

Along with Phillip Hochman and executive members Clinton Porter, Steve Smith, Raymond Layes, Irving Allen, Richard Dumas, Dermott Chisholm, and Charlie Hallet, they were all instrumental in the new build, and they deserve great praise for their dedication. The association works tirelessly to maintain 56 kilometres of this system of connected trails, and their improvements are profoundly appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, the hard work put forth by these volunteers is shown in the head count of young families, seniors, and health enthusiasts that enjoy this important infrastructure

every chance they get. Their efforts have also left lasting impressions with tourists, who speak highly of our natural advantage, and for this I thank the Guysborough County Trails Association and their dedicated volunteers.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**ADAMS, JAKE: GOLD MEDAL, SNOWBOARD N.S. - CONGRATS.**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Jake Adams; he is a senior student at the Amherst Regional High School. Jake won a gold medal in the Snowboard Nova Scotia provincial event at Ski Wentworth. He competed against other snowboarders from Nova Scotia and P.E.I.

Our community has a lot of excellent athletes like Jake, and he is an example of our community's youth that is passionate about his sport. I am pleased to congratulate Jake on his gold medal, and wish him well in all future endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

**SAULNIER, KAREN: JEM - THANKS**

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the efforts of Halifax Armdale resident Karen Saulnier. Karen is a committed community volunteer who has devoted many hours to the Red Cross. Through those efforts, she became interested in emergency response work, and is now spearheading the formation of a new Joint Emergency Management (JEM) Team, in Mainland South.

Covering neighbourhoods across Halifax Armdale and Atlantic, this JEM team will work on strengthening our community's capacity to prepare for and respond to emergencies, such as hurricanes, wildfires and winter storms. In the critical hours following a crisis situation, residents and affected communities need to be prepared to help themselves and to assist their neighbours, who may have been seriously impacted by the event. Our area's JEM team will undertake these preparations through emergency planning, public education, and identifying and establishing local comfort centres.

Please join me in thanking Karen Saulnier for leading this important initiative, and encourage residents to consider volunteering with our JEM team.

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

**KEINICK, PAUL - STORE MANAGER, SOBEYS:  
EQUAL OPP. EMPLOYER - RECOGNIZE**

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a local store manager, Paul Keinick, manager of Sobeys in Cole Harbour. His outstanding dedication in his role as a prominent equal opportunity employer in his community has set an example for all other workplaces. His passion for inclusion in that equality for all abilities, all ethnicities, and all persons, has set the bar very high.

His dedication to inclusion has become an element of pride for Cole Harbour-Portland Valley, and teaches us all the value of being differently abled, and appreciating everyone's contribution to our community.

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

**CRAWFORD, PATSY - DEACON, BEECHVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH:  
YOUTH ADVOCATE - RECOGNIZE**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the unofficial mayor of Beechville, Patsy Crawford. Patsy's reach spreads through generations with her 20 grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, and five great-great-grandchildren.

Patsy is a strong advocate for the well-being of youth. In 2013, she retired after working 35 years as an educational program assistant, devoting her time to special needs students.

Patsy, known as "Nunny in the church," accepted the call on her life and was installed in the office of deacon in 2004 at the Beechville Baptist Church. She has held various positions over the years, including church clerk, choir member, Baptist Youth Fellowship counsellor, and president of the ladies' auxiliary. Deacon Crawford also held many positions in the African United Baptist Association and the community which include past-president of the Beechville Residents' Association, co-chairman of the Beechville Educational Committee, and secretary of District 2.

Mr. Speaker, I would like members of the House to join me in recognizing Deacon Crawford for her contribution to young people of all abilities, the church, and for continuing to be a champion for the community of Beechville.

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

**YHAP, RONALD: RECYCLED MATERIALS ARTIST - RECOGNIZE**

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ronald Yhap, a talented local artist.

Ron has been creating plastic bottle fish for about four years now, after he was inspired by trade show artists who spray painted pop bottles. Ron grew up in Guyana but moved to Halifax in 1971, where he practised engineering for 20 years before being employed as a land surveyor.

In his retirement, he devotes his time to creating artwork out of recycled materials. He has received tremendous praise for his work, and it has been most recently displayed at the Dalhousie Art Gallery.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of this House to join me in recognizing Ronald Yhap for creating not only beautiful, but environmentally friendly and resourceful art.

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

**PHILLIPS, LUCY: WINNING GOALIE - CONGRATS.**

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate goalie Lucy Phillips of Fall River. Lucy led her Metro West Force Blue girls hockey team to a win in the Bantam AA Provincial Championships.

The close 3-1 final means Lucy and her team will be heading to the Atlantic Championships. This was the third straight provincial title for the Georges P. Vanier student. She stopped 20 of 21 shots in the game. Taylor Jeffrey scored twice, while Jill Duggan added an empty net for the team. During the five games of the tournament, Lucy had a save percentage of .995 and her goals against average was .8.

I would like all members of the Legislature to wish Lucy and her team all the best as they head to the Atlantics.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**CAMERON, GUS: SERV. TO VETERANS - RECOGNIZE**

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, over the next few weeks, I want to recognize some very special people who live in my community.

There is no one better to start with than Gus Cameron. Gus is a 26-year veteran of the Royal Canadian Navy - but it's not just his brave service to our country that makes him special, it's his work outside of the Navy.

Gus has worked for a special federal veterans' ID card, saying "you retire and your sense of camaraderie or brotherhood sort of gets lost. Having a small card in your wallet or purse is a small token of Canada's appreciation for what we did."

Gus also organizes a monthly veterans' breakfast at Steak and Stein, which started out with about nine people in attendance and is now over 100 people. Gus also organizes lunches and concerts for our Camp Hill veterans, and guitar lessons to help veterans with PTSD.

I ask that the Legislature recognize Gus for his service to our country, and veterans both in and out of military service. Gus is a true Canadian hero.

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

**CLARKE, KRISTIN/TEAM JONES: CURLING MEDALLISTS - CONGRATS.**

MR. BEN JESSOME: I would like to recognize Kristin Clark of Hammonds Plains. She is a member of the Kaitlyn Jones rink that won the Junior Women's Curling Championship held in Shawinigan, Quebec, in January. Kristin and teammate Karlee Burgess were also members in 2016 who not only won the national title but also won Worlds in Denmark that year.

Kaitlyn Jones moved to Nova Scotia last year to attend Dalhousie and she joined up with Kristin, Karlee, and Lindsey. The team played flawlessly during the weeks of play in the Canadian Juniors and avenged their only loss, against Quebec, by beating them in the final, 5-3. The team represented Canada at the World Junior Curling Championships held in Aberdeen, Scotland, in early March. There, Kristin won a second gold medal as Team Kaitlyn Jones rink won the gold at this year's world championships.

I would ask all members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Kristin Clark and Team Jones on their gold medal win both at the Canadian and World Junior Curling Championships.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**MURDOCH, TRACY & ORRIN: FOOD BANK CONTRIB. - THANKS**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, every week starting at the beginning of May, Tracy Murdoch, owner of Mirella Rose Farm, will be delivering organically-grown fruits and vegetables to the Mahone Bay Area Food Bank.

Tracy Murdoch and her husband Orrin own a 36-hectare farm outside Mahone Bay, where they grow top-grade fruits and vegetables with no added chemicals. Murdoch believes that everybody deserves access to fresh foods, even if they can't afford it.

Although the Murdochs can't afford to supply and give away the produce, they have set up a GoFundMe page to help with their initiative. The Murdochs set out to raise \$1,500 and have met their financial goal.

Cathie Slaughenwhite-Nowe, the vice-president of the food bank, is thankful for the Murdochs' contribution. She knows how difficult it can be to get fresh produce for the food bank.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you and all members of this House of Assembly please join me in thanking the Murdochs for their contribution to our local food bank.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**MACDONALD, JOAN/SPONAGLE, ELAINE:  
CWL. AWARD - CONGRATS.**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, two women from Pictou East, Joan MacDonald and Elaine Sponagle, were presented with a national award from the St. John the Baptist Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada.

The Bellelle Guerin Award is the third-highest award in the league and the highest award presented to members who have not served at the provincial or national levels. Recipients have been active and dedicated members for at least 25 years. The award recognizes extraordinary service and love of the league, demonstrated by words and actions.

Joan and Elaine are both very worthy recipients, and I congratulate both for obtaining this prestigious honour.

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

**BIANCHINI, LUCIANO:  
FOUNDER, VERITAS CATHOLIC BOOKS - HONOUR**

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I want to honour the legacy of a devoted man from my riding who touched the lives of many. Luciano Bianchini founded Veritas Catholic Books and Gifts over 20 years ago, after retiring as the chief librarian at Mount Saint Vincent University.

Mr. Bianchini was known for his warmth and open-door policy. Anyone could walk into the store on Barrington Street, and no matter how busy he was, he would take the time to listen and discuss matters of faith.

Despite many struggles, Mr. Bianchini never despaired. Veritas expanded and established clientele across Canada. Mr. Bianchini worked at the downtown location until his death in 2016, at the age of 87.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the members of this House join me in honouring Mr. Bianchini for his devotion to his faith and his deep commitment to sharing it with others. His legacy lives on in Veritas, its volunteers, and the countless people who were fortunate to encounter him at the bookstore.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**RUSSELL, ELAINE - SHEPHERD'S LUNCH: COM. SERV. - THANKS**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, Elaine Russell and her team of volunteers are carrying on the Shepherd's Lunch Room that was started over 25 years ago. The purpose then and now was to give a hot meal to those who would otherwise do without.

In Trinity church hall, a large group of volunteers come in every Monday and Thursday to prep, serve, and clean up after serving a piping-hot dinner with all the trimmings and, of course, dessert. These meals not only fuel the bodies but are sometimes the only social interaction these folks have.

There is a table where clothing and other necessities can be dropped off, free for the taking. I have seen first-hand how much this program means to the people. Elaine and her team deserve many thanks for all they have done and continue to do. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**VALLEY HEAT U12 GIRLS BASKETBALL PROV. CHAMPS. - CONGRATS.**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Valley Heat U12 girls basketball team's exceptional season. Through hard work, commitment, and a positive attitude, these talented young athletes rebounded from a losing record last year to finish this season undefeated.

The team dominated their competition at the recent Basketball Nova Scotia Division 1 provincial championship tournament, scoring 251 points over five games while only giving up 66 points to their opponents. Their closest game was a 51 to 26 victory over the Halifax Hurricanes in the finals, to take home the provincial championship.

I invite all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating the Valley Heat U12 girls basketball team on winning the Basketball Nova Scotia Division 1 provincial championships and in wishing them the very best in all their future endeavours, on and off the court.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much for those members' statements.

[2:00 p.m.]

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

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

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

#### **PREM. - N.S. UNIV. CAMPUSES: CANNABIS BARS - POLICY**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is for the Premier. We all understand that, according to the plan, cannabis was to be legalized on July 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. Now we are hearing out of Ottawa that legalization will happen possibly at the end of summer. Student groups like Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy are suggesting that universities need designated pot-smoking areas. They are actually advocating that universities ought to consider creating pot bars along the line of bars that serve alcohol.

Is the Premier going to allow the establishment of cannabis bars on Nova Scotia university campuses?

THE PREMIER: I thank the Minister of Justice, who has been working diligently along with many other departments to ensure that we have the most progressive piece of legislation when the introduction of cannabis happens in our country. We will continue to work with them. In some cases, as the minister talked about today, we will treat that as impaired driving, as an alcohol substance. There are other cases where we have allowed that.

When it comes to consumption in public, it will be around the Smoke-free Places Act, which we have actually tightened up to exclude places that were currently allowed to smoke cigarettes. We removed that. We have also left a provision where municipalities and, in some cases, our sister institutions can even go further if they like.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, when parents send their children off to university, they expect government to provide guidelines that will keep their children safe. Students are currently applying for Fall admissions to various universities in our province.

If there are going to be differences, though, from one campus to another, students and their parents need to know this now because it will matter to some. When can Nova Scotians expect clear rules regarding pot consumption on campuses?

THE PREMIER: They're very clear today.

MS. MACFARLANE: That's not what we're hearing, but if you want to table that, that would be wonderful.



Previously, my colleague from Inverness asked a question regarding cannabis rules for apartments and condos. Another multi-unit building that I don't believe was contemplated in his question is university dormitories. One could read the current rules - which I have read - in a way that permits every dorm room to house up to four plants of cannabis.

Does the Premier plan to create a province-wide policy for cannabis cultivation on campuses?

THE PREMIER: Again, I want to thank the Minister of Justice for the tremendous work that he has been doing in and around ensuring that we move forward with this piece of legislation for whenever this product, substance, is legalized in the country. We will continue to make sure to we have reached out to our partners to ensure that we have struck the right balance. We're continuing to ensure that we provide a safe environment in our province for all Nova Scotians.

As she would know, the Smoke-free Places Act deals with that particular issue. The fact of the matter is, we're continuing to make sure we provide that environment and the consistency across our province and also live in the reality of today.

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

#### **PREM.: MIN. WAGE - RAISE**

MR. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, 15 cents - that's what the minimum wage has gone up this week in Nova Scotia, to \$11 an hour. Meanwhile, in Alberta, in six months, the minimum wage is slated to go up to \$15 an hour. In Ontario, in nine months, it's slated to go up to \$15 an hour.

I want to ask the Premier on behalf of 130,000 people in Nova Scotia who are working today for less than \$15 an hour, how does he think we can get where we need to go as a 15 cent jurisdiction in a \$15 world?

THE PREMIER: As the honourable member knows, that increase was based on the structure that was put in place by the former NDP Government. Those increases have been based on the committee that they put together back when they were in government.

I have also told this House that, working with my colleagues across Atlantic Canada, our hope is to arrive at a common minimum wage inside of Atlantic Canada and continue to ensure that they will have structured increases that reflects the cost of living within our province. In the meantime, what we continue to do is ensure that we provide more money in the pockets of hard-working Nova Scotians by increasing the basic personal exemption for those low-income Nova Scotians to ensure they keep more of their

investment. That's why we continue to make sure we have universal pre-Primary programs across the province to get more people back in the work place.

We know there's more work to do and we're continuing to collaborate and work with our partners to ensure that we achieve all that we want to achieve.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, the tax changes of which the Premier speaks stand to put hundreds of dollars in people's pockets, but the difference between \$11 and \$15 an hour would put thousands of dollars every year in the pockets of these 130,000 people. In this sense, the Premier's answer indicates to me an inadequate awareness of what is actually happening in actual economies in Canada on this front.

What's actually happening in the actual economy of Ontario at the moment is in the sector that has the greatest concentration of minimum wage employees - accommodations and food services - employment is up for two months and running since the big change in minimum wage on January 1<sup>st</sup>.

I want to ask the Premier, is he actually as unaware as his government's actions seem to indicate of the mounting and the cross-jurisdictional evidence of the benefits to an economy of a substantial and dramatic increase in the minimum wage?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member actually answered his question in his preamble. The fact of the matter is, he is correct, there are more people working in low-paying jobs in Ontario, but they're getting fewer hours. The fact of the matter is the pockets of those hard-working Ontarians have less money in it today because of the very changes he's advocating on behalf of the people of Nova Scotia.

What we worked towards is ensuring that we've left more money of the pay cheques those hard-working Nova Scotians are achieving, ensuring that we're putting in place the infrastructure that allows them to get back into the workforce, reduce the amount of income they're paying on child care - everything I know he is very passionate about. All of those things are meaningful impacts on the hard-working Nova Scotians in our province, at the same time when the employers are continuing to make sure their hours stay steady.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, the effect of the 15 cent changes this week is to make us in Nova Scotia the jurisdiction in Canada with the second lowest minimum wage in the country by a whole differential of four cents. I want to ask the Premier, is this what he wants to be remembered by - after five years of governing, Nova Scotia has been brought up to a place of being the second worst?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to remind him that we continue to reduce the wait for income housing in our province - reduced it by 20 per cent, affordable housing. We've made a commitment to reduce it by another 30 per cent. We're on track.

I want to remind the honourable member we have one of the best performing economies inside of Canada. I want to remind the honourable member in the last two years we've seen more young people choose to live in this province than leave. Those are all positive signs of an economy moving forward.

We know hard-working families in this province need support. It's why we brought in the pre-Primary program, which wasn't supported by his Party. We're going to continue to work and ensure there's subsidized daycare for those individuals who require our support. We're going to continue to make sure that those hard-working Nova Scotians get to keep more of their own money and put it in their pockets.

Those events and those public policy positions are having a huge impact on those Nova Scotians who require our supports.

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

#### **H&W: NORTHSIDE ER CLOSURE - UPDATE**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, about a year ago I asked the then-Minister of Health and Wellness about the long-term viability of the emergency room at the Northside General Hospital. The Minister of Health and Wellness of the day said, ". . . all governments have committed to keeping Northside viable for now and for the future." I'll table that.

At the time, I asked the minister to commit in writing to keep the Northside General emergency room open. Mr. Speaker, he did not fulfill that commitment and now, the community is hearing that the ER at the Northside General will be closing beginning in May.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, will the minister tell this House today that the emergency room at the Northside General is closing, when it will reopen or if the closure is permanent?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, we've engaged in several conversations with the member and indeed many of the members representing the industrial Cape Breton region have asked about this Northside General or other community hospitals in the region and the challenges of maintaining their emergency rooms. We know there are some staffing challenges there but of course in community hospitals across the province.

We continue to work diligently to ensure we have appropriate staffing in place to serve the communities. When that's not possible, there are times when those hospitals close, we try to give as much warning as possible before that takes place.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I don't think I heard an answer, if it was closing, not closing, or otherwise. The fact of the matter is, there's an acute doctor shortage in the ERs of Cape Breton because of the actions of this government.

ER doctors at the Northside General Hospital and Glace Bay Hospital are paid less than the emergency room doctors at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital, even though they work just as hard, and have no backup Mr. Speaker, one emergency room doctor in each of those places, two with the emergency room in Cape Breton Regional Hospital.

Changes to pay for locum doctors made by this government, mean that locum doctors no longer want to come to the Northside General Hospital, because they will be out of pocket for expenses.

So, my question for the minister, will the minister admit that starving out the emergency room doctors at the Northside and Glace Bay is this government's way of forcing them to close?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, that wouldn't be the case at all from our perspective. What transpired was that we had nine different health authorities, there were different pay structures and approaches for compensating physicians in hospitals across this province. Since amalgamating the Health Authority, efforts were made to bring a standardized approach to the compensation practices throughout the province. So, that work was taking place.

This, Mr. Speaker, has absolutely no foundation in the path that the member opposite was suggesting it would have.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

### **EECD - HRSB: SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING - DETAILS**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Throughout our debates on this government's reforms to education, we've expressed concern about the unintended consequences of eliminating school boards. One of these consequences could be the loss of the substantial supplementary funding provided by the municipalities like HRM to local school boards. The Halifax Charter requires the municipality to provide these funds to the Halifax Regional School Board, but the board no longer exists.

Mr. Speaker, did the minister consult with Halifax Regional Council about supplementary funding before eliminating the elected school boards?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, in fact, I did have a conversation with the mayor in relation to this, because I wanted to make it very clear that by maintaining the current legal boundaries of each of those educational centres, municipalities will still be able to engage themselves in these sorts of investments, and those dollars will remain regional.

So, of course, I hope that all those municipalities who have taken the time to invest in the most important resource we have - our students - will continue to do so, because those dollars will remain in their communities.

MS. CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, it's not at all clear that this investment will, in fact, continue, and I want to point out that this supplementary funding allows students to benefit from programs and services that might not be available with the general funding previously received by the Halifax Regional School Board.

More than 97 per cent of this funding is spent on staffing. In 2016-17, the funding provided for 130.9 full-time teaching positions, and 104 school-based support staff. In addition, a significant portion of the funding is spent to provide enhanced arts and music programs, lower class sizes, and increased student support throughout the region.

The total funding for 2017-18 was more than \$15 million. Mr. Speaker, will the minister commit to replacing this funding for the Halifax Regional Education Centre, as it's now called, if it is no longer provided by the municipality?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, we have maintained a structure in place that will allow municipalities to continue to invest and ensure that those dollars remain in their communities. That's been made very clear to our municipal partners through my conversations with the mayor, and of course, the only ones that are jeopardizing us, I think, are those opposite who are scaring people into thinking that these sorts of funding opportunities can't remain under the new structure, when in fact, they can.

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

### **H&W - NORTHSIDE GENERAL HOSP: ER CLOSURE - IMPLICATIONS**

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Cape Breton residents are justifiably concerned about the medium and long-term implications if the Northside General emergency rooms close permanently, or even for an extended period.

Northside General has more than 36,000 emergency room visits a year. That's about 100 each and every day of the year. Other hospitals in the area are struggling to find doctors to cover the patient load that now exists. The closure may finally cripple the health care system in Cape Breton.

So, my question is, does the minister have a plan for how patients displaced by the closure at Northside General Hospital, will be absorbed in a system that is already struggling?

[2:15 p.m.]

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as the member would know, we take a number of steps as government, along with our partners, the Nova Scotia Health Authority, when addressing the challenges in our health care system. That includes work around primary care. We recognize that many of the health care visits to emergency departments stem from people looking for primary care access that they didn't have.

We've been working very hard with our partners to provide primary care access in communities across the province. We continue those efforts, Mr. Speaker. We continue to invest in primary care and work with our partners to find appropriate ways, like collaborative care practices, provide an expanded scope of practice, and opportunities with our nurses and nurse practitioners, family practice nurses, social workers, and others to provide that care on behalf of all Nova Scotians - not just in Cape Breton, but right across the province.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, the decisions made by this government have created the conditions that have now forced the closure of the Northside General emergency room, but the conditions also exist in other area hospitals, including the Glace Bay Hospital. Under-market wages are pushing doctors away from these hospitals and towards the regional hospital.

This government is changing and adjusting the labour market in order to centralize services in Cape Breton and the patients are the ones being left behind.

My question to the minister is, will the minister commit to wage parity between the regional hospital and the other area hospitals so that doctors don't have to forgo wages to work?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, one of the steps that took place when amalgamating the nine health authorities into the Nova Scotia Health Authority was that we got a provincial lens, not just on the programs and services that were offered throughout the province to have the opportunity to work towards standardizing them, but also around compensation, recognizing that there are different approaches and different compensation models deployed throughout the province, so steps have been taken. (Interruption)

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

MR. DELOREY: Steps have been taken, Mr. Speaker, since coming into being by the Nova Scotia Health Authority to establish standardized compensation programs for emergency department physicians and other roles throughout the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**JUSTICE - CANNABIS LEGALIZATION:  
DOCTORS N.S. - RECOMMENDATIONS**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Last week, on March 26<sup>th</sup>, Doctors Nova Scotia released six recommendations to encourage government to take a population health approach in cannabis legislation. I'll table their recommendations.

There are well-known harmful risks associated with cannabis use, especially in the developing brain. Doctors Nova Scotia recommends that in order to protect our youth, to establish the minimum age of 21 to either purchase or use cannabis.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, will he take the recommendations of Doctors Nova Scotia and establish the minimum legal age to purchase and/or use cannabis to 21?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. We value the feedback and contribution that Doctors Nova Scotia has contributed. As a matter of fact, five of the six recommendations that my colleague has identified align with government's position.

Yes, we differ on age, Mr. Speaker. We know that there are concerns around the consumption of cannabis, but the reality is quite simply this: those will continue to consume, regardless of the age. It's important that we establish that age to align with neighbouring provinces, to align with our alcohol drinking age, to ensure that the programs and policies we put in place around cannabis consumption are in the best interests of all Nova Scotians and public safety.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, Doctors Nova Scotia also recommended that our government implement a comprehensive public education and awareness program, to promote responsible cannabis use and prevent related deaths of morbidity and mortality, especially harms to our children and youth exposed to cannabis-impaired driving.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, will his department be taking the recommendations of Doctors Nova Scotia and implement a comprehensive public education and awareness program to prevent cannabis-related injury and deaths? Mr. Speaker, time is of the essence.

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, within the Department of Justice, we are presently working with our partnering departments, as well as the federal government, not-for-profit groups like MADD Canada, who are here today to support the bill, as well as the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation.

What's important around the education and awareness campaign is that it is progressive and that we are not duplicating initiatives. The federal government have rolled out two programs that have educated millions of young people across the country. The average adult doesn't see it because it is being done through social media outlets.

The province is committed to an awareness and education campaign. We will continue to partner with our colleagues. The education and awareness campaign will be progressive and it will be productive.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

### **JUSTICE - CANNABIS RETAIL: PROV. REGULATIONS - TIMETABLE**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: I have a question for the minister responsible for the Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel, and Tobacco Division.

In a question and answer provided to Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation employees, there was reference making sure cannabis was to be sold responsibly; that retailing would meet all federal and provincial regulations. Today, we see a bill brought forward for legislation, but we do not see the regulations and the legalization date is quickly approaching.

Will the minister tell this House whether their department will be responsible for provincial cannabis regulations and have those regulations been drafted?

HON. MARK FUREY: I want to thank my colleague for the question. The Department of Justice is the lead on the cannabis file and the legalization is consistent with the federal requirements and the responsibilities they have delegated to the province.

We will be ready when the federal legislation is in place. We are looking forward to the introduction and discussion around the bill, but I want to assure my colleague that Nova Scotia is best positioned of any province, as we speak, and we will be ready for the legalization of cannabis.

MR. MACMASTER: We want to see what the government intends to do. Legalization of marijuana is going to bring significant change for our country and for our province. Our culture will change. After years of telling young people to say no to drugs, the very act of legalization will normalize the use of marijuana. It will send a message to youth that marijuana is okay.



Will the minister share the regulations that he intends to implement before this Legislature is asked to pass a bill with the power we will then give to the government to decide those regulations?

MR. FUREY: One of the things that is lost in the discussion around the illicit sale and consumption of cannabis is that Nova Scotia has the highest consumption rate in the country per capita amongst our youth.

Our youth are consuming this at disproportionate rates. The objective of cannabis legislation at the provincial level is to put safeguards around that retail market to provide a quality product and an education awareness campaign that helps inform individuals around safe consumption.

Much like the efforts put into the reduction of smoking tobacco, where we have seen significant progress and accomplishments, we anticipate similar outcomes around the consumption of cannabis, as time moves forward.

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

#### **H&W: AUTISM TREATMENT/SUPPORTS - RESPONSIBILITY**

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Families across our province, including Carly Sutherland's family, are out of luck with their children when their children age out of eligibility for EIBI. At six, children with ASD cease to be the concern of the health system.

According to Autism Nova Scotia, some families in this situation have been paying between \$6,000 and \$7,000 per month out of pocket for therapy and respite care, because what's available through their schools just isn't enough. I will table that.

Can the Minister of Health and Wellness explain why his government is asking the education system to provide clinical treatment and support that should be the responsibility of the Department of Health and Wellness?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the question. It is very timely considering yesterday was World Autism Awareness Day and in light of our guests who were here earlier today.

It has been a long-standing approach to work with our partners across government, through the Departments of Health and Wellness, Education and Early Childhood Development, and Community Services - all offering a range of programs, services, and supports for Nova Scotians with autism.

The model and the approach that has been taken and is in place includes, as the member noted, a transition for school-aged children to receive the supports and programs

through the education system. I'm pleased, Mr. Speaker, that we have added an additional \$15 million in our budget this year to help work towards inclusive education. Many children with autism will be able to receive the benefit of that investment.

MS. MARTIN: The pot of money that families in need of respite care for access has actually been cut by 12 per cent since this government took office in 2013. We also know that our mental health crisis supports don't have the capacity to support those with ASD.

The last autism strategy recommended that the province should evaluate the existing services for families and individuals with ASD, but there has been no update on that strategy. We know from talking to families that the crisis services aren't adequate, but we're not sure if the government is aware.

Mr. Speaker, when can Nova Scotians expect a clear plan for families with ASD?

MR. DELOREY: One of the things we have done as a government is work hard between departments to break down traditional silos so that there is more opportunity not just for ministers, but also staff within the departments to engage and look for those opportunities where we can bring to bear all supports that we may have when an individual requires investments. In this case, we're talking specifically about individuals, particularly those at the more acute side of the autism spectrum.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to work together when those cases come forward, and we have programs and supports in place for those that fit more on the spectrum, that fit the standard programs we have in place.

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

**COM. SERV. - CANNABIS LEGALIZATION:  
CHILD WELFARE CASES - IMPACTS**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: My question is for the Minister of Community Services.

We have heard the minister say, in defence of the inaccurate findings from the Motherisk Labs, that substance use and abuse is only one of the factors that the department looks at when it comes to child welfare cases.

Often the presence of either illegal or regulated substances form Community Services' decision whether to remove a child from the home of the parents. With the pending legalization of cannabis, the department is sure to encounter more cases where children are in a home with cannabis or where cannabis use is not concealed.

My question to the minister is, has the department determined whether the presence of cannabis in a home will be counted among considerations for removing a child from the home?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I do believe that the honourable member is asking me whether it would be counted against a parent if they are using a substance that is now legal. It will be treated as alcohol is treated currently.

MS. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, substances don't need to be illegal to cause problems in domestic situations. Of course, we all know that alcohol, prescription drugs, and gambling are all perfectly legal, and their presence would not necessarily indicate a harmful environment. However, we are all aware of circumstances where these controlled substances, although legal, can cause breakdown in a family structure, particularly if more than one is used at the same time.

With cannabis coming on stream as a legal substance, there is obviously a spectrum of use, some of which is largely benign and some of which could cause parents to fall into negligent situations. There was a situation in my constituency where a set of foster parents were looking to adopt a child, and they were going to be refused because of cannabis.

My question to the minister is, has the department given any consideration as to the threshold of cannabis use that may or may not warrant the removal of a child from the home?

MS. REGAN: Our number-one priority at the Department of Community Services Child Welfare Division is of course the safety of children, Mr. Speaker. I think that's what we all want here in the House.

Nonetheless, a variety of factors go into a decision whether or not a child comes into the care of the minister. I can tell the honourable member that we would look at a continuum of behaviours in that family. We want families to succeed. We know that children generally do better when they're at home with their parents. We will continue to support families so that their children can have the best lives possible.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**JUSTICE - CANNABIS PACKAGING:  
WORLD HEALTH ORG. GUIDELINES - MEET**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation.

Senator Judith Seidman of Quebec, a medical researcher and social worker before her appointment to the Senate, has recently commented extensively on how cannabis

consumption relates to tobacco consumption and how lessons from tobacco cessation programs could be applied to cannabis. She noted that cannabis packaging as proposed by the federal government does not include many of the warnings and graphic images we have come to associate with tobacco. In fact, she stated the packaging does not even meet the World Health Organization standards for plain packaging.

[2:30 p.m.]

My question for the minister is, can the minister responsible for the sale of cannabis comment on whether the NSLC will insist on cannabis packaging that exceeds the federal government suggestions and meets the World Health Organization guidelines?

HON. MARK FUREY: As my colleague alluded, the federal government has laid down the regulations around packaging. We are compelled to comply with the legislation that the federal government has advanced.

I want to also advise my colleague, as we have spoken of earlier, the education and awareness campaign will follow the same methodology as the smoking cessation plan. This is the expectation. These are the anticipated outcomes. We look forward to the opportunity to communicate the education and awareness campaign.

MR. LOHR: Mr. Speaker, in Canada and in Nova Scotia, we have diverging approaches on how regulations address tobacco and alcohol. We do not permit the marketing of tobacco, and we insist on plain packaging heavily covered in warnings. Alcohol, however, is readily marketed, contains few warnings, and is packaged as producers and marketers so choose. With the decision to co-locate cannabis and alcohol, one is led to believe that cannabis marketing will fall closer to alcohol marketing.

My question for the minister is, can the minister responsible for the sale of cannabis articulate how cannabis will be marketed and whether Nova Scotians should expect to see cannabis adverts in their weekly flyers?

MR. FUREY: The elements that my colleague is speaking to are captured in federal legislation. There is no marketing permitted around the retail sale of cannabis. The model that the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation will be rolling out clearly adheres to the federal legislation. I can assure my colleague and all Nova Scotians that we are taking every avenue possible to ensure that the public health and safety of Nova Scotians is maintained.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

### **JUSTICE - CANNABIS: PUBLIC PLACE ODOUR - PLAN**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. The proposed federal Bill C-45 seeks to amend the Non-smokers' Health Act to prohibit public

consumption of non-medical cannabis in federally regulated areas. Outside of federally regulated areas, Bill C-45 does not address public consumption. Authority for that lies with provinces and territories.

As it stands right now in Nova Scotia, with the exception of private vehicles, people can smoke cannabis anywhere they smoke cigarettes. There are a lot of young families with young children living here, and to have people smoking pot on the street anywhere anytime is not what most Nova Scotians would want. Planned updates to the Smoke-free Places Act address sports fields and playgrounds but do not change the rules for general-public spaces.

My question to the minister is, what is the minister's plan to ensure that Nova Scotians will not have to be subjected to the odour of cannabis in public places?

HON. MARK FUREY: My colleague has rightly identified the enhancement of the Smoke-free Places Act to add public spaces, but one of the things we have continued to do from the time that I was Minister of Municipal Affairs was to maintain a positive work relationship with our municipalities. I have engaged our municipal leaders, and I have engaged the UNSM executive. We have had this very discussion. What they are looking for is the ability to further those restrictions in their communities. We'll continue that work relationship with the municipalities, and we look forward to what the municipalities choose to do in addition to provincial amendments.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, the Smoke-free Places Act states "No person shall smoke in an outdoor area within four metres of an intake for a building ventilation system, an open window of a place of employment or an entrance to a place of employment."

Cannabis smoke is much more potent than the smell of cigarettes, and we must ensure that those who do not want to be subjected to second-hand cannabis smoke are protected. Imagine taking your children to the public library only to have them subjected to this very unpleasant odour because someone is smoking close to the entrance. The proposed changes to the Smoke-free Places Act address many other smoking restrictions but doesn't speak to air intake into public buildings.

The question to the minister is, given the strong smell of cannabis compared to cigarettes, will the minister commit to requiring cannabis smokers to be more than four metres from the entrance to a public building?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, the changes that we have made to the Smoke-free Places Act placed further restrictions on those who choose to consume cannabis in public, and I think as the legislation unfolds, and we have discussions in this Legislature and the Chamber, there will be a better understanding of the implications of those amendments. I want to assure my colleague, we are, and have continued to prioritize the public health and safety of all Nova Scotians, and we'll continue down that road.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**IMMIG. - RURAL N.S.: IMMIG. NEEDS - ADDRESS**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Immigration.

We all agree that population growth through immigration is key to addressing some of the challenges we face as a province, however, the structure of existing immigration programs has resulted in little benefit for rural areas in Nova Scotia.

In 2016, for example, 87 per cent of provincial nominees in Nova Scotia intended to settle in Halifax. All communities need access to workers who are also consumers, potential volunteers, and neighbours, in order to grow their local economies, and maintain their communities.

So, my question for the minister is, what actions has she taken to ensure immigration programs meet the needs of rural Nova Scotia?

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, indeed, we have undertaken a number of activities through the Office of Immigration, by streamlining and dedicating staff to work with not just businesses and employers, but in fact, all chamber of commerce, and all stakeholders.

The Atlantic Immigration Pilot is a really exciting opportunity for us, and what we have seen thus far in the last 12 months - since it's only been around for 12 months - is the uptake in outside the HRM area is about 50 per cent, which is very, very, very good, and that is unseen in any other immigration program that we've ever had, and in fact, any provinces could have. So, that is an exciting opportunity for us.

MS. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, organizations like New Dawn have been calling on the government to establish a pilot program under the Provincial Nominee Program, to enable regional immigration quotas and provide settlement services and supports in communities outside of Halifax. They argue that this kind of targeted, local approach is needed to grow the regional economies that are being so badly undermined by population decline.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the minister, will she commit to working with organizations in Cape Breton to implement programs and policies to increase its share of immigration?

MS. DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure my colleague and all members of the Legislature, and in fact, all Nova Scotians, that we are exactly doing that, and absolutely, we will not only commit, but we have been doing that since coming into office in 2013.

I personally have visited New Dawn, and all the facilities in Cape Breton a number of times as the minister, and have continued to work with them. In fact, we've expanded, we've started the YREACH, and expanded it to nine rural areas across the province to add additional support. We're also working with our francophone immigration partners - some of them are in the Cape Breton area as well.

So, we are doing everything we can, and we will definitely continue to do that. We need partners to work with us as well.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

### **EECD - CANNABIS EDUCATION: GR. 9 HEALTHY LIVING - UPDATE**

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Currently, as the minister is aware, there is curriculum in Grade 9 Healthy Living about thinking critically, and making informed decisions around tobacco, cannabis, and gambling. Of course, when it comes to cannabis, teachers have been talking about a substance that was illegal in our province and country. In the next academic year, that will change.

The old pedagogy won't be as effective, Mr. Speaker, teachers will require new materials in order to talk about cannabis with their students. My question is, will the curriculum in Grade 9 Healthy Living be adjusted to reflect the changes in the law?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, the curriculum is ever-changing, it's ever-evolving. We're always looking for opportunities to enhance that curriculum. In fact, this government, through Bill No. 72, has committed to bringing more teachers into the department to actually assist us with just that.

MR. HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, high school students who have already taken Grade 9 Healthy Living would have talked about abstaining from a substance that was illegal and dangerous to their development. Next academic year, it will be legal and students in Grades 10 to 12 will conceivably not be given any instruction at school about how to safely and responsibly deal with cannabis, which will then be a legal product. It is a gap with serious implications.

My question is, will the minister commit to curriculum change in Grades 10 to 12 in order to instruct our students about the dangers of cannabis use within the context of legalization?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I would remind the member that for most students - 99 per cent of our students - the product still will be illegal for them until they reach the age of 19. The curriculum will be reflective of the health risks associated with

cannabis as it is now, the same way it approaches the conversation around alcohol or opioid use or prescription drug abuse.

If the member has any specific recommendations that he believes the department should evaluate in terms of enhancing that curriculum, we'd be very happy to hear it on the floor of the Legislature or in writing.

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

### **LAE - CANNABIS IMPAIRMENT: WORKPLACE TESTING - PROTECT**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. Cannabis will be legal on July 1<sup>st</sup> or September 1<sup>st</sup> or sometime this year - we think. "When" is only one of the unanswered questions. There are a lot of unanswered questions about its use in Nova Scotia.

The health and safety of Nova Scotia workers is a priority for us all. Impairment from cannabis use could put some workers at risk for injury, especially those who operate heavy equipment. Employers want to promote safe workplaces, but they don't want to violate the rights of the employees.

My question to the minister is, has the minister determined whether and how to impose marijuana testing for workers in Nova Scotia?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. One of the elements in discussions that have been taking place, both within the Department of Labour and Advanced Education and amongst the business community, are the Occupational Health and Safety elements of the consumption of cannabis.

Most businesses have existing policies as we speak. They will plan to continue to apply those policies going forward. They've applied them very well in the present environment. We anticipate they will be applied well into the future.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, marijuana has been illegal in Canada for about 95 years. There's bound to be some confusion from employers about how to deal with cannabis use when it's legal. The federal government struck a committee to help establish federal workplace rules for cannabis is at an impasse, and it seems unlikely any rules will be in place before pot becomes legal. I'll table that article from *The Chronicle Herald*.

My question is, how will the minister protect workers, employers, and public safety when there are no rules around workplace impairment in place when pot becomes legal?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my first response, the business community have existing policies and procedures in place for the consumption of



intoxicants. That will not change going forward. There may be an enhancement of those policies, but the Occupational Health and Safety Committees within those environments are speaking to this very subject. They're continuing to apply those policies, and we anticipate they will continue to apply those policies into the future.

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

### **JUSTICE - CANNABIS: ILLICIT MARKET - CONCERN**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, my question again is for the Minister of Justice. We've all had some fun talking about cannabis and the potential impacts that will come from this legislation. But it is a very serious matter and it has serious implications.

For decades, cannabis has been the trade of criminals, criminals who are not easily pushed off their territory. The NSLC has a stated goal of eliminating the illicit market for cannabis, and no question, it's a noble goal - but the illicit market has its own ideas. They worry about the things that dealers might do in order to protect their livelihood.

My question is, can the Minister of Justice share what law enforcement anticipates will be the countermoves by the illicit market to maintain their trade?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, one of the ongoing discussions that we've had over the past number of months as we advance the work around the legalization of cannabis is with our law enforcement community. The law enforcement community to this very day, they have and will continue to advance an intelligence-led policing model that addresses many of the points my colleague has identified.

Things are not going to change relative to enforcement. The law enforcement community will continue - I anticipate that they may even enhance their efforts now that there will be clarity around legislation. But I assure my colleague that we look forward to continuing to work with our law enforcement community to ensure that the public safety and health of Nova Scotians is maintained.

MR. HARRISON: I'm getting my education on this, and I've heard that there is a street drug called "shatter." This drug has a concentrated THC content that runs in the area of 80 per cent and sometimes 90 per cent.

My understanding is that when someone uses shatter, it renders future use of regular cannabis ineffective. Dealers are attempting to transition their customers from standard cannabis to this shatter in an attempt to maintain a hold on the market.

My question for the Minister of Justice is, how widespread is the use of shatter and what are the plans to combat it?

MR. FUREY: I thank my colleague for the question because what my colleague has actually identified are the very reasons why we have to regulate the distribution of cannabis.

The illicit market is laced with multiple chemicals. A legal regulated market will provide quality control. It will provide a safe product, recognizing that there are health implications. It is about eliminating the illicit market. There is a lot of work to do, but I want to assure my colleague that those are the primary focuses of our government's efforts in bringing this bill forward.

[2:45 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**NAT. RES. - WAGNER LAKE: PLANNED CLEAR-CUT - CONCERN**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Near Wagner Lake, in Shelburne County, 640 acres of forest have been marked for clear-cutting. On paper, that giant clear-cut looks like eight smaller ones because there are thin, 15-metre strips of forest that divide it, but from any other perspective it is one big 640-acre clear-cut.

Does the minister think that such large clear-cuts are good for the future of Nova Scotia's forests?

HON. MARGARET MILLER: I'm not totally aware of that section, but often you will see, when looking at different lots and different cutting plans or treatment plans, avenues there, moose paths, or you'll be looking at lichens and there will be 150 metres around different lichens, so any kind of harvest plan you see will have different formations that are avoiding different issues, about looking after the preservation of lichens or wildlife.

MS. ROBERTS: While we await the results of the forestry review, we are hearing news of old-growth forests being clear cut for biomass burning and new giant clear-cuts being approved.

Nova Scotians are losing confidence that the government is committed to ensuring we have high-quality forest products for generations to come. Seeing the proposed Wagner Lake cuts, Nova Scotians are frustrated because they expect old-growth trees, wetlands, wildlife, and soil health, will all be ignored. Given the recent revelations of poor oversights of clear-cuts in Guysborough County, I share those concerns.

Can the minister table for this House documentation showing that departmental officials have assessed the Wagner Lake sites in person?

MS. MILLER: I thank the member opposite for that question. The problem with some of these harvesting plans is that they had been planned long ago.

Just because something was approved a month ago, two months ago, six months ago, doesn't mean it is going to be harvested in the near future - it might be two or three years forward.

Some of these plans may have been made many years ago and other ones coming forward now – they are all assessed on a one-by-one basis, and actually hit my desk before they go for final approval.

I am also looking forward to the Lahey report coming out and start to look at what challenges we are going to have in the industry in making sure that we are proper stewards of our forests in Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

#### **JUSTICE - MEDICAL CANNABIS: EXCISE TAXES - EXEMPT**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: My question is for the Minister of Justice. Does this government support fair and reasonable access to cannabis for prescription users - will this government exempt cannabis users for medical purposes from excise taxes?

HON. MARK FUREY: I thank my colleague for the question. My colleague would know that the medicinal stream of marijuana is regulated by the federal Health Department. That does not interfere. That will be maintained. The retail sale of cannabis is a different discussion, and we look forward to unfolding this bill over the next number of days.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. That concludes the time allotted for Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers.

#### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

#### **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

The House will now recess for a few minutes while it resolves itself into the Committee of the Whole on Supply.

[2:58 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CW on Supply with Deputy Speaker Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft in the Chair.]

[7:07 p.m. CW on Supply rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Kevin Murphy, resumed the Chair.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Chair of the Committee of the Whole on Supply reports:

THE CLERK: That the Committee of the Whole on Supply has met and made some considerable progress and begs leave to sit again.

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. 87.

### **Bill No. 87 - Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and move second reading of Bill No. 87, an Act to amend the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act. The ability to properly regulate aquaculture is a priority for government because it contributes to sustainable growth. Aquaculture has been a valuable contributor to our rural economy for more than three decades. Aquaculture is estimated to have been worth over \$100 million in Nova Scotia's economy in 2017.

There has been a significant growth across all sectors, including salmon, trout, and oysters. That is an historic achievement for the aquaculture industry. We have never seen

numbers like that before in Nova Scotia. Aquaculture is responsible for supporting 600 direct jobs and over three times that in indirect jobs, many located in rural areas of Nova Scotia.

Our government has shown leadership in our approach to regulating the aquaculture industry, and we now have a world-class set of regulations that can support sustainable development while protecting the environment and our coastal and rural communities. We made great strides in a very short time. We delivered a more accountable, transparent approach to managing the growth of the aquaculture industry.

Mr. Speaker, with our robust approach to regulation, aquaculture has the potential of being an even more important contributor to the sustainable prosperity, especially in rural Nova Scotia. The proposed changes introduced in the bill will provide clarity to industry in various operational issues and streamline some of the processes now in place.

The changes include allowing the amalgamation of two or more immediately adjacent licensed aquaculture sites by the same operator under one licence. This eases unnecessary burdens and reduces costs for small business while ensuring effective regulation and management of the aquaculture industry. It would permit a site in the same immediate geographic area and allow for an operator to operate more efficiently and manage their site more properly. It will also reduce the amount of paperwork for the government, making regulations more efficient.

Requiring departmental review and ministerial approval prior to application of the Aquaculture Review Board to amend an existing licence or lease where the operator wants to expand their site and add another species - I want to make sure that aquaculture succeeds and the licences are showing maximum economic return. The department will ensure that there's a sound business case behind a proposal amendment and that the operator will be successful going forward.

Creating a class of institutional aquaculture licences, a licence for non-commercial operations - this brings the department's three fish hatcheries and pure research facilities under our aquaculture regulations, which has been something we always intended to do. It enhances the accountability of transparency for our hatchery operations, which is so important for the sustainable development of our sport fishing sector.

Clarifying Aquaculture Review Board decisions that would be implemented if an appeal is received without the need for waiting for the appeal period to pass - this is in line with the principles followed in the Nova Scotia regulatory decisions and provides greater clarity for industry.

These changes will help ensure the industry is managed effectively and responsibly, and overall the effective amendments will be positive for aquaculture operators and for the sustainable development in the industry in an environmental way.

As Canada's leading exporter of premium quality seafoods to the world, we need to be a vibrant and well-managed aquaculture industry to support continued development of our seafood industry. Last year, Nova Scotia exported \$2 billion worth of seafood to markets all around the world - more than we've ever seen before in history. Aquaculture played a big role in this kind of growth. In 2017, revenues from aquaculture were over \$100 million, up from \$55 million just the year before. These kinds of numbers have never been seen before in Nova Scotia and demonstrate that our world-class regulations are able to provide our industry with the ability to grow in a safe and sustainable way, even as we work to protect the environment and our coastal communities.

Continuing to improve our regulations ensures growth is supported. We're investing in research and development. We can support the sustainability and effective growth in aquaculture, and we are ensuring the effective management of the industry growth through our world-class regulations.

I want to commend the men and women working in the industry for the commitment to safety and responsible development and contribution to Nova Scotia's economy. We're creating jobs and opportunities in rural and coastal communities. That means young Nova Scotians have the opportunity to stay here at home and build careers and raise their families in rural Nova Scotia. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to say a few words to Bill No. 87. I do want to recognize that the minister is correct - aquaculture is incredibly important to the Province of Nova Scotia, and we're very pleased to see the industry surging ahead.

We have some reservations about the bill, but see very good provisions in the bill too. I just want to go through those four main provisions and just say a couple of words. Creating a class of institutional aquaculture licences and leases for non-commercial operation is very positive. We realize that what this industry does need is research, and if this gives the opportunity for that type of thing, that's very positive.

Allowing the amalgamation of two or more adjacent board-licensed aquaculture sites by the same operator under one licence is also positive. Concern has been expressed to us over the meaning of the term "adjacent" - the bill says that's still being debated, or undecided yet, but what does "adjacent" mean? I expect that there will be a definition of "adjacent" and we trust that we'll be able to see that that would be positive, but there is concern about that.

[7:15 p.m.]

Clarifying the process around the 30-day appeal period for the aquaculture review board is also a positive step, we believe, and finally, the requiring the ministerial approval

through the aquaculture review board to amend an existing licence or lease, the first provision. We have some reservations about that, and it mainly revolves around the amount of control of the industry put into the hands of the minister. The minister already appoints the aquaculture review board and now, before any application gets to that review board, the minister will say yea or nay, that's going ahead or not going ahead.

I understand that the problem the minister says in the bill that they're addressing, is that somebody can put an application in or start the process, and somebody else can jump the claim, and I think that would be a relatively easy process to solve, even within the aquaculture review board in the process. It could just simply be whoever puts their application for that piece of water or that process could have time. So, it's not necessary for the minister to be the gatekeeper of that process. So, I have some concerns about the amount of control and amount of power that puts in the minister's hands within this industry.

With those words, we're looking forward to hearing what comes out of Law Amendments Committee. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to have a moment to say just a few words about Bill No. 87. I am, in particular, glad to see a process in place to encourage more aquaculture research. However, we also see this as a missed opportunity for the province to build public confidence by showing it's serious about the Doelle-Lahey recommendations, and it does nothing to address worries that Nova Scotia is being left behind when it comes to safe, sustainable, and profitable aquaculture practices.

Washington, B.C., Maine, Virginia, Florida, and Denmark are all successfully moving away from open-net finfish farming, but in Nova Scotia, it's where we seem to be stuck, and I worry that this lack of leadership risks damaging our environment and wild fishery, and risks the industry itself. Other jurisdictions are finding that more controlled environments reduce environmental harm and increase production with few costs related to disease, storm damage, and temperature changes, and as East Coast Environmental Law points out, if this government does not address Nova Scotians' concerns about this industry then effectively Nova Scotians are encouraged to insist on shutting down the industry as a whole.

The East Coast Environmental Law and the Ecology Action Centre are among those who have pointed out that the Liberal Government is failing to fully implement the Doelle-Lahey recommendations and failing therefore to support a low-impact/high-value aquaculture industry in Nova Scotia. For those recommendations to work, they work as a package. They can't be cherry-picked, as this government has.

For example, the Doelle-Lahey report said that in order to ensure social licence, communities need to have a decisive say in licence approvals and renewals, but instead, communities have been offered superficial consultation. As another example, the Doelle-Lahey report was quite specific that aquaculture sites should not be located near known salmon migratory routes or spawning rivers, but the regulations simply say that proximity to wild salmon should be considered.

Half measures only lead to further frustration among fishers and communities, and do not help to create clarity and certainty for aquaculture companies. The repeated issues with aquaculture in Jordan Bay speak to some of the problems. Nova Scotians need to know that the government will listen to them when they see issues but the government has to be pushed or prodded by concerned citizens before it will admit there may be something to look into. It's for reasons like this that the New Democratic Party is proposing an environmental bill of rights for all Nova Scotians. An environmental bill of rights would give Nova Scotians the tools to make sure the government has to listen when they see problems.

I'll just say, briefly, that I had the opportunity as part of a parliamentary conference with l'Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie last summer to actually go out with an oyster farmer in northern New Brunswick, and it was wonderful to chat with the young man who owned the oyster farm. He had come home from working out West and he had been able to start up this business with relatively little capital investment and was so enjoying being back in New Brunswick, doing this work which is entirely dependent on a safe, clean environment. In fact, oyster farming, like mussel farming, actually provides ecosystem services. It actually provides services where it is cleaning the environment. In fact, in this particular area of New Brunswick, there is such an extent of oyster farms that storm surge is mitigated by the farms because they are literally on the water kind of controlling the waves during storms.

I think about him often and about that experience because the demographic and the story that he told, and similar stories I have heard from oyster farmers whom I have met at fundraisers here in Halifax, it's a wonderful opportunity for younger people to start up something they can care about and start up something they can grow and sort of, much like craft brewing, it's an industry which is distributed throughout our province. That's what we need, we need opportunities for younger people to create something they can be proud of, create something where they can create their own jobs and employ others, and where they're doing it in communities across the province.

I really welcome opportunities to grow the sort of aquaculture industry that is in line and not in conflict with, I think, values that we can all hold and all be proud of, particularly ones that are in line with a growing tourism industry because they protect and in fact are dependent on the beautiful coastline and the clean coastline that we are so lucky to enjoy and to steward here in Nova Scotia.



With those few comments, I'll just say that I look forward to Law Amendments Committee and I hope to hear from Nova Scotians about ways that this bill can be amended to increase government transparency and community oversight. Thank you very much.

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

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the two members who spoke on aquaculture and, indeed, the member from the NDP caucus may not be aware that Nova Scotia has the biggest oyster farm in Canada. As its products come online, it's going to be very interesting to see what quality oysters are.

I appreciate the comments. I look for Law Amendments Committee to see what comes from there. With that, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 87.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 87. 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 Bill No. 106.

**Bill No. 106 - Insurance Act.**

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

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 106 be now read a second time.

Bill No. 106 amends the Insurance Act to clarify one aspect of a homeowner's insurance policy. This clarification is important; it will help protect vulnerable Nova Scotians. Currently coverage could be denied if damage was caused by a wilful or criminal act of any person named under the policy, and this resulted in the potential for innocent Nova Scotians to be denied their coverage because of those criminal actions.

These amendments will clarify the language and protect Nova Scotians from being penalized for the criminal actions of a co-insured person in their home. It will bring forward a precedent that will ensure insurance companies must provide coverage for the innocent partner in a case of domestic violence. (Applause)

Currently insurance companies can rely on an exclusion clause in their homeowner's policy. Currently insurance companies are not required to pay a claim if the damage is caused by a wilful or criminal act of any persons named on the policy. For example, in a domestic case where a spouse burns down a co-owned property with both names on the insurance policy, the wilful act by the spouse or another named on the policy could jeopardize the financial interest of the innocent co-insured. This definition of persons includes all named as partner and/or children.

Historically, courts have ruled that the financial interests of the innocent co-insured have not been covered under the insurance. The Insurance Bureau of Canada has recognized this gap and has advised their members to pay claims on a case-by-case basis. However, the Insurance Bureau of Canada members are not bound by that.

These amendments impact all Nova Scotians, but they are important for women who are disproportionately affected by domestic violence and abuse. Our province now joins British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, and Quebec in addressing this issue. There are no financial implications for the province.

We know that Nova Scotia homeowners rely on insurance to provide a safety net in their time of need. The proposed legislative amendments will provide consistent application of the coverage. It protects the financial interest of a co-owner who could be a victim.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, it's hard to believe what some people will do to other people.

We see this legislation come forward, and we will be supporting it. We see that other provinces are doing it. The Insurance Bureau of Canada is supportive of it. But most importantly, we want to be supportive of Nova Scotians who are in situations where a partner intentionally does something to try to hurt them financially, and maybe otherwise too.

We will be supporting this bill, and we look forward to its passage here in the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I echo the comments of my colleague from Inverness. It seems very clear that there is a legislative gap in this area, and I applaud the government's quick action to fix it. We will also be supporting this bill.

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

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

HON. KAREN CASEY: I appreciate the comments and the support from the other side of the House.

We have done a bit of research. We believe that within the last 10 years in Nova Scotia, there has been one incident, but in our opinion - and I think it's supported - that's one too many. Thank you very much. I move to close debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 106. 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 Bill No. 104.

**Bill No. 104 - Research Nova Scotia Corporation Act.**

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

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 104, entitled the Research Nova Scotia Corporation Act, be read for a second time.

I would like to take some time today to share details around the Research Nova Scotia Corporation Act. This new legislation will drive the world-class research happening within our province's universities and the Nova Scotia Community College.

As a province, we are working together to foster innovation, grow our economy, and create jobs for Nova Scotians. Research drives innovation, and it creates products and services that solve real world problems. We need research to have innovation and to have economic growth. We need to invest in areas that will benefit Nova Scotians for decades to come and ultimately create a stronger, more sustainable economy.

In Fall 2016, government announced in its Throne Speech its intent to establish a Research Nova Scotia Corporation. In March 2017, government created the Research Nova Scotia Trust as a first step towards the creation of Research Nova Scotia Corporation and the Research Opportunities Fund. At that time, government invested \$25 million to the trust, and just recently, we followed with an additional \$20 million. Half of the \$20 million is dedicated to health innovation and mental health research. Any remaining funds left in the trust upon its expiry will transfer to Research Nova Scotia Corporation.

[7:30 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, the Research Nova Scotia Trust has already been supporting the incredible research happening here in Nova Scotia. Just this past October, we announced funding for nine ocean-related research projects, and in February, we announced another three clean tech-related research projects. These 12 projects combined represent a \$14-million investment in research and have helped to support 558 jobs, and 1,930 training positions. The Research Nova Scotia Corporation will continue the good work of the trust. Our province is lucky to be home to world-class researchers, and their work is giving us a competitive advantage both nationally and internationally.

One great example of the world-class research that is currently happening here in Nova Scotia are the ocean-related research projects announced from the trust this past Fall. These research projects are building on our strength, ocean sciences and technology. The ocean economy is becoming progressively more knowledge-based and technologically intensive.

Nova Scotia is well positioned, with our research talent and infrastructure already in place. We're home to many ocean research institutes and have the largest concentration of ocean-related PhDs in the world, 450 of them. This ocean-related research is helping to drive our economy and make us globally competitive. The Research Nova Scotia Corporation will support initiatives in areas like ocean science and technology, health and wellness, information and communications technology, clean technology, life sciences, social innovation, and resource sectors.

This legislation to create the Research Nova Scotia Corporation defines the organization's objectives, duties, powers, and reporting requirements. It defines appointments and rules for the board of directors, creates the research opportunities fund, prescribes how the fund is used, and will provide for regulatory oversight by Governor in Council. The new legislation also establishes the Research Nova Scotia Corporation as an arm's-length entity which will include the Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust and the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation. Going forward, we will also continue to work closely with the Offshore Energy Research Association, as they will play an important role in helping to align the research sectors in our province.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, the aim of the Research Nova Scotia Corporation is to help researchers better synchronize efforts and strategically leverage research funding availability both provincially and nationally. This will also enable our province to attract and retain top research talent.

Mr. Speaker, if we want to achieve new, better, stronger results, we need to do things differently, our research and innovation work in unison. Our innovation plays a critical role in making our research globally competitive. Our goal as a province is to grow

our inclusive and innovative ecosystem, and this new legislation will help us to achieve that.

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I am going to start off by saying this: I think with any good speech, you start off with a little bit of vinegar and some salt, and you end it with a little bit of honey.

I want to start off with what I think is wrong here, which is this government's bent on trying to amalgamate everything they can touch. They started off amalgamating municipal units - HRM is a good example, and CBRM. Those things didn't work out so well. They're still feeling the results of some of those things this far down the road. They're trying to amalgamate the health board. They're trying to amalgamate the (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: They're trying to amalgamate the school boards. So this is a bent on amalgamating lots of things.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's really look at what we're trying to do here. The Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust, the Offshore Energy Research Association, and the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation are all very good organizations in this province doing great research work. I'll give them the benefit of the doubt - maybe by putting some of these synergies together, it will be a better research organization, even though I don't see some of the fits between health research and offshore energy research and how those things are actually going to work very well together.

Yet when it comes to attracting those dollars for research, I think this is a good thing, because we can't do it all on our own. I know that innovation trusts across this country, the federal innovation funds, do have to attract amounts from the provinces. From a per capita standpoint, we only spend about one third of the national average on research. We need to do a better job of that and maybe this is an avenue to have that happen.

I'm going to end with this about the Health Research Foundation, which I was happy to be the minister responsible for a while for. It was brought in in 1998, it received Royal Assent by the Liberals and it was put in place by a Progressive Conservative Government at the time, so we've all had our hands in the good work of the Health Research Foundation.

I just wanted to try to figure out - not to figure out, but to sort of remind the government what the core mandate of the Health Research Foundation is and how it is

important in the discussion we are having on a regular basis here in the House of Assembly when it comes to attracting doctors and health professionals in this province.

The Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation, their priorities are: changing demographics; factors that contribute to inequities; income education; raise culture, literacy, et cetera, issues specific and unique to marginalized populations in Nova Scotia; disease prevention; and mental health. They are interested in continuing care models; primary health care access models; models of health human resources; and governance, sustainability, and costs.

What I do hope by basically taking those responsibilities away from the Minister of Health and Wellness and putting them in the hands of Labour and Advanced Education, that some of those tenets are not lost when they are transferred over to that organization, nor are the dollars that have been available to them lost either. I don't want to see health dollars being moved into the hands of offshore exploration or offshore research. I want to understand the delineation, the firewalls that are between those issues to make sure that the dollars we are spending today of course are still there tomorrow.

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge Krista Connell. She is the CEO of the Nova Scotia Research Foundation. She has done a phenomenal job over this and I want to thank Krista for all her hard work; and of course to thank Marli MacNeil, who is an executive director over there. They have done a phenomenal job of making sure that we are all along for the ride. I mean how many invites did we get to their celebrations of research in this province over the last number of years to understand the good stuff that happens here in our universities in concert with our medical and health professionals? They've done some pretty darn cool stuff for Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, again, it's a little bit of vinegar and a little bit of salt and, of course, a lot of sugar in the end, thanking those people for the good work they've done. I look forward to seeing what happens in the Law Amendments Committee when this comes forward.

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to rise to my feet today to just say a few things about Bill No. 104 on second reading. Investments in research obviously are vital to the progress of society and vital to the progress of Nova Scotia. Many issues need to be better researched in this province: climate change risk and mitigation practices; rural economic development strategies; sustainable and safe aquaculture practices; green jobs; transition strategies and best practices; fair and progressive taxation to address inequality; stimulus strategies for consumer demand; mental health and illness; and marine protection.

Now we do have some concerns about this legislation, however, and some of those are as follows. We are concerned that existing research trusts and foundations are being rolled into one. We are concerned that this may impact the work that those trusts and foundations have already been doing and supporting. Health research is extremely important to this province and so it's really not clear to us why the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation should cease to exist, rather like the school boards, and why it should cease to exist as an autonomous foundation.

That said, I look forward to hearing the public's input at Law Amendments Committee and we, the NDP, will have more to say on this bill after that, upon third reading. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, a great conversation from the members for both Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River and Argyle-Barrington. I do want to assure them that in terms of how we came to be here, this was part of the Nicholson report which really laid out what the province should be doing in terms of more funding for research, which we've demonstrated in the last year and a bit with the \$45 million being put into the research trust.

As well, it also focused on the fact that we were fragmented and, even with the \$45 million that we put in which will bring us to the national average for this period of time, it still doesn't bring the research dollars that we can attract up to a higher level, which is what we're hoping to do here. Both of those organizations do great work. I will add, at this point the Offshore Energy Research Association is not coming into this group but the option there for this new research corporation is to handle some of their back office, so they can have efficiency in terms of this moving forward and not have redundancy.

One thing I would also like to point out is that there will be no cuts in terms of the amount of money that will be going to these organizations. The \$45 million is over and above, and out of that \$45 million, the last \$20 million, there was an extra \$10 million which was earmarked to Health and Wellness which will go towards areas that the two members spoke about which will have an impact on the lives of Nova Scotians. I think that \$10 million will make quite a big difference.

The last thing I'd like to say - so that was my sugar and now here comes a little bit of my salt, but it won't be too salty. We talk about amalgamation and we talk about it like it's been bad. In terms of health care, I know I've spoken many times on this, but a lot of what was in the news was, oh my gosh, severances are going to cost \$10 million. That was four years ago. Since then we've saved \$40 million in those salaries and they were redundant salaries because we didn't need 40 vice-presidents. I'm going to give you

another area - when we took nine health authorities and amalgamated them into one, we had one purchasing group. In one item, pacemakers alone, we save \$1 million buying the same amount of pacemakers because we had more buying power.

As we went through an analysis which was done by a third party, we found \$50 million in procurement savings over two years. That money was not pulled out of health care - it remained there and it is there in order to provide better services. I think the health care amalgamation has been successful and I do look forward to third reading as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 104. 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, that concludes government business for today. (Interruption) I know that shatters your dreams. (Laughter)

I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow, Wednesday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, between 1:00 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. Following the daily routine, Question Period, and Opposition business, we will resolve the House into a Committee of the Whole on Supply. With time permitting, we will also consider for second reading Bill Nos. 107 and 108 as well as third reading on Bill No. 76.

I now ask the Deputy New Democratic Party House Leader to provide us with tomorrow's business.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy New Democratic Party House Leader.

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, Opposition Day tomorrow will be between 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. We will be calling the following Opposition business: Bill No. 69, an Act to Provide Dental Health Care for All Nova Scotian Children; Bill No. 71, the Fair Drug Pricing Act; and Bill No. 86, the Motor Vehicle Act, Respecting the Fixing of Speed Limits by Traffic Authorities of Municipalities.

I ask that the House now rise to meet again tomorrow between 1:00 p.m. and 11:59 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for adjournment. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.



The motion is carried.

The House is adjourned.

[The House rose at 7:45 p.m.]