



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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

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

### First Session

THURSDAY, APRIL 5, 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:	
Res. 1136, Sexual Assault Awareness Mo.: Free Online Training	
- Educate, Hon. K. Regan .....	3609
Vote - Affirmative.....	3610
Res. 1137, Ntl. Oral Health Mo.: Initiatives - Support,	
Hon. R. Delorey .....	3610
Vote - Affirmative.....	3611
Res. 1138, Newell, Todd: Live Well Challenge - Thanks,	
Hon. K. Colwell .....	3611
Vote - Affirmative.....	3612
Res. 1139, Appointees, Q.C. Designation - Recognize,	
Hon. M. Furey.....	3612
Vote - Affirmative.....	3613
Res. 1140, Intl. Adult Learners Wk.: Lifelong Learning - Value,	
Hon. L. Kousoulis .....	3614
Vote - Affirmative.....	3615
Res. 1141, King, Nathaniel: 1 <sup>st</sup> Safety Award - Dedication,	
Hon. K. Colwell .....	3615
Vote - Affirmative.....	3615

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:

No. 114, Gaelic College Foundation Act/Achd Fonndas Colaisde na Gàidhlig, Hon. R. Delorey .....	3616
No. 115, Motor Vehicle Act, Hon. P. Dunn.....	3616

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS:

N.S. Keltic U18 Rugby - Trip to Ireland, Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	3617
N.S. Coalition on Com. Interpreting: Serv. Delivery - Recognize, Ms. R. DiCostanzo.....	3618
CAN-U: Adult Educ. & Employment - Recognize, Ms. E. Smith-McCrossin.....	3619
Hines, Nola: Fundraising through Fitness - Best Wishes, Mr. B. Horne .....	3619
Reginato, Cole: Maj. Jr. Hockey - Congrats., Hon. A. MacLeod .....	3619
Masonic Frat.: Com. Fundraising - Thanks, Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	3620
Mooseheads: Hosts, Mem. Cup 2019 - Congrats., Mr. T. Halman.....	3620
Nova Scotians for Equalization & Fairness: Econ. Dev. - Study, Ms. T. Martin .....	3621
Tod, Judith: Prov. Volunteer Award - Congrats., Mr. K. Irving.....	3621
Fudge, Martin: 2018 Ntl. Special Olympics - Congrats., Ms. K. Masland.....	3622
Unions: Vehicles for Adult Learning - Recognize, Ms. L. Roberts.....	3622
Bridgewater/Ekistics Design: Cdn. Landscape Architects Award - Congrats., Hon. M. Furey.....	3623
Travelling Crosbys: Com. Spirit - Recognize, Ms. B. Adams .....	3623
Smith, Luke: All-Around Athlete - Best Wishes, Hon. K. Casey.....	3624
Dal. Agric. Students: Cdn. Engineering Competition Win - Congrats., Mr. L. Harrison .....	3624
Intl. Trans Day of Visibility: Support, Ms. S. Leblanc .....	3624
1 <sup>st</sup> Kingston Scouts: Com. Food Drive - Commend, Hon. L. Glavine.....	3625
N.S. Tourism: Enjoyment by Locals - Encourage, Hon. P. Dunn.....	3625
E. Hants Sr. Games: Com. Spirit - Recognize, Hon. M. Miller .....	3626
McDaniel, Zoe: Loran Scholarship - Congrats., Mr. A. MacMaster.....	3626

Foster, Jackie: Commonwealth Games - Congrats., Hon. R. Delorey .....	3627
Women's Institute: Com. Quilts - Thanks, Mr. T. Houston.....	3627
Digby Health Serv. Charitable Fdn.: Com. Fundraising - Thanks, Mr. Gordon Wilson.....	3628
Hair Masters: Mobile Cosmetology - Thanks, Mr. E. Orrell.....	3628
Dillon, Joan: Death of - Tribute, Hon. L. Hines .....	3629
Habitat for Humanity - Pictou Co. Chapter: Welcome, Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	3630
Chebucto Atl. Atom Hockey: Weekend Competition - Best Wishes, Hon. L. Diab .....	3630
Support Serv. Grp. Co-op.: Independent Living - Thanks, Mr. T. Halman.....	3630
Duale, Ali: Refugee Contrib. to Can. - Recognize, Hon. I. Rankin.....	3631
Jones, Deidre: STU Athlete of the Yr. - Congrats., Hon. A. MacLeod .....	3631
[GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:]	
Res. 1155, Mooseheads: Hosts, Mem. Cup 2019 - Congrats., Hon. L. Glavine.....	3632
Vote - Affirmative.....	3633
[STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS:]	
Cockerill, Courtney: Horatio Alger Scholarship - Congrats., Ms. K. Masland.....	3633
Baldwin, Danny: 65 <sup>th</sup> Birthday - Best Wishes, Hon. D. Mombourquette.....	3633
McRae, Cecilia - Proj. Smiles, Mr. T. Houston.....	3634
ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS:	
No. 602, Prem.: Sexual Violence Outreach Prog. - Funding Cut, Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	3634
No. 603, Prem. - Min. Wage Increase: Impacts - Data Table, Mr. G. Burrill .....	3636
No. 604, Prem. - Health Care Serv.: NSHA - Ineffective, Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	3637
No. 605, Environ. - Tire Burning: Pilot Proj. - Explain, Ms. L. Zann.....	3638
No. 606, H&W - Surgery Wait Times: AG Review - Explain, Mr. T. Houston.....	3640
No. 607, Justice - Cannabis: Online Sales - Security Measures, Mr. A. MacMaster.....	3641
No. 608, Int. Serv.: Gov't. Emails: Private Acc. - Concern, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	3642

No. 609, H&W: Local Health Serv.: Prov. Invest. - Lacking, Ms. T. Martin .....	3643
No. 610, H&W - Specialty Wait Times: Reduction Measures - Explain, Ms. B. Adams.....	3645
No. 611, Justice - Stewiacke: Speeding - Action, Mr. L. Harrison .....	3646
No. 612, TIR - Englishtown Ferry Work: Completion Date - Assurances, Mr. K. Bain.....	3647
No. 613, Nat. Res. - Crown Land Oak Lake: Alternative Uses - Consideration, Ms. L. Roberts.....	3648
No. 614, Com. Serv. - ESIA Recipients: Shelter Allow. - Raise, Hon. P. Dunn.....	3649
No. 615, Bus.: Workforce Barriers - Explore, Ms. E. Smith-McCrossin.....	3651
No. 616, TIR - Road Proj. Contracts: 20/80 Policy - Continuation, Hon. A. MacLeod .....	3652
No. 617, Status of Women: Sexual Assault Ctrs. (C.B.) - Funding, Ms. L. Zann.....	3653
<b>GOVERNMENT BUSINESS:</b>	
<b>GOVERNMENT MOTIONS:</b>	
HOUSE RESOLVED INTO CW ON SUPPLY AT 2:57 P.M. ....	3654
HOUSE RECONVENED AT 7:03 P.M. ....	3654
<b>PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:</b>	
No. 99, House of Assembly Act	
Hon. G. MacLellan .....	3655
Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	3656
Mr. G. Burrill .....	3659
Hon. G. MacLellan .....	3662
Vote - Affirmative.....	3664
No. 107, Labour Standards Code	
Hon. L. Kousoulis .....	3665
Mr. E. Orrell.....	3667
Ms. T. Martin .....	3668
Ms. B. Adams .....	3669
Hon. L. Kousoulis.....	3671
Vote - Affirmative.....	3673
No. 108, Cannabis Control Act	
Hon. M. Furey.....	3673
Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	3681
Ms. C. Chender .....	3684
Mr. A. MacMaster.....	3686
Mr. J. Lohr .....	3688
Mr. B. Johns.....	3692
Hon. M. Furey.....	3693
Vote - Affirmative.....	3694
ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Fri., Apr. 6 <sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. ....	3695

## NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):

Res. 1142, Store Next Door: Com. Initiative - Congrats., Hon. Z. Churchill .....	3696
Res. 1143, Bates/Merrill Friendship Tournament: Bearcat Victory - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey .....	3696
Res. 1144, SLAM U16 Basketball Champs.: Congrats., Hon. I. Rankin.....	3697
Res. 1145, St. Margaret's Bay Lions: Breakfast Prog. - Thanks, Hon. I. Rankin.....	3697
Res. 1146, Quilting Grp.: PPRA Fundraiser - Congrats., Hon. I. Rankin.....	3698
Res. 1147, Chill Street Brewing: Marketing Champion Award - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller .....	3698
Res. 1148, Allie Huybers Fitness: Home-based Bus. Award - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller .....	3699
Res. 1149, ProTx: Healthcare Serv. Award - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller .....	3699
Res. 1150, Elmsdale Landscaping: Green Leader Award - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller .....	3700
Res. 1151, McNeill's Shell: Employer of the Yr. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller .....	3700
Res. 1152, McNeill, Pam: Bus. Person of the Yr. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller .....	3701
Res. 1153, Shooters Bar & Grill: Com. Booster Award - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller .....	3701
Res. 1154, Sweet Spot Choc. Shop: Bus. of the Yr. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller .....	3702
Res. 1156, Musquodoboit Rwy. Mus.: 100 <sup>th</sup> Anniv. - Congrats., The Speaker .....	3702



House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, THURSDAY, APRIL 5, 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**

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

**GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1136**

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

Whereas April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, a time for Nova Scotians to educate about, and raise awareness of, sexual violence and to work together to prevent it; and

Whereas it takes courage to start conversations about rape culture, misogyny, missing and murdered Indigenous women, and the many issues related to sexual violence that need to be dealt with in our society; and

Whereas a committee of dedicated and passionate community members developed a free online training course to help people learn more about sexual violence and how to support someone who has survived it;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in encouraging Nova Scotians to take the free online training, Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence: A Nova Scotia Resource, which can be found at [breakthesilencens.ca](http://breakthesilencens.ca).

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1137**

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

Whereas good oral health, including regular dental checks, mouth cleaning, and eating a well-balanced diet is an important piece of our overall health; and

Whereas healthy eating practices and good dental habits at all ages can improve both health and quality of life; and

Whereas April is National Oral Health Month, a time to increase awareness about the link between oral health and overall health;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature support oral health initiatives aimed at improving oral health literacy and better health outcomes.

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.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1138**

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

Whereas after four children died in a tragic house fire in Pubnico in January, Todd Newell, a fish harvester from Cape Sable Island, decided to raise funds to support the surviving family members of the victims with the Live Well Challenge; and

Whereas Mr. Newell created a fundraising challenge that encouraged fishing captains to raise funds in exchange for an agreement to jump into the live wells of their boats, a hold below deck used to store live fish that is filled with ice-cold water at this time of year; and

Whereas since issuing the Live Well Challenge, the fishing community has come together and been plunging into frigid waters, not only live wells but off their boats and moors in the harbour and at lobster houses, raising nearly \$1 million for benefits of the victims of the fire and more than 100 other charities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in thanking Todd Newell for his thoughtful, community-minded actions in creating a Live Well Challenge and all those Nova Scotians who have taken up the challenge and raised funds for this worthy cause.

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

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



Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request permission to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Joining us in the gallery today - and I'm taking my chances because I know she may be upset with me - but I'd like to introduce Aleta Cromwell, Q.C. Aleta is a lawyer within the Department of Justice and a team lead in the area of child protection in our Truro office. I ask you to bring warm greetings to Aleta. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1139**

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is home to many dedicated and talented lawyers who work tirelessly to improve public policy and justice, who take the time to lead the next generation of lawyers and ensure they have the skills and knowledge needed, and who give selflessly of themselves to supporting community and volunteer organizations across the province; and

Whereas the Queen's Counsel designation is awarded annually to members of the legal profession who have demonstrated exceptional merit and outstanding contributions to the legal community and whose candidacy has been recommended by an independent advisory committee chaired by a Justice of the Court of Appeal; and

Whereas this year, 14 of the province's most esteemed lawyers are being awarded the prestigious Q.C. designation, including Aleta Cromwell from the Department of Justice, and the MLA for Halifax Armdale, our colleague here in the House, the Honourable Lena Metlege Diab;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature recognize these 14 individuals for their outstanding contributions and applaud them on their appointment.

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. (Applause)

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, today I have the pleasure of telling you about Adult Learners' Week, which celebrates adult learners across the province and the importance of literacy and learning throughout life. Adults who return to learning . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

I think you have a member's statement.

MR. KOUSOULIS: I do. I'm just doing the preamble before I introduce some members in the gallery.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. Do you have a Government Notice of Motion?

MR. KOUSOULIS: Yes, I do.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. Then, you want to do an introduction.

MR. KOUSOULIS: This is part of my introduction, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. Permission granted.

MR. KOUSOULIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Adults who return to learning and improve their literacy and essential skills change their lives and the lives of those around them. Literacy Nova Scotia is a provincial, non-profit organization that has been supporting the literacy community since 1992. Literacy Nova Scotia works to ensure that all Nova Scotians have equal access to quality literacy, essential skills, and lifelong learning opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, I would like permission to introduce some special guests in the House in the east gallery. Today, we have staff and board representatives from Literacy Nova Scotia along with adult learners whose decision to attend adult learning opportunities has changed their lives.

If you look at the east gallery, I would like to introduce Literacy Nova Scotia board chair Danny Cavanagh - please stand - Literacy Nova Scotia treasurer Darren Googoo; Literacy Nova Scotia executive director Jayne Hunter; Literacy Nova Scotia communications coordinator Elaine Frampton; Todd Porter, who attended classes at Cumberland Adult Network for Upgrading; Nicole Webb, who attended classes at Dartmouth Learning Network; and Karl Francis-Williams, who attended classes at Bedford-Sackville Learning Network.

I would ask that the House give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

[1:15 p.m.]

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

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1140**

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

Whereas Nova Scotians mark the outstanding achievements of adult learners during Adult Learners' Week, April 1<sup>st</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>, at events throughout the province; and

Whereas a literate community means more opportunities for Nova Scotians to access better jobs and strengthen our economic potential, which helps individuals, families, the community, and our province; and

Whereas the Government of Nova Scotia recognizes the value of adult literacy and supports the development and delivery of adult literacy programs in communities all across the province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize April 1 to 7, 2018, as International Adult Learners' Week in the Province of Nova Scotia and urge all Nova Scotians to embrace and understand the value of literacy as the foundation to lifelong learning.

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. 1141**

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

Whereas promoting safety in Nova Scotia's fishing industry is a priority for both government and the industry as we work together to ensure that our fish harvesters are able to earn their livelihood and return safely to their families at the end of each day; and

Whereas after Nathaniel King and his *Nomada Queen* crewmate Wayne Atwood were pulled into the Atlantic Ocean and became entangled in gear on Dumping Day in 2015, a series of decisions that Nathaniel made saved his life and that of his crewmate; and

Whereas since the events of that day, Nathaniel has publicly shared his story with thousands of Nova Scotians about how his safety training courses helped him and his colleague survive the icy Atlantic, and was recognized for the first Safety Award at the recent 20<sup>th</sup> Fisheries and Aquaculture Minister's Conference on the fishing industry;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in thanking Nathaniel for his brave efforts in saving his own life and that of his colleague and for his dedication to encouraging the adoption of better safety practices by sharing his story, an inspiration and positive change in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Gaelic Affairs.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, before I introduce the bill, may I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. DELOREY: Tapadh leibh. I would like to direct my colleagues' attention to the Speaker's Gallery where we have some guests here today. The honourable Rodney MacDonald, former Premier, CEO of the Gaelic College. (Applause)

Joining Mr. MacDonald is David Rankin, director of school operations at the Gaelic College and also the president of Gaelic Council Nova Scotia, and Tonya Lundrigan Fry, who is a Gaelic College board member as well as the president ex-officio of the Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia. (Applause)

It's also worth noting that Tonya's a local business owner.

I guess you've already received the warm welcome of the House (Interruptions) Okay you need to see this from my vantage point - there's actually a piece blocking the space up there in your gallery.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to introduce Lewis MacKinnon, a great Antigonish native. Lewis is from Antigonish, his dad still lives in Antigonish, and he is the Executive Director for the Office of Gaelic Affairs. (Applause)

**Bill No. 114 - Entitled An Act Continuing the Gaelic College Foundation. (Hon. Randy Delorey)**

**Bill No. 115 - Entitled An Act to Amend Chapter 293 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Motor Vehicle Act. (Hon. Pat Dunn)**

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 Pictou West.

**N.S. KELTIC U18 RUGBY - TRIP TO IRELAND**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, the Nova Scotia Keltic U18 Men's and Women's rugby teams both travelled to Ireland on March 7<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>. The teams were comprised of 44 players and coaching staff from across Nova Scotia. This trip included opportunities to play three friendly exhibition matches against Irish high schools, as well as local clubs. The visit also included training sessions with a professional rugby coach, a tour of state-of-the-art rugby facilities, and watching a few professional and international rugby matches.

Pictou West was represented on the field by Andrew Little and Justin MacLennan. These young men demonstrated a high degree of dedication to the sport and have made Pictou West and its citizens very proud. I am pleased to wish the players the best of luck in all their future matches. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. DICOSTANZO: I would like to introduce a group of very important people in my life and in my career in the last 20 years, the Coalition on Community Interpreting. I'm going to introduce them one by one. If they don't mind standing up, so we can clap for everybody at the same time at the end.

First I have Merek Jagielski, he is with ISANS, and he is the lead of the Nova Scotia Coalition on Community Interpreting. Please stand up, Merek. Then I have Alana Baxter. Alana is with the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration - just keep standing, if you don't mind. After that I have Erlinda Unite, and she is the President of ACINS, which is the Association of Community Interpreters of Nova Scotia. The fourth person I have, my favourite Chinese interpreter, she is Cantonese and Mandarin. She is the best interpreter in town for the last 25 years. Christina Chui is with the Nova Scotia Interpreting Services, representing today. The fifth person I have Tabinda Sheikh, and Tabinda is representing the Department of Health and Wellness here. Sixth I have Bassima O'Brian, who is from the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Nova Scotia, and Nicole Holland from the Nova Scotia Health Authority. Last but not least, I also have Shadi Aljendi from ISANS, and he is responsible to keep up with our website, so please give them a warm, warm welcome. (Applause)

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

**N.S. COALITION ON COM. INTERPRETING:  
SERV. DELIVERY - RECOGNIZE**

MS. RAFAH DICONSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the important work of the Nova Scotia Coalition on Community Interpreting, the work that they're doing to improve the delivery of interpreting services in the public sector.

The coalition has existed since 2013 as a collective of 12 stakeholders and partners that represent interpretive services, interpreter and translator associations, educational institutions, government departments, service provider organizations, and experienced interpreters.

The coalition has organized several policy consultations across the service sector and developed a business case for language interpretation for publicly funded services in Nova Scotia. Most notably, it introduced guidelines and standards for language interpretation in 2014. The coalition's future ambition is to form a regulatory body, or a college, similar to the Barristers' Society, to help implement standards for community interpreters in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the coalition for its work to strengthen interpreting services in our province, and I wish them the best of luck in their future endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. SMITH MCCROSSIN: Introductions, I should say.

Today, I'd like to welcome to the House, in the east gallery I believe, members of CAN-U Cumberland Adult Network, the instructors, and students. I would ask them to stand as I introduce them - Rick Baker; LingXia Gao; Lisa Harnish; Kimberley Laurette; Sheila Little; Christopher MacLeod; Joshua McCallum; Todd Porter; Malcom Rector; Amanda Roberts; Stephen Spicer; Tracy Sutherland; Alice Timbury; Shelly Thomas; Sarah Tower; Jennifer Dow; Tiffany Huntley; Catherine Wile; Courtney MacMullin; and Zack Knol.

I'd like to welcome them to the House today, Mr. Speaker. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**CAN-U: ADULT EDUC. & EMPLOYMENT - RECOGNIZE**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize Tiffany Huntley and the other staff from CAN-U, and the other students from the Cumberland Adult Network.

Life is not always easy. Life's circumstances can put obstacles and barriers in the way to achieving an education. An education is often the key factor in entering the work force and CAN-U offers many programs for adults to aid in their education and employment opportunities.

I'm so proud of the important work that CAN-U is doing in our community of Amherst and Cumberland County, and today I wish our adult learners future success in achieving their goals and life dreams.

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

**HINES, NOLA: FUNDRAISING THROUGH FITNESS - BEST WISHES**

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, Nola Hines, a volunteer firefighter in Wellington, jumped at the opportunity to be a Team Myles Ambassador with the Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon. With the demands and challenges of firefighting, she felt she was not doing enough to keep up her fitness.

The special program invites people to train together for a 5KM or a 10KM race, and offers access to experts to help you to set personal goals and learn about exercise, running, diet, and nutrition. Nola Hines works for BoyneClarke, title sponsor of the newly added 15KM race, and had the opportunity to apply through her employer. Nola will be raising money for the Children's Wish Foundation of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that members of the Legislature wish Nola the best of luck on her training and her race.

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

**REGINATO, COLE: MAJ. JR. HOCKEY - CONGRATS.**

HON. ALIFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Cole Reginato of Albert Bridge, who recently had a dream come true.

Cole Reginato plays with the Saint John Sea Dogs, and they just took home the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League's President's Cup.



Cole has always wanted to play in the Québec Major Junior Hockey League, and last year, he split his time between the Cape Breton Screaming Eagles and the Saint John Sea Dogs.

But what Cole didn't know was that his second dream would also come true. The 19-year-old captured the President's Cup title recently, helping the Saint John Sea Dogs defeat the Blainville-Boisbrand Armada 5-1, sweeping the league final 4-0.

I'm so very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate Cole on this win, and wish him the very best as he continues on with his promising hockey career.

[1:30 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

#### **MASONIC FRAT.: COM. FUNDRAISING - THANKS**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: I rise today to recognize the Masonic Fraternity for the District of Lunenburg Queens and its eight lodges for their contribution to the Health Services Foundation of the South Shore.

The Health Services Foundation has been raising money for the past year for their Minimally Invasive Surgery Project. This project is to aid in building two surgery units within South Shore Regional Hospital. The Masonic Fraternity could see the benefits these units have to the community, and applied for \$10,000 from the Masonic Foundation under special funding. The funding was approved, and a presentation was made to the Health Services Foundation at their Curl for a Cause event. The Masonic Foundation distributes various funds to projects that benefit communities, contributing \$400,000 over the past several years.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask you and members of this House of Assembly to please join me in thanking the Masonic Fraternity for the District of Lunenburg Queens and the Masonic Foundation for their contribution to the Health Services Foundation of the South Shore.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

#### **MOOSEHEADS: HOSTS, MEM. CUP 2019 - CONGRATS.**

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Memorial Cup is coming back to Halifax. We learned only moments ago that the best young players will vie for junior hockey's biggest prize next year right here in our province's city.

Mr. Speaker, 2019 will mark the 25<sup>th</sup> season for the Mooseheads, so it seems a fitting time to host this prestigious tournament. I know I speak for all members when I congratulate team owner Bobby Smith and general manager Cam Russell and everyone in the Mooseheads organization for submitting the successful bid.

The Memorial Cup was established to honour those who gave their lives in World War I and was rededicated to honour all soldiers who died fighting for Canada. Nova Scotia's proud military history makes it a perfect host city. Halifax is a hockey city.

We last hosted the Memorial Cup in 2000, and I know the organizers and fans will make Memorial Cup 2019 a memorable event for players and fans.

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

**NOVA SCOTIANS FOR EQUALIZATION & FAIRNESS:  
ECON. DEV. - STUDY**

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge the hard-working efforts of a group of advocates in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, called the Nova Scotians for Equalization Fairness.

One of the founders of this group, Father Albert Maroun, has been steadfast in his campaign to ensure Cape Breton is a viable community and will continue to prosper and grow. Cape Breton faces an unprecedented fiscal imbalance with the rest of Nova Scotia. There is an urgent need to address this imbalance and ensure that CBRM can meet the needs of its residents.

The NDP caucus is on the record for calling for an immediate stimulus plan to support economic development in Cape Breton. There are rallies of support scheduled over the next couple of months, and I am proud to see Cape Bretoners coming together, as we did for so many years, to support such a worthy cause.

I urge my colleagues in this House to look into and study the dire situation in Cape Breton. I will proudly march and stand with them.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**TOD, JUDITH: PROV. VOLUNTEER AWARD - CONGRATS.**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 2018 Provincial Volunteer Award recipient from Wolfville, Judith Tod.

Judith has had a profound impact on our community since moving here from Manitoba. She has been a chaplain, a senior pastor, a Rotary Club member, the president

of Family and Children's Services, and an engaged member of her church, among her many roles. Judith is deeply committed to helping refugees as Chair of the Refugee Support Network in the Wolfville area and has played an integral role in assisting Syrian families to build new lives in her community. Her compassion for her fellow citizens is extraordinary, and she's very deserving of this award.

Please join me in thanking the wonderful Judith Tod for her tremendous efforts to improve the lives of her fellow citizens, and in congratulating her on being named a 2018 Provincial Volunteer Award recipient.

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

**FUDGE, MARTIN:  
2018 NTL. SPECIAL OLYMPICS - CONGRATS.**

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Shelburne Special Olympian Martin Fudge, who will be representing Nova Scotia in individual and team competitions at the National Special Olympics 5-Pin Bowling Championships in Prince Edward Island from May 14<sup>th</sup> to May 20<sup>th</sup> this year.

In 2017, Martin received the Dr. Frank Hayden Award, recognizing his many contributions to the true spirit of Special Olympics for the past 30 years. He is a dedicated athlete who trains and participates in both the summer and winter programs. As new athletes join the program, Martin consistently demonstrates leadership and kindness to new members as they become familiar with their sport and teammates.

Best wishes to Martin for a successful tournament. His dedication, passion, and commitment to his sport and his community are inspirational.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**UNIONS: VEHICLES FOR ADULT LEARNING - RECOGNIZE**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: During this Adult Learners' Week, I particularly want to recognize the phenomenal work of unions in supporting life-long learning.

I have been so impressed by various union members who have come in groups to my office to speak to me about different public policy issues, as part of various campaigns.

Skills of running meetings, setting agendas, keeping minutes, gaining confidence in public speaking, and learning to advocate are learned by many Nova Scotians through union membership. Then those skills and that confidence are often loaned to other efforts and organizations in our communities.

I just want to say, during this week, how much I value that and appreciate that contribution of unions to Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

**BRIDGEWATER/EKISTICS DESIGN:  
CDN. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS AWARD - CONGRATS.**

HON. MARK FUREY: Last summer was the first full season that residents of Bridgewater were able to enjoy the Pijinuiskaq Park. Free concerts and other activities were held at the park all summer as a way to celebrate its completion and to bring the community together.

Pijinuiskaq Park, while beautiful, can now boast a significant award as well. The Town of Bridgewater, in partnership with Ekistics Planning & Design, have won the 2018 Canadian Society of Landscape Architects award. The winning category was Small-Scale Public Landscapes Designed by a Landscape Architect, and is well deserved.

I'd like to congratulate Bridgewater's former mayor, David Walker; current mayor, David Mitchell; past and present council members; and the residents of Bridgewater for this prestigious award. We will all benefit from the park's presence and beauty.

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

**TRAVELLING CROSBYS: COM. SPIRIT - RECOGNIZE**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Today I would like to bring attention to the Travelling Crosbys group of Cole Harbour. This dedicated group travelled to Pittsburgh to watch local hockey superstar Sidney Crosby play against the Montreal Canadiens and the Washington Capitals. The group started off with only a few people, but quickly expanded to 24. Some of the members knew Crosby and played hockey with him growing up.

All 24 men sported jerseys of teams that Sidney had played on throughout his life, including Team Canada, Cole Harbour Red Wings, and Dartmouth Subways. Sidney's 1993 Timbits jersey was even worn by one of the 24.

The Travelling Crosbys group showed true loyalty and were well-received by Sidney Crosby, and my only regret is that I didn't get to go with them.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

**SMITH, LUKE: ALL-AROUND ATHLETE - BEST WISHES**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Seventeen-year-old Luke Smith of Great Village is a Grade 12 student at the Cobequid Educational Centre in Truro. He has been a member of the CEC Cougars hockey team for three years and has been their team captain.

This high-scoring defenceman is a strong skater, covers the ice well, handles the puck with expertise, and has a powerful shot. He is proud of the team's win at the Auburn Classic Hockey Tournament held in Cole Harbour recently in December, where they defeated the host team 2-1 and where he scored his first goal.

Smith was also an assistant coach with the Brookfield Elks Bantam A hockey team, and enjoys working with young skaters. An all-round athlete, Smith also played in the outfield for three seasons with the CEC Cougars baseball team. Always humble, yet polite, Smith plans to study engineering after graduating this year. Please join me in wishing Luke all the best.

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

**DAL. AGRIC. STUDENTS:  
CDN. ENGINEERING COMPETITION WIN - CONGRATS.**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: For the second year in a row, a team of students from Dalhousie University's Faculty of Agriculture won top prize at the 2018 Canadian Engineering Competition.

Approximately 150 engineering undergraduate students from across the nation compete through seven different competitions in the fields of innovation, design, and communication. The Dal AC team won in the Junior Design Category which challenged them, having limited time and budget constraints to design, create, and test a physical prototype as a solution to a real-world problem.

I wish to congratulate the innovative Dal AC Engineering Undergraduate Team of Justin Thorne from Cooks Brook, Shannon O'Connor of Valley, Logan Miller of Truro, and Paul Diamond of Bible Hill, on winning the Junior Design Category of the 2018 Canadian Engineering Competition.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**INTL. TRANS DAY OF VISIBILITY: SUPPORT**

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, March 31<sup>st</sup> was the International Transgender Day of Visibility, a day to celebrate the courage and successes of transgender

people in our families and communities, and also to bring light to the many issues and injustices trans people face in many aspects of their lives.

Since becoming MLA for Dartmouth North, I have had many trans people come into my office with serious issues about their treatment by government offices, including problems with legal name changes and gender changes where years after someone has made those changes, computer systems show old names and gender markers; not being addressed by preferred names or pronouns; waiting times for doctors' appointments and referrals for sex reassignment surgeries; lack of access in Nova Scotia to those surgeries; and lack of supports for people diagnosed with gender dysphoria who are on income assistance - the list goes on.

With the marking of Trans Day of Visibility, Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage everyone in this House to see, to listen to, and to protect all trans people in our province, our country, and our world. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> KINGSTON SCOUTS: COM. FOOD DRIVE - COMMEND**

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the 1<sup>st</sup> Kingston Scouts for their 425-pound contribution of non-perishable food items to the Upper Room Food Bank in Kingston, in advance of the Easter weekend.

Scout Venturers went door to door in local subdivisions to collect food, and reported that they were impressed with the support that they received from the community. Inspired by the Scouts' efforts, Eden Valley Poultry of Berwick committed to matching the donation weight to the food bank each month for the remainder of 2018.

As the MLA for Kings West, I'd like to congratulate the 1<sup>st</sup> Kingston Scouts for assisting the community through their delivery to the Kingston food bank and for making such a positive impact. Furthermore, I'd like to commend the group for embodying the values through their actions - being kind, doing your best, and leaving each place a little better than you found it.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

#### **N.S. TOURISM: ENJOYMENT BY LOCALS - ENCOURAGE**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, from the rolling mountain range in the Cape Breton Highlands and expansive fields of green in the Annapolis Valley to the numerous lighthouses that cover our coastline, our province has so much to offer.

Nova Scotia is home to many numerous places for locals and tourists to see. We live in an incredible province with the vast Atlantic Ocean, the rocky shores, and the incredible natural beauty of the East Coast. It is a place to visit if you want to meet friendly people, go whale-watching, boating, hiking, or enjoy one of the many music festivals in the area.

The province contains several classic tourist sites and it is possible that locals are not aware of the charm and beauty that exists in our backyard.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

### **E. HANTS SR. GAMES: COM. SPIRIT - RECOGNIZE**

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, in life we can't avoid growing old, but we can grow old productively, enthusiastically, and have a whole lot of fun in the process.

In my constituency that ideal is represented quite fittingly with the organization of the East Hants Senior Games each Spring. Residents of 50 years or better can register and participate in a wide variety of activities, giving them the opportunity to connect with friends and newcomers in a fun, competitive setting.

This year the games run from April 4<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, with a closing ceremony held on May 18<sup>th</sup>. The games are open to all who qualify by the number of years on the planet. This energetic organization hosts competitions in darts, bowling, washer toss, pool, scrabble, and Auction 45s. Volunteers from the seniors' community make sure the games are fun, healthy, and socially enjoyable for all.

I'd like to recognize the volunteers of the East Hants Senior Games for their work to benefit this segment of our community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

### **MCDANIEL, ZOE: LORAN SCHOLARSHIP - CONGRATS.**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, Zoe McDaniel has been awarded the prestigious Loran Scholarship for 2018. She is one of 34 Canadians from over 5,000 applicants who has been selected. The Grade 12 Dalbrae Academy student from Brook Village underwent a rigorous selection process designed to seek out evidence of character, integrity, courage, grit, compassion, and inner directness in young leaders committed to serving others.

Her prize is a \$100,000 scholarship over four years, plus a \$10,000 annual stipend, tuition, waivers, mentorship, funding for summer internships, annual retreats, and a week-long orientation expedition in the Algonquin Park.

[1:45 p.m.]

Ms. McDaniel is a youth member of the Mabou Gaelic and Historical Society. She has been a leader in the Challenge Movement, organizing and facilitating weekend retreats at the Mabou Renewal Centre. She is a member of the Dalbrae Dragons Drama Club and the Students Helping Our World committee, and was a Healthy Relationships for Youth coordinator. Last year she ran a free peer-tutoring program.

May we in this Legislature wish Zoe well with her plans to take museum studies at the University of British Columbia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**FOSTER, JACKIE:  
COMMONWEALTH GAMES - CONGRATS.**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to recognize the many Canadians who are in Australia at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, which recently opened. In particular, I want to draw attention to a Nova Scotian who is on the Canadian lawn bowls team. She hails from the Valley, has competed in several national and international events, was recently a member of the 2018 Apple Spiel curling championship team, and is often seen here at the Legislature, although she's probably more well known for her former career, which brought her to the living room of many Nova Scotians.

Jackie Foster kicked off her round-robin lawn bowl matches earlier today - this morning, in Atlantic Time - in the women's fours and picked up a win over Wales and a loss to Scotland.

I trust my colleagues will join me in congratulating Jackie for her success making Team Canada and wish her and the team the best of luck as the 2018 Commonwealth Games continue.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**WOMEN'S INSTITUTE: COM. QUILTS - THANKS**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, Helen Cruickshank has been a member of the Women's Institute since 1967. She transferred from the Fox Brook branch when the Riverton group disbanded.



To describe Helen as a quilter would be an understatement. February was Women's Institute Month and Helen is surrounded by quilts - from bassinets to single beds, there are quilts for all.

Carol Grant is the other quilter in the group, but all the supplies come from a whole combination of members. This year each of the Women's Institute groups are making five quilts, for a total of 45. The Aberdeen Hospital, the IWK, and Tearmann House are the recipients of these quilts.

Thank you to these ladies who give so generously to strangers in need of warmth and comfort. Your labour of love is a true gift.

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

**DIGBY HEALTH SERV. CHARITABLE FDN.:  
COM. FUNDRAISING - THANKS**

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, again this year the Digby and Area Health Services Charitable Foundation contributed for some major purchases of equipment for the Digby General Hospital. This included helping fund the new cardiac monitors as well as purchasing a new cardiac stress-testing unit and ultrasound unit.

Since its establishment, the foundation has supported the hospital in its efforts to acquire medical diagnostic equipment. Not only is this important for the care of our area's patients, but a selling point for the hospital when trying to attract physicians and other medical professionals to the area.

I want to thank the foundation for funding the equipment the staff has identified as an important and necessary way to improve the care of our patients. Also, we appreciate that the foundation continues to raise funds for the future contributions to the hospital and other good causes.

The same weekend of the announcement of this new equipment, Kevin Ellis and Mike Bartlett, organized the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Richard Ellis Memorial Golf Tournament, which raised \$15,000 for the foundation.

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

**HAIR MASTERS: MOBILE COSMETOLOGY - THANKS**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Angela Iannetti, who is the owner and operator of Hair Masters in North Sydney. Hair Masters is a private career college specializing in cosmetology. She realized many people who live in rural areas cannot get into urban areas to receive haircuts and other spa services.

Angela and her six students offer a mobile cosmetology service to the North Shore of Cape Breton. This experiment has become a raging success, and Angela is considering expanding her service.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Angela and her students for taking their skills to rural Cape Breton and making her clients extremely happy.

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

### **DILLON, JOAN: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay my humble respects to humanitarian Joan Dillon, whose compassionate presence inspired thousands and will now be deeply mourned by thousands more with her recent passing. Joan was the co-founder of X-Project, the St. F.X. University volunteer mentoring program that began in Lincolnville, Guysborough County, in 1965.

Over 50 years ago Joan began teaching pottery to local youth, and because of her inspirational conviction and infectious spirit, X-Project is now servicing Pictou Landing First Nation, Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation, Sunnyville, Lincolnville, and Upper Big Tracadie with educational assistance programs, recreation programs, and various other workshops led by over 4,000 X student volunteers since its inception.

Joan Dillon is a beloved figure in Guysborough County, and my words will surely fall flat trying to explain her contribution to our community. I strongly encourage all members and Nova Scotians alike to visit the St. F.X. website to see many wonderful pictures taken by Joan herself and to learn about the life's work of a woman whose uninhibited social conscience will fill one with gratitude.

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

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the members to turn their attention to the east gallery, where we are joined today by Mr. Connor Smith from Vancouver Island. Connor is a first-year political science student at Acadia University with a keen interest in politics, who hopes to stay in the province after he graduates, so hopefully, we might even see him in the Chamber one day.

He's accompanied today by his uncle Lang Jongmans, who is my indispensable Director of Policy and Planning for the Department of Internal Services. I'd ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY - PICTOU CO. CHAPTER: WELCOME**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am so proud that Pictou County is now home to a chapter of Habitat for Humanity. This wonderful organization brings volunteers together to build houses for people who might not be able to afford one. Those who might not be able to get a traditional mortgage from a bank are given a mortgage through Habitat that costs about 30 per cent of their gross income. The lower price is achieved through volunteer work that goes into building the homes, as well as corporate and community contributions.

The first construction project will take place in Stellarton with other projects then taking place throughout Pictou County. I look forward to the tremendous impact this organization, its contributors, and its volunteers will make to our community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

**CHEBUCTO ATL. ATOM HOCKEY:  
WEEKEND COMPETITION - BEST WISHES**

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, today is a good day for many reasons, especially for the hockey lovers, having just received the news that Halifax has been chosen to host the 2019 Memorial Cup. (Applause)

I want to congratulate our own 17 young, talented hockey players of the Chebucto Atom A for being named the Central Minor Hockey Atom A Champions: Carter, Ryan, Charlie, Quinn, Patrick, Callum, Joseph, Jackson, Matthew, Camden, Ethan, Colby, Ryan, Shawn, Peyton, Ty, and Callum. I want to wish all players the best of luck as they compete on ice this weekend in the Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Day of Champions.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**SUPPORT SERV. GRP. CO-OP.: INDEPENDENT LIVING - THANKS**

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Support Services Group Co-operative. It is a non-profit organization that empowers individuals with disabilities to become independent by living and working within the community.

Any organization Mr. Speaker, with the goal of maximizing freedom, dignity and decision making for all their members, by supporting and assisting them with their challenges to living independently, is an organization I am grateful to have in my community. Groups like these that teach life skills and encourage independent living, are important to any community and I am so proud to have them in Dartmouth East.

I want to thank Support Services Group Co-operative for everything that they do for Nova Scotians.

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

**DUALE, ALI: REFUGEE CONTRIB. TO CAN. - RECOGNIZE**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize my good friend Ali Duale of Beechville. In 2017, Ali was chosen to share the story of his arrival in Canada as a refugee from his homeland of Somalia, by the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, as a part of their exhibit called Our Canada, My Story.

The museum developed Our Canada, My Story, to celebrate Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Confederation. This exhibition provides a glimpse into some of the current perspectives in lived human rights experiences of Canadians across the country. Through a series of intimate, engaging films, seven personal stories are presented to encourage reflection and dialogue about human rights in Canada today. Ali and his wife Sudi also received a congratulatory personal phone call from Prime Minister Trudeau.

These stories - also available on YouTube - illuminate the value of working towards equality, inclusion, and dignity for all Canadians, and gives one pause to consider how diverse we are as a nation, and how diversity makes our society stronger.

I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to congratulate Ali, and acknowledge the struggle that refugees endure and the value that adds to the Canadian experience.

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

**JONES, DEIDRE: STU ATHLETE OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Deidre Jones from Coxheath, for being named St. Thomas University's Athlete of the Year. As the Tommies Women's Volleyball Team Captain, Deidre led the Fredericton school to a 17-to-7 record in 2017-18 in the Atlantic Collegiate Athletic Association season. Deidre Jones got two Female Athlete of the Week honours over the past season and was recently named as the ACAA First Team All-Star. Deidre spent two seasons with the Cape Breton CAPERS before transferring to St. Thomas University when the CBU volleyball program was discontinued following the 2014-15 season.

Mr. Speaker, today, I'm pleased to congratulate Deidre on all her awards throughout the past years and I feel confident we will hear more great things about this young lady as a result of her hard work.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I would ask, with the unanimous consent of the House, to revert to the order of business, Government Notices of Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

### **GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1155**

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the members opposite, and also the enthusiasm that is in the House today for the great announcement which I just attended.

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

Whereas next year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Halifax Mooseheads hockey club, who have established themselves as a major franchise in the Québec Major Junior Hockey League with a reputation for excellence and player development exemplified by the quality of their roster and alumni; and

Whereas the Memorial Cup, the National Major Junior Championship, was established in 1919, nearly 100 years ago, to commemorate the soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice for our country to ensure us the ability to enjoy the freedoms we have today; and

Whereas the Province of Nova Scotia, in keeping with its rich military and sporting traditions, will proudly honour the memory of our soldiers once again as the Halifax Mooseheads will host the Memorial Cup in 2019;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Halifax Mooseheads, the host committee, the major planning team at the Nova Centre, the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, and the Halifax Regional Municipality, on officially earning the confidence of the Canadian Hockey League as we look toward hosting the 2019 Memorial Cup here in Halifax, 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.

**[STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS]**

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

**COCKERILL, COURTNEY:  
HORATIO ALGER SCHOLARSHIP - CONGRATS.**

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I'd like today to congratulate a student from North Queens Community School who has won a \$5,000 scholarship from the Horatio Alger Association of Canada. She is one of the 85 recipients from across Canada to receive this scholarship which recognizes deserving students who have shown great perseverance in overcoming significant adversity.

Courtney Cockerill, of Caledonia, has demonstrated strength of character, strong academic achievement, and a commitment to pursuing higher education, as well as a desire to contribute to society.

I would like everyone to join me in congratulating Courtney on this significant accomplishment. I would like to wish her every success in life as she goes forward to further her education.

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

**BALDWIN, DANNY: 65<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES**

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the birthday of an individual that many of the MLAs in Cape Breton would know. Today marks the 65<sup>th</sup> birthday for Danny Baldwin of Main-a-Dieu. Danny Baldwin originally grew up in the old town of Louisbourg and, after leaving Louisbourg, spent some time in Ashby before he met the love of his life, Patsy, and travelled the rugged roads back to Main-a-Dieu to raise a beautiful family of daughters.

Danny spent 35 years working for Parks Canada, and many would know Danny back in the day for his hockey skill throughout the Island and beyond.

I rise in my place and I believe I speak for many of the MLAs in Cape Breton when I want to wish Danny a very happy 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, and thank him for the support that he has provided to many young people who he kept out of trouble over the years, and I hope he has a wonderful day with his beautiful wife and daughters.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East with 20 seconds.

### **MCRAE, CECILIA - PROJ. SMILES**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, less than a year ago, Cecilia McRae of the Pictou County Mental Illness Family Support Association had an idea. Dental work without insurance being cost prohibitive, many cannot afford minimal dental care. Many suffering from mental illness were in that position. The Bright Smiles project helps those with mental illness find their confidence again through nicer-looking, clean teeth and proper dental hygiene.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for Statements by Members has expired. We'll now move on to Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers.

[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.: SEXUAL VIOLENCE OUTREACH PROG. - FUNDING CUT**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is for the Premier. On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, when I asked the Premier about funding for organizations that offer sexual violence counselling, he said, and I quote, "government is working with shelters across the province to continue to make sure we make those investments, to ensure that people feel safe." I will table that.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, today people in Cape Breton must feel a little less safe. The Cape Breton Transition House Association announced yesterday that it is ending its sexual violence outreach program because of funding cuts from this government.

Will the Premier admit that his government's decision to cut funding for a sexual violence outreach program is a short-sighted move that actually makes women less safe?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): What the honourable member is referring to, Mr. Speaker, is two years ago, there was a program put together. There was

money allotted. All the organizations knew that funding was coming to an end. What I also said on the date she raised, in the House, is that there is actually funding in this current budget, which we will hopefully get a chance to pass in the not-too-distant future. We will be reaching out to our different organizations on how we best use that money to meet the outcomes that the organizations have been working on.

MS. MACFARLANE: It sounds like the Premier is saying that it's not needed, the funding ended. Really, there is no organization on Cape Breton Island that got funding to provide specialized trauma therapy for victims of sexual assault.

Victims and survivors of sexual assault now must travel to Antigonish to get the services they need and deserve. This sounds very familiar because we all also know that young people in Cape Breton who need and deserve mental health services must travel five hours to the IWK to get those services.

Will the Premier explain why his government decided that sexual assault victims in Cape Breton don't need specialized trauma therapy close to home?

THE PREMIER: I did not at all say that that funding was not required. What I had said was that the program that was in place was a program that had an ending to it. The fact of the matter is, that program is being assessed.

As I said to the honourable member, in many locations we have actual funding in this particular budget that will reach out to our organizations and partners to give best practices, and the best way to make sure we support those Nova Scotians who require that support in the best way to spend that money.

MS. MACFARLANE: In a media story, the executive director of the Cape Breton Transition House was confused about the reasons the sexual assault trauma therapy program had been discontinued by this government. She said her organization actually exceeded all of the expectations for the program. She felt she was being assessed under the two years of receiving funding. There is definitely a need for this kind of therapy, and the program was meeting all expectations.

Mr. Speaker, we can't blame her for being puzzled by this government's decision to remove funding. Will the Premier explain why funding for the sexual assault therapy program in Cape Breton was discontinued by his government and not left there to make sure that women and children feel safe?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member would know, she was in the House when the program was announced, that there was an end date to that particular program. The funding has not been cut. The funding is actually in the current budget. What we have said is that we're reaching out to our partners to make sure that the right programs are in place



to support those Nova Scotians who require it. We look forward, Mr. Speaker, to having our budget passed and going out and continuing to work with our partners.

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

**PREM. - MIN. WAGE INCREASE: IMPACTS - DATA TABLE**

MR. GARY BURRILL: Yesterday, the Premier suggested that minimum wage workers in Ontario are losing hours because of the recent minimum wage increase. When asked by journalists to name the source of this information, the Premier said he had the data to prove that low-income Nova Scotians lose purchasing power when the minimum wage goes up.

Mr. Speaker, if this is so, then there are a good many reputable, credible economists who have just been refuted. So it's reasonable to ask the Premier, if there is such data, to please table it and make it publicly available so it can be subjected to the scrutiny that it calls for.

THE PREMIER: I would be happy to do so.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, may I have your permission for 30 seconds to review the document that has just been tabled?

MR. SPEAKER: Does the member have a question?

MR. BURRILL: Yes, I do. May I ask the Clerk for the title of this document?

THE PREMIER: The reality, Mr. Speaker, is we continue to know the best thing we can do for all Canadians and Nova Scotians is to continue to get our fiscal house in order, to continue to grow the economy of this province, and continue to provide hope for young people in this province.

The honourable asked me for that, it's called *The Impacts of Minimum Wage Increases on the Canadian Economy*, and it's done by the Bank of Canada.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, I am familiar with this study. It is a study from December 2017; that is a month before the minimum wage increased in Ontario. The numbers I am referring to from Statistics Canada are numbers which have been calculated since the minimum wage increase, and those numbers show that not only the number of jobs has increased since the January 1<sup>st</sup> increase, but that the total number of hours in those jobs has increased.

Surely the Premier, if he is going to stake the position of our government on a study, can find a study that looks at the change that has happened since this happened and not makes a prediction about what it thinks is going to happen before it.

So, I want to ask the Premier, will he then acknowledge that there are a good many credible economists who find his position on this subject without merit?

**THE PREMIER:** Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the honourable member there are lots of Nova Scotians who have disagreed with positions I've taken over a period of time. The fact of the matter is that every time I make a decision, or our government makes one, we go and defend it to the people of Nova Scotia, we communicate it out to them. That's why they are continuing to work with us to grow the economy of this province, to provide new opportunities, why we're seeing investments in research and development, export growth taking off, and we're seeing more young people who are staying.

We've changed the trend that was growing under their government, Mr. Speaker. More young people saw hope in a future in this province in good-paying jobs. It's why we've invested in pre-Primary, because every child, regardless of the socio-economic circumstances they are born into, should be given an opportunity to grow in this province.

We're going to continue to work with them, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to put out good public policy, and we're going to continue to make sure this province is moving forward.

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

**PREM. - HEALTH CARE SERV.: NSHA - INEFFECTIVE**

**MS. KARLA MACFARLANE:** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier.

They say necessity is the mother of invention - and that was definitely the case in Chester. When adequate and accessible health care was not actually available, members of the community banded together and opened a new walk-in clinic. That was accomplished actually by a not-for-profit organization with almost no involvement from the Nova Scotia Health Authority.

Will the Premier admit that the Health Authority is ineffective when a group of volunteers can provide primary care for a community where the Health Authority could not?

**THE PREMIER:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all of those community organizations across the province that work with our health organizations. Without the foundations, and auxiliaries, a good number of things that happened in our community facilities, our health care facilities, would not be taking place, quite frankly.

I want to thank them, I want to thank the people of Chester and all those Nova Scotians who continue to go out to make sure that we invest and help support the critical infrastructure that our communities require.

MS. MACFARLANE: I think what it shows is just how ineffective the Health Authority is.

The Mayor of Kentville is actually quite intrigued by this new walk-in clinic in Chester and her community has a critical doctor shortage, as many of us know. She believes community-run clinics are the way of possibly moving forward in the future, but she maintains the province should actually be responsible for the recruiting of doctors, staffing the doctors, and staffing the clinics with administrators, et cetera.

My question is, why is it that the Nova Scotia Health Authority, the Premier and his government, continue to download health care services on community organizations and municipalities, Mr. Speaker?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member would know, Mr. Speaker, that health foundations have been supporting infrastructure across the province for as long as I've been in this House. Under all three Parties, they have been working with the infrastructure.

I do want to acknowledge that the walk-in clinics play a role, but I do not believe they replace what we are looking at in collaborative care. Doctors and health care providers will actually tell you that the challenges around a walk-in clinic is that they do not have that face-to-face, personal relationship with their patients to make sure they can follow their health year after year.

That is why, in the most recent changes, we are investing more in those health care providers who are working in clinics because it allows those patients to be attached to a health care team over the long period.

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

#### **ENVIRON. - TIRE BURNING: PILOT PROJ. - EXPLAIN**

MS. LENORE ZANN: My question is for the Minister of Environment. The minister's decision to approve burning tires at the LaFarge Cement factory is based on laboratory experiments done at Dalhousie University. In budget assessments this week, I questioned the minister's decision, and he responded that the approval is just for a pilot project, and that once the pilot was concluded, the research that had been done will be confirmed or not.

Well, that surprises me because I did not realize the minister's decision to do this was based on a science experiment that he was doing. I would have hoped that the research would have already been thoroughly confirmed before we start burning tires, not after.

Does the minister concur that the Department of Environment should not be in the business of turning Nova Scotians into guinea pigs, while experimenting with our environment?

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, a pilot project is just that - it's a pilot project based on the evidence that we have, and the application is approved for the environmental assessment. It still must go through the process for industrial approval. This practice does take place in other jurisdictions throughout the world, and in other provinces.

We have the evidence from Dalhousie, Dr. Gibson and the team, and we look forward to the results. Thank you.

MS. ZANN: Please forgive me, but that does not make me feel much better, and I am sure most Nova Scotians listening to that would make them extremely concerned.

The minister has said that his decision to allow LaFarge Cement to burn tires at their plant was based on scientific facts, but there are serious doubts that the minister had all the facts in front of him when he made that decision. The recent court case that came out upholding the minister's decision was actually decided on just a technical point of law, and made no judgment about whether it was a good decision for the environment.

A respected toxicologist, Dr. Doug Hallett, has strongly stated that the minister did not have all the information necessary to make an informed decision; I will table that. Given Dr. Hallett's warning, I would expect the minister to realize he should revisit his decision and ensure it is the right one.

Is the Minister of the Environment, knowing that there is now more information available, more scientific facts available - is he comfortable allowing tire burning to move forward based on a legal technicality, when people's health and our environment are at stake?

MR. RANKIN: I am very comfortable with the process we have. We had an environmental assessment that included a 30-day period for public submissions. We took in all the submissions and we had our staff review all the information before us.

As I said, this practice does take place in multiple jurisdictions, with very strict air-quality standards, including states like California, and the Provinces of British Columbia and Quebec.

This is an approval for an environmental assessment, and we are pleased with the court's decision on that file.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

### **H&W - SURGERY WAIT TIMES: AG REVIEW - EXPLAIN**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Yesterday, in Public Accounts, the Auditor General highlighted the failure of the Department of Health and Wellness and the Health Authority to release regular, short-term performance metrics for surgery wait times.

This is something that the department and all the health authorities had initially agreed to. In fact, at the time, the health authorities seemed particularly eager, promising that regular performance targets would be up and running no later than March 2015. Flash forward three years, and we still do not have those regular public targets indicating what kind of progress they are making. All the AG got on follow-up was some vague assurances that targets are being set and will be monitored.

Does the Minister of Health and Wellness plan to hold his own department and the Nova Scotia Health Authority accountable for missing this self-imposed deadline by three years and counting?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as is the case when recommendations come forward from the Auditor General, they get reviewed and assessed for the ability to move forward on them. We continue, in those cases where the recommendation has been accepted, to work towards them either through the department or our partners at the health authorities.

[2:15 p.m.]

The member noted in his question that the statement he made reference to was in March 2015. The member would recognize that the legislation in place that created the Nova Scotia Health Authority took place in April 2015. The recommendations were some jurisdictions or regional health authorities, not for the entire province. Part of the process of moving forward on these recommendations does include standardizing throughout the province, which was not considered at the time those commitments were made.

MR. HOUSTON: The minister may well be right, but they had some evidence right in front of them of what standardizing would mean, what appropriate standardization would be, and that was informing the public of how we're going as to meeting the wait times. If my children went all the way through school, and I was only to find out on graduation day that they weren't fit to graduate, I would be a little disappointed. That might be okay with the minister and the health authority.

The public is being told that an operating room efficiency group has this well in hand, but there is no evidence that it's well in hand. We have a target date of 2020 to meet the national benchmark on surgery wait-lists, but there's no quarterly reporting as to how we're going to meet that benchmark.

We have an Auditor General who says interim reporting should be happening. The Health Authority says it should be happening, but it's not happening. My question for the minister is, will the minister finally stand up to the Health Authority and tell them that saying, trust us, we got this, is not good enough?

MR. DELOREY: I thank the member for finally acknowledging that I'm right.

With respect to the metrics, I have already made reference, through past questions in this Legislature and through Estimates debate, that in October we acknowledged, reviewed, and released a plan for moving forward particularly to improve our orthopaedic surgeries. We made a commitment to work towards improving.

We already announced over 400 additional orthopaedic surgeries conducted since October at the end of March. We have invested more money following that plan that's in place, and we expect to have an additional 350 surgeries going forward in this fiscal year.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

### **JUSTICE - CANNABIS: ONLINE SALES - SECURITY MEASURES**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation. The sale of cannabis in NSLC stores will require a source of supply and a secure distribution network, a huge undertaking to be completed in a short time here in Nova Scotia. As legalization rolls across Canada simultaneously, there are only guesses as to what the national and provincial consumption levels will be and no certainty that suppliers will be able to meet that demand. Other provinces have already secured their suppliers.

When will the minister tell Nova Scotians that a reliable source for cannabis has been secured and a secure distribution network has been established?

HON. MARK FUREY: It's my understanding as we speak that the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation has, in fact, issued an expression of interest. They have reached out to all of the producers, those outside of the province as well, and they're quite satisfied and comfortable that they will have the source they require to meet the needs.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, we have heard the Minister of Justice say in this Legislature that legalization will make it safer for youth. I don't believe that to be the case, and I'll tell you why.

We know that 50 per cent of marijuana is going to be sold online. It's going to be delivered by Canada Post. With all of this marijuana flowing through the mail, will it really matter if people are ordering pot through the NSLC or from illegal markets? No one is going to know the difference, and there are no measures in place to stop illegal marijuana shipments from reaching underage youth through the mail.

MR. FUREY: I certainly respect the opinion of my colleague, but I must disagree with the position that he has advanced.

My colleague would know that a medicinal marijuana stream administered by Health Canada has been in place since the early 2000s. There is a mechanism that confirms identity for the purposes of delivery and receipt. The same circumstances will apply to this recreational stream, which will be legalized sometime this summer.

I want to assure my colleague, you have the option of an unknown illicit product, or you have the option of a regulated, controlled, analyzed product for the general public to consume if they choose to do so, Mr. Speaker. But the most important piece of this legislation is in fact to protect the safety of Nova Scotians, particularly our youth.

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

**INT. SERV.: GOV'T. EMAILS: PRIVATE ACC. - CONCERN**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians remain concerned about the government's use of private email servers to conduct public business. A recent report confirmed the member, formally responsible for the Department of Health and Wellness, used a series of private email accounts for correspondence instead of the government's email server.

Now, whether intentional or not, the use of private email for government raises serious questions of a possible breach of privacies. A spokesman for the Department of Internal Services stated that the type of email account used does not factor into whether a privacy breach occurred and, as such, there's no indication of a breach - and I'll table that document.

So, my question to the Minister of Internal Services is, can she explain the specific analysis undertaken that confirmed emails sent on a private non-government server was not subject to a privacy breach?

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: I'd like to thank the member for the question, because it is a very important issue that he brings up.

To reiterate what the position of our department is within the FOIPOP Act - it is not the medium that is used, but the content. It is of the utmost of importance for all public

servants and elected officials that any government business that is conducted be done in a manner that is subject to FOIPOP, but the medium, whether it's a government email or a Gmail account, or whatever the case may be, is irrelevant.

So, further to the member's question, I actually would like to table the protocols and forms used for conducting a privacy breach.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I appreciate the discussion with the minister, as I know we're probably not going to get a chance to talk about her budget and her department in the Red Room later on today.

As we know, government policy governs the use of email by a minister. It stipulates that it must be conducted using official servers and channels. In this particular instance, the member felt that no confidential information had been exchanged on private servers, and that he was told to, and did change his email practices after they were raised. However, I'd like to have some comfort that this is not a larger issue within government.

So, could the Minister of Internal Services please tell the House how many other Cabinet Ministers were found to be using private email servers, and confirm that specific steps were taken to educate the members of the government about the proper email protocols?

MS. ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate that the medium that is used to conduct government business is not an issue, it is the content. So, anything, any government content, whether it's an email, or a conversation, anything that is about government business is subject to FOIPOP. So, whether it's done from a private email or a public email, it makes no difference whatsoever. The same policies are followed - and I will table our Privacy Policy for the member as well.

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

#### **H&W: LOCAL HEALTH SERV.: PROV. INVEST. - LACKING**

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, with 500 people in their community still on the waiting list for a family doctor, the Our Health Centre Association in Chester has opened a walk-in clinic staffed by doctors willing to come in from the city to work a shift or two - and I'll table that.

This walk-in clinic is in addition to their existing family practice, which people in Chester built through extensive fundraising. According to Thelma Costello, chairwoman of the association, the community was fed up with inaction and couldn't wait any longer for the Health Authority to provide a solution.



Mr. Speaker, the people in Chester build their clinic from the ground up and still aren't getting the help they need from the province. Does the Minister of Health think this situation reflects well on his leadership?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: As the member would well know, the work that's ongoing between the Department of Health and Wellness, our partners within the Health Authorities, and even partners with Doctors Nova Scotia, Mr. Speaker, with the nurses and other health care practitioners, the efforts to improve the access to primary care services for Nova Scotians in Chester, Cape Breton, and throughout the province is well under way.

We had the opportunity to announce, earlier in March, an expansion and update on our expansion of our collaborative care practices, Mr. Speaker. It's well under way. We're seeing a lot of enthusiasm - over 100 responses to Nova Scotia Health Authority's expression of interest for physicians and health care providers interested in expanding or creating new collaborative practices.

Mr. Speaker, the plan and the priority's in place, the plan is in place and the Health Authority is well under way in execution.

MS. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the group in Chester has piqued the interest of other communities. Kentville mayor Sandra Snow says the only way to cut through the red tape presented by the centralized Health Authority is to ensure that decisions about health care services are made at the local level. However, at the same time, she worries about allowing the province to abdicate responsibility for ensuring that communities get the health services they need.

Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of Health and Wellness agree that for our publicly-funded health care system to work, investments need to reflect the actual needs of the communities, not the abstract ideas that are dreamed up in Halifax?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I believe all members of this Legislature, reflecting the interests of our constituents, do agree that one of the top health care priorities is access to primary care. We recognize that. We've made it very clear through the campaign and forming government that that was a top priority for us. That's why we continue to invest. It's why we continue to work with the collaborative care practices, based upon the feedback and input not only of individuals in Halifax but from across the province.

We hear from physicians and health care providers and professions such as nursing and physiotherapy and other allied health professionals that working as teams is not some far-flung idea, Mr. Speaker, but rather an important transition in our health care system. It's one that we are pursuing, and it's going to improve primary care access for Nova Scotians.

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

**H&W - SPECIALTY WAIT TIMES: REDUCTION MEASURES - EXPLAIN**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. One of the symptoms of a sick health care system is excessively long wait times. Like most other members of the House, I spent the long Easter weekend with my extended family. I had a relative who has a large abdominal hernia, and she has been told she will have to wait over a year to have her surgery. She is in her 80s.

Can the minister tell me what he has done to reduce the wait times in specialties other than orthopaedics, please?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: The work that is ongoing to improve efficiencies in the operations - we rolled out the orthopaedic work first. This was a plan that was designed by the front-line officials to help identify ways to be more efficient in the delivery of these surgeries. That learning is something that we look at then, to see how it can be applied in other areas of specialty.

Again, we start with orthopaedics. It has the longest wait times, with the most people waiting. That is why that was the first area we targeted.

We certainly learned from those experiences and look forward to seeing enhancements rolled out in other areas of health care as well.

MS. ADAMS: Well, given that only 44 per cent of the Auditor General's recommendations for the Nova Scotia Health Authority in the orthopaedic area were completed, I don't have a whole lot of confidence that an area that hasn't been looked at by the Auditor General is going to fare any better.

My supplementary question to the Minister of Health and Wellness: at the same family gathering, I learned that two of my family members were charged \$10 by their family doctors to have their prescriptions renewed.

One of them was a call-in over the phone - the doctor called in to the pharmacy and they charged the family member \$10. I've learned that that's not standard across HRM or around the province, so I'm not sure why one person is getting charged \$10 and the other one isn't. However, the other family member was in the doctor's office and still got charged the \$10 for the prescription renewal.

My question to the minister is, can he explain to me why a family doctor would be double-charging both the government as well as the patient to fill one prescription?

MR. DELOREY: If the member would bring the specific case forward - I haven't heard of that practice taking place, but as the member would know, those physicians who

work in those practices are independent practitioners, Mr. Speaker, if they've made the decision to bill in a particular way.

What I want to let the member know, though, is that there is a Canada Health Act, that the physicians would be expected - providing insured services, they should not be double billing, Mr. Speaker. So if the member or other members are aware of that, please bring to my attention and we'll certainly investigate that.

Also, I'd like to remind the member that, with respect to phone-in and other means of providing services, we recently announced an agreement with Doctors Nova Scotia to enhance those opportunities, providing flat-rate billing to family physicians to ensure that that type of practice does not occur.

[2:30 p.m.]

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

#### **JUSTICE – STEWIACKE: SPEEDING - ACTION**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: My question is for the Minister of Justice. Yesterday the CBC reported about the high number of tickets for aggressive driving issued in the Stewiacke area. In the last two years, officers issued 553 tickets in the Stewiacke area. There were two fatalities or serious collisions in the area as well. One resulted in the death of Kyle, the son of Darrell and Charlene Davis.

Now the government is adding additional risks and temptations to young drivers with the introduction of cannabis. My question is, will the minister take action to help prevent tragedies like this in the future?

HON. MARK FUREY: I want to thank my colleague for the question. I think this is a very relevant question that points to some of the challenges that we face in the legalization of recreational cannabis.

One of those elements of the provincial piece of legislation that I introduced earlier this week is specific to driving offences. I'm quite pleased to say we worked very closely with MADD Canada. MADD Canada had identified some gaps in what they believed was happening across the country. In our discussions with them, we were able to identify those elements and ensure that they were part of the bill going forward.

I'm quite confident that the measures we have included, the expanded authority that we have given the law enforcement community, we will, in fact, be able to enhance road safety.

MR. HARRISON: The second part of my question I would like to address to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Road tragedies are all too common in Nova Scotia on the roads, and stories like the Davises' are certainly heartbreaking. First responders live with the memories of witnessing far too many young people being hurt or killed.

Mr. Speaker, 452 of those tickets were issued in the Stewiacke area alone. I must admit I was one of them. (Laughter) I wasn't paying attention coming out of an 80-kilometre-an-hour zone into a 50-kilometre-an-hour zone.

AN HON. MEMBER: Stop talking.

MR. HARRISON: Stop talking, I know.

I'm asking, will the minister review the speed limits in the area of Trunk 2 and Main Street along with the possibility of adding a four-way stop at that intersection?

HON. LLOYD HINES: I want to assure the House and all of the folks in Nova Scotia that highway safety is our number one priority when we go to execute our duties under the highway legislation. Because traffic patterns do change, we're constantly monitoring to see what kinds of changes would be suitable.

In this instance, we'll certainly take a look at what the situation is there and see if there are any recommendations from our department.

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

### **TIR - ENGLISHTOWN FERRY WORK: COMPLETION DATE - ASSURANCES**

MR. KEITH BAIN: My question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Last December, the Englishtown ferry was supposed to be closed to all traffic until April of this year to allow for reconstruction of the ramps and other items. We know now that the timeline has changed.

Residents in the community are concerned that the ferry connecting tourists to the Cabot Trail may not be operating until later into the tourist season. This is not good news for businesses along the north shore of the Cabot Trail, because many tourists are anxious to get to their destination and don't stop to check out local businesses along the way.

My question is, what assurances can the minister provide to residents that the new completion date of May 30<sup>th</sup> for the Englishtown ferry will be met?

HON. LLOYD HINES: I'm so pleased that our government has decided to do a complete overhaul of that very important link, which will enhance the safety of the ferry,

and also to upgrade the facilities, particularly the washroom facilities that are included in that area.

As the member and all folks in the area would appreciate, it's pretty hard to hold back the strength of the packed ice that comes into that area there. That got hold of some of the cribbing that was involved in that area. It was no match for Mother Nature. That has changed the water on the beans a bit and has resulted in the time for completion being pushed back a bit.

MR. BAIN: There are flashing lights indicating that the ferry is not operating, but not all travellers pay attention to them, especially tourists. Many tourists rely on their GPS to get to their destination; however, their GPS won't tell them that the ferry is closed because in reality Englishtown Road is still open for local traffic. Unfortunately, a tourist who continues to travel down this road will have to turn back, often causing stress and strain because they aren't familiar with the area.

My question to the minister is, will the minister commit to adding additional signage advising motorists to use Exit 11 as an alternate route, and detour signs as well as local traffic only signs being installed to eliminate any confusion tourists might encounter.

MR. HINES: As the member would appreciate, that particular part of Nova Scotia has fond memories for me. I spent much time on the ferry in various travels between Antigonish and Ingonish. One of the most delightful parts of that travel is the opportunity to visit Tarbotvale, one of the most enchanting parts of Nova Scotia. If you have to take a detour in Nova Scotia, that's the detour to take. The various tourist operations that are in that section of the province will benefit from the short period of time that they have to take that detour.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**NAT. RES. - CROWN LAND OAK LAKE:  
ALTERNATIVE USES - CONSIDERATION**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. By allowing clear-cutting to continue unchecked, this government is blocking the development of good green jobs. The way the minister brushes off clear-cutting concerns doesn't suggest that she takes this seriously.

Recently, the Healthy Forest Coalition shared a photo of a 2017 clear-cut on Crown land near Oak Lake. It was a hardwood hill with a lot of sugar maple. There's a nearby maple syrup producer who would have leased that land for syrup production, but that won't be possible now for at least another 40 years.

Can the minister tell us that alternative uses of that forest land were considered before the clear-cut approval was given?

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Certainly, we have had applications come to the department about forestry measures where there have been hardwoods, and there have been agreements made about sugar maple production. If anything had come forward to that department about that piece of land, or any other lot, we would be looking at that alternative.

MS. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, community forests like the Medway Community Forest are inspiring and, to use one of the Liberal Party's favourite terms, innovative examples of what Nova Scotians want to see for the future of our forests. They deserve and need more support from the province, and the market for carbon offsets presents a great opportunity.

Sustainably managed healthy forests can sequester many tons of polluters' carbon. More community-owned community forests on Crown land would inject considerable revenue from carbon offset sales into rural economies and create good green jobs. I'll table an article related to that.

My question for the minister is, what is she doing to facilitate access to Crown lands for more community-run forests?

MS. MILLER: I thank the member again for that question, it gives me the opportunity to talk about the Medway Community Forest and the great job that they are doing, and what a great asset they are to our province.

Certainly, we are looking at all kinds of alternatives for Crown land. Actually, just recently I have been speaking with the Minister of Agriculture about different projects that we can actually work on with Agriculture on orphan pieces of Crown land. We're looking at all kinds of opportunities to make sure that our Crown lands resource in this province is used to the best ability for all of Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**COM. SERV. - ESIA RECIPIENTS: SHELTER ALLOW. - RAISE**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, in the second question by the member for Victoria-The Lakes, he mentioned GPS. Perhaps the member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley could use a GPS travelling through Stewiacke.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Community Services said many times that all Nova Scotians should have the opportunity to succeed and thrive right here at home. I

couldn't agree with her more. However, her words ring hollow and lack the action that thousands of Nova Scotians who receive income assistance deserve.

Previously, I asked the minister if she believes that the current funding of \$223 for a rooming house and \$535 for an entire apartment provided to those on income assistance in areas like Pictou Centre is adequate. It is the minister's mandate to help Nova Scotians meet their basic needs.

My question to the minister is, will the minister provide the members of this House with a definite answer when her department is going to raise the rates for IA recipients, so they can live with the dignity they deserve?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As the member knows, we are in the process of transforming how we deliver income assistance to those we serve, and there are a number of initiatives that we're rolling out right now.

I would like to remind the honourable member that over the last couple of years we have reduced the social housing wait-list by 25 per cent. After this budget that we are currently debating is passed, we will roll out a further \$3 million investment this year. That is the first of three subsequent years where we will see increases in the money for those supplements increased by \$3 million a year.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, on March 9<sup>th</sup>, I used the example of a constituent who did receive \$535 living in a rooming house. That was grandfathered in when the minister's department made changes to their current funding model.

Unfortunately, he had to move because of a bedbug infestation. My constituent found a room for \$435, but now he has been reduced to \$223, because this accommodation had not been grandfathered under the new formula.

Since then he has had to move into his elderly grandmother's one-bedroom apartment and has to use her couch as a bed. He has a mental illness that hinders his ability to find employment. He doesn't have any children, so the programs the minister referenced last week would be of no use to him. The poverty reduction credit of an extra \$20 per month is peanuts compared to what is needed.

My question to the minister is, does the minister believe someone should have to choose between bedbugs or \$300?

MS. REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I would want to let him know that under the standard household rate changes, all of our income assistance recipients will move to the top of the maximum allowable for their particular

housing, so that someone who was receiving a lower amount will move to the top of the range, and on top of that they will get either a 2 per cent or a 5 per cent increase.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

### **BUS.: WORKFORCE BARRIERS - EXPLORE**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, in lieu of our Minister of Labour and Advanced Education not being here, I will direct my question to the Minister of Business.

There are many Nova Scotians who, for various reasons, are not able to complete the traditional form of Grade 12 education. Without a skillset to enter the workforce, too many Nova Scotians are living in poverty. Barriers such as inadequate housing and lack of transportation get in the way of getting an adult education and a skillset.

My question to the minister is, will he explore ways of working with the Department of Community Services and the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education to assist in removing some of these barriers that people have in entering the workforce?

MR. SPEAKER: I just want to remind the honourable member that it's outside of the Rules of the House to indicate who is present and who is not present. Just keep that in mind.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. The answer is absolutely, my colleagues in Cabinet from Labour and Advanced Education and Community Services and our entire government are committed to providing opportunities for all Nova Scotians.

Again, as I said to the member yesterday in response to a question, as well, what has been really something that we are very proud on this side of the House is our fiscal record. We can set the tone for businesses in the private sector to hire more Nova Scotians and make sure that we use programs under the Department of Labour and Advanced Education to match needs for employers and employees. We want to make sure we give access and every opportunity for Nova Scotians to work and make sure they stay in the workforce for a very long time.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: That sounds really good, but it doesn't match the real world here in Nova Scotia and what people are experiencing. There are many businesses throughout this province that actually can't find skilled workers. This impacts a business' ability to have productivity. Trucking companies can't find drivers. Farmers can't find labourers. Manufacturing plants can't find skilled workers, and we have people in our communities who are unable to find a job.



My question to the Minister of Business is, will the minister explore ways of working with the business community of Nova Scotia to create working internships and onsite training to bridge these workers so they can get back into the workforce?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I would like to let her know that DCS and LAE are currently working together so that we will be able to deliver programs at Nova Scotia Works centres for clients from across the general population, as well as the clients that DCS serves.

I would also want to let the honourable member know that each of the Nova Scotia work centres has a business consultant who actually goes out into the community to find out what the needs are for those businesses there, because in the past we didn't have that. Often folks were going into centres and the very people who were delivering programs didn't know what the needs were in their communities.

[2:45 p.m.]

We will continue on with that, and I want to assure the honourable member that we will coordinate among the three departments.

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

#### **TIR - ROAD PROJ. CONTRACTS: 20/80 POLICY - CONTINUATION**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. (Interruptions) We see the Minister of Health and Wellness smiling.

In rural Nova Scotia and in many parts of Nova Scotia, the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal is looked upon as an economic driver of the community. One of the organizations that benefits from the work that is created by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal is the Truckers Association of Nova Scotia.

When contracts are awarded, there is a policy/tradition of having a 20/80 rule where 80 per cent of the trucks working on a project have to be from private small business owners.

I'd just like to clarify with the minister, does he stand by that policy and will he see that policy continue as an economic driver for small communities?

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely a fact, particularly in rural Nova Scotia, that we depend on the investment by small owners who have a truck or two. It provides an income for themselves and jobs for people, by attaching themselves to paving and other road projects currently with the expansion of the gravel road program in their areas.

The 20/80 rule does currently exist, and there is nothing on the horizon that would see that changing.

MR. MACLEOD: I want to thank the minister for that answer because it is a very important issue for many of those who are involved with the Truckers Association of Nova Scotia.

The other challenge for those members are the rates that are being paid. Over the last number of years, the rate increases have not been coming. There has been a 2 per cent increase this year, and we appreciate that, but again as a small business owner who has a limited season for making money, I am just wondering, would the minister take time to consider upping that amount that is paid to the Truckers Association so that, indeed, we can keep these people working in rural Nova Scotia?

MR. HINES: I would like to highlight that the department has an excellent relationship with the Truckers Association of Nova Scotia (TANS). We correspond with them and meet with them regularly, and we have a great free flow of information.

When it comes to the free market, aside from what the member has indicated with regard to the rates, it would not be seen as our place to interfere in that free market situation that exists.

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

#### **STATUS OF WOMEN: SEXUAL ASSAULT CTRS. (C.B.) - FUNDING**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I have met with women's organizations across the province and they have all told me that the demand for supports for survivors of sexual violence is growing in Nova Scotia, and they are struggling to meet the needs.

While I am pleased to see that the government will continue to fund some beyond March 31<sup>st</sup>, including three sexual assault centres on the mainland and one that supports male victims, I am not sure why the women of Cape Breton are being treated differently. As the executive director of the Cape Breton Transition House Association says, "It was shocking to hear that we were left out completely."

Can the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act please explain why they were left out - why was it felt that the services were not needed in Cape Breton, and could she please look into this and try to find the funding that is needed?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question and I share her passion for the safety of women here in Nova Scotia.

I want to let her know that in order to receive what were always billed as time-limited funds, organizations had to indicate how they were going to continue those services beyond that point, if they wanted - that's how they got that grant awarded.

We actually tried to remove costs from them so that they could use money they would normally spend on other things to do that. But absolutely, I will take this up with my colleague at the Department of Health and Wellness.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for confessions today has now expired.

#### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

#### **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that 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.

[2:57 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CW on Supply with Deputy Speaker Mr. Chuck Porter in the Chair.]

[7:03 p.m. CW on Supply rose and the House reconvened. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Kevin Murphy, resumed the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the Committee of the Whole on Supply has met and made very 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. 99.

#### **Bill No. 99 - House of Assembly Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I now move that Bill No. 99, the House of Assembly Act, be read for a second time.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to have had the opportunity to introduce this important bill to the House, and to have the presence of so many stakeholders for this bill briefing, including representatives from the Black Cultural Centre, the African Diaspora Association of the Maritimes, the African United Baptist Association, the Black Business Initiative, and la Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse.

Before I outline the details of this piece of legislation, I would like to thank Doug Keefe and the members of the Commission on Effective Electoral Representation of Acadian and African Nova Scotians for their work.

We established this independent commission last April to help determine what would encourage minority representation and what effective representation could mean for Acadians, francophones, and African Nova Scotians. The commission travelled the province to hear first-hand from individuals and groups. Their final report included several recommendations on how to achieve effective representation, some of which are outlined in the proposed changes to the House of Assembly Act.

Mr. Speaker, these changes will do a number of things. They will put terms of reference for boundary commissions in legislation. Proposed terms of reference include setting a standard for deviation from the average number of voters in electoral districts. Under the amendments, the number of voters in each riding would not vary by more or less than 25 per cent of the average number of voters per riding.

Mr. Speaker, a set standard deviation will balance voter parity with minority representation. We also provided flexibility to the terms of reference that would allow the commission to exceed these criteria in exceptional circumstances, giving consideration to linguistic, cultural, or historical circumstances when drawing electoral boundaries.

The proposed changes will also include discretionary authority for the boundary commission to create non-contiguous ridings. These ridings would be based on the best interests of the community or specific group and have to be backed by public support.

Mr. Speaker, changes to the House of Assembly Act will also give specific authorities to the all-Party select committee, including the ability for them to set additional terms of reference, if required, and to determine the minimum and maximum number of electoral districts the commission may consider. The select committee would also have authority to define the parameters around exceptional circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, a final change to note is the mandatory representation on the commission from the Acadian community and the African Nova Scotian community. This change will ensure that those tasked with making electoral boundary recommendations on behalf of voters are themselves broadly representative of voters. It is important to note that future boundaries commissions will continue to engage communities, and base their decisions on what they learn through public consultation.

Mr. Speaker, these changes are about making sure the effective representation of Acadians, francophones, African Nova Scotians, and other communities of interest is thoroughly considered, and the commissions can do their work without interference. It is important that any changes we make to the legislation are done with this in mind, it's essential.

I look forward to continuing to move these amendments through the process and to make sure they best support the interests of all Nova Scotians. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: If I may make an introduction before I get going?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Joining us in the east gallery, up behind me, there are five members of the Acadian Federation joining us this evening. I'll ask them to stand and receive the warm welcome of the House: Ghislain Boudreau, président de la Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse; Marie-Claude Rioux, directrice générale de la Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse; agente de communication, Giselle Thibault; Hiba

Bannani; et John Rafuse aussi de la Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse. I'd like them to get the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

I also see Mark Bannerman up there, executive director of Acadian Affairs. Mark, nice to see you as well. (Applause)

Bill No. 99, Mr. Speaker, is a difficult culmination of a path that's been woven for us, brought us down paths that maybe communities were not comfortable with, but it is something we have to consider here today.

Mr. Speaker, the reason we have Bill No. 99 was maybe from previous governments, and maybe a couple of mistakes that I think some people have admitted that they had some mistakes and made some bad decisions, and I accept them on that. We're here to try to fix some of those wrongs.

I appreciate the help from the House Leaders in this process. It hasn't been an easy one, and maybe we're not going to agree on all the things that we see in Bill No. 99, either. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I don't think every one of us, as a member of this House of Assembly, would agree with everything we see here, but I think it's as good as we can get when we're trying to make a bill that affects us. I've said in scrums outside of this House, when we talk about electoral representation and we talk about boundary commissions, it's very uncomfortable, I think, for politicians to leave their fate in the hands of other people.

We don't like giving up control and that's exactly what we have to do in this particular case. We have to put a number of ideals, of terms of reference, and put it in the hands of others to decide what effective representation in this House of Assembly actually looks like. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, it goes into interesting discussions sometimes when you try to - well, what if this does this and what if that does that - and that's why I think the bill before us does some of the things that we needed to do but there are also some things I think that we've left in the hands of the government, that I have their assurances that they want to give the broadest breadth of terms of reference to the commission so that the commission can make its decision, because it's only been since 1991 that this House of Assembly has had independent boundary commissions.

Prior to that, it was a group of, if I may say it, "us" that would decide what the boundaries looked like and, depending on the government of the day, it would benefit the government of the day versus the Opposition Parties. In 1991, smartly, the government of the day decided let's put it out of our hands, let them make that decision. And it was at that time, in 1991, that it recognized the independence - I would say "independence" is the wrong word, but the special place that African Nova Scotians and Acadians and Aboriginals needed to have in this House of Assembly - only in 1991.

That's kind of - you know, from an historical standpoint, I was doing university when that was happening. I know the member for Kings West probably was not in university at that time, but that's not that long ago that we made these decisions. Actually, who was born in 1991 around here? Gee, there are a few of them here. (Laughter) All right, never mind, never mind. I'm old; I am old.

What I may say in that is back then the Acadian constituency of Argyle was only created in 1982, after the Acadian Federation of the time, that was established in 1968, fought with its members for the creation of Acadian seats at the time. It took them 10 years at that time to get the government to listen to them and to get the boundaries set in a certain way. Yarmouth used to be what was called "a dual riding." The people of the County of Yarmouth could elect two MLAs. (Interruption) Normally it was one Catholic and one Protestant - one French, one English. It's kind of how it worked out in the end, but that wasn't the way to effectively represent those communities in this House of Assembly.

I, too, want to thank the Commission on Effective Electoral Representation. They gave us a lot to think about, a lot to consider when this bill was being drafted, and also gave us a whole bunch of other things beyond the recommendations for a boundary commission that government can react to - effective representation, how government should serve these communities to be able to allow them to be the communities that they need to be for their people.

Doug Keefe, Dr. Kenneth Deveau, Ms. Sharon Davis-Murdoch, listened to a lot of these communities and, I think, came up with that comprehensive group. We also, as government, as legislators, need to make sure that those other recommendations are put in place in government as well. There are also recommendations for political Parties themselves on how we conduct and how we nominate MLAs or candidates for elections. So, there are a number of things that need to be considered beyond what is in Bill No. 99.

As I said, the challenges in this - of course, there's always the issue of giving up control, but also the issue of where are we going to be when this boundary commission does its work from a population standpoint, where that population standpoint is going to be in 10 years as the next boundary commission comes around? What's the best number of MLAs in this House of Assembly? Right now, we're operating with 51. Prior to the last boundary review, we had 52. There's always been that debate that goes on.

[7:15 p.m.]

So, again, we need to make sure that when that boundary commission is put in place, that we give them the full breadth to come up with recommendations that we can see ourselves in - as Acadians, as African Nova Scotians, as MLAs, as Liberals, as Conservatives, as NDP, that we can see ourselves in that. We don't want one group getting the leg-up on another group. We just want to make sure that it's fair, and it's fair on this floor, that we're supposed to be here to represent the people of Nova Scotia.

So, with those quick comments, I again want to thank the government for bringing this bill forward. There might be a number of things that might be, or should be, amended between here and the third reading, and I hope that they do listen and work with us to make sure that those things are done to the best of their ability. Thank you so much, merci beaucoup.

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

MR. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, we in the NDP, we come to this piece of legislation from a range of different angles. I think I would say that the first angle, from which we come to Bill No. 99, is to say that we come to this piece of legislation in our Party, in good faith.

From the time of the decision of the Court of Appeal in January 2017 - with that decision's rejection and negative assessment from a constitutional point of view of our work on the electoral boundaries question when we were in office - from that time, we have accepted that decision without equivocation, and we have recognized that decision as entirely worthy of respect. This is the point from which we begin these deliberations on Bill No. 99, in good faith.

Having said this, I wish also to register a real sense of the deep and sincere effort, which our caucus at that time gave to doing our level-best on this not-one-bit-easy issue. These discussions in our caucus at that time were long, and serious, and many-sided, whereas the Commission on Effective Electoral Representation of Acadians and African Nova Scotians has recognized and said in a variety of ways that this is a profoundly difficult-to-balance question.

Of course, much of the overall difficulty in the demographics of our province that lies at the base of the difficulty of this question, is rooted in the real historic level of shift of population that has taken place within our province, just in very recent decades. A shift which has moved so many of the people of the province in the direction of the urban and the suburban parts of the HRM.

So, on the one hand, we have seats in rural areas that have endured significant depopulation. I'm not unacquainted with this, I formerly represented the seat of Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley, which has 66 communities, only one of which is a town, and that's a small town, Stewiacke. So one might say, looking at the surface of this situation, where a rural area has become depopulated, well, there are fewer people there now, so, diminished representation for that area, that's the thing that's called for.

Yet, that isn't all that there is to the story, for we know that when the only thing that is counted is just the numbers, the rural part of our province always comes up short. Not enough numbers to effectively deliver the curriculum the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development sets? Oh, so sorry, now you have no school. Not enough



numbers to effectively have an emergency department? The Department of Health and Wellness says, oh, so sorry, now you have no hospital.

If we know anything about demographics in Nova Scotia, we know that in order for there to be fairness and balance in our decisions about the province, we always have to struggle together to find a formula that is going to take into account more than just parity in numbers.

On the other hand, we have to acknowledge a truth on the other side. It's also true that it is not one bit fair to the people of the urban and suburban HRM that as their areas grow their numbers of political representatives should remain the same. When that happens, the effect of it is to make the vote of a rural resident in Nova Scotia - to use the commission's language - more effective. More effective, in fact, than the votes of those in the urban and suburban parts of the province, particularly when we come to the situation of which my colleagues have both spoken previously: the situation of those ridings where there are the extraordinary circumstances of minority populations, particularly in those ridings.

This general backdrop calls for deep wrestling with a complex and difficult set of contradictions. I want simply at the outset to mark that this serious grappling was not something that was evaded by the governing caucus at the time. That's one.

Secondly, we in our Party come to this bill from the angle of concern, particularly concern that the government has taken 15 months to bring this important matter forward. There was every reasonable possibility that, upon receiving the judgment of the Court of Appeal a year ago January, the government could have convened a select committee and an Electoral Boundaries Commission and could have received and then implemented its report well before the expiry of the government's mandate at that time. The time frame available was well within the scope of the time that Electoral Boundaries Commissions had operated within all the time before.

So the decision to not proceed along this path had a serious effect. It had the effect that the 2017 election was contested on the basis of boundaries over which the court had already cast a heavy shadow. The result is that we have a House of Assembly which is constituted today in a way which is dissonant with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This was, in my judgment, inadequate leadership on the government's part. We do come to this legislation from that angle, too - the angle of this concern.

There's a third angle from which we in our Party come to Bill No. 99, and that is the angle of criticism of the substance of the bill itself. In the opinion of our Party, the terms of reference of the boundary review envisioned by this legislation are hampered by being much too narrow. The question of effective representation, which is at the heart of the work of an Electoral Boundaries Commission, involves also the effective functioning

and the effective operation of our electoral system as a whole. This truth too is one that is underlined repeated times in the report of the Commission on Effective Representation.

We are living in a time politically when effective representation, in this broader sense, is something that has been brought very much into public question. At the heart of this is the question of proportional representation and the ever-more-evident inadequacy of the first-past-the-post system.

Public concern about the extent to which the first-past-the-post system fails to embody effective representation has been amplified, and public cynicism about effective representation in the political system as a whole has been deepened by the failure of the present federal Liberal administration to deliver on that solemn commitment made by the Prime Minister when he held his hand over his heart here at the Dartmouth Sportsplex in the last election and promised that the 2015 federal election would be the last held in Canada under the first-past-the-post system, and then subsequently betrayed and abandoned that commitment.

The question of the effectiveness of representation is a question that is not just before the Nova Scotia Legislature. This is a question in all its breadth that is before democracy in general, at the moment.

Is it effective representation here in our province that a Party - in this case, the Nova Scotia Liberals, who received 39 per cent of the vote in the general election - should have a 53 per cent majority of the seats in our Legislature? I don't expect that most of the members of our public think so.

Is it effective representation that Nova Scotia is the only province in our country that does not have fixed election dates? Many people do not think so. Neither does the New Democratic Party.

It isn't an exaggeration to say, when it comes to this question of democratic effective representation, that we are in a time of real public despair. The deep public disdain for those who offer themselves to the political vocation - this is something that all of us have experienced - this deeply-held public disdain is a sign of this. The common conversational styles in public conversation about the discussion of the political vocation - we've all heard it, they're all the same, or what difference does it make - speak to this disdain.

Something else that speaks to the disdain and the despair about effective representation in our political culture is the steep decline in voter turnout. From numbers of approximately 80 per cent when someone of my generation first became of voting age, having shrunk in the election last year to 53 per cent.

The overall level of despair, I thought, was very clearly encapsulated in a poll taken not very long ago by the Abacus Data firm - and I will table a copy of the data from the poll - a poll which found that when they asked respondents in the Maritimes and Newfoundland how many people believe that the electoral system works well and isn't really in need of fixing, the number of people who said it works well and isn't really in need of fixing was 17 per cent.

So, this present moment for us of Bill No. 99, this moment in which the question of effective representation is in sharp focus and set before politics in Nova Scotia; this present moment when we have this court-mandated necessity for us to make a thorough addressing of the adequacy of political representation in Nova Scotia - in my view, this is a moment that provides a wonderful opportunity. This is a tailor-made opportunity for a broadened consideration of the issues under this heading of effective political representation.

This is particularly true, since the Electoral Boundaries Commission - which this legislation is providing for - is not, of course, the regular mandated decadal review, but is rather an extraordinary boundary review brought about by these special circumstances of the court decision.

So, our Party called for a broadening of the terms of the electoral boundary review so that the opportunity may be taken for a major consideration of the range of matters under the heading of electoral reform and effective representation in Nova Scotia.

So, we come to Bill No. 99. We come in good faith, we come with concern, and we come with criticism, but we come with hopefulness, as well. We are hopeful that the government is true in its desire to listen to voices which are going to be bringing forward proposed improvements to this legislation. We are looking forward to doing our part in this discussion and we are looking forward to the contributions of the public at the Committee on Law Amendments.

MR. SPEAKER: If I recognize the Government House Leader it will be to close the debate.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, I would certainly like to thank the contributors for this evening - the Progressive Conservative House Leader and the Leader of the New Democratic Party.

I would also like to give a heartfelt thanks to my colleagues in the Opposition, the House Leaders, the two gentlemen from Argyle-Barrington and Sackville-Cobequid, have been nothing but fantastic in dealing with this conversation to get here for Bill No. 99.

On the heels of the Keefe report, we sat down together to talk about some of the aspects; what would be controversial, what would make sense, what was inside this Legislature, what would have to be put into, as the Progressive Conservative House Leader said, into policy government framework so that effective representation would be reached on a much broader scale. They have done tremendous work. We're all very proud of the members of the select committee for the MLA group that we have established, all people committed and pushing in a good direction. We're in a good place with the MLA select committee.

[7:30 p.m.]

Of course, we have an extremely important task in making sure that we get this commission right, and let them do their work and be unbiased and not lean in on any of their direction. As we said, this bill gives them their parameters, but after that we stay out of their way.

Mr. Speaker, we have arrived here based on the idea of one thing, and that's fairness. I have assured the members in the House, and I have assured the members of the public, the stakeholders, who contributed to this. We just have to get this right. We have had a very challenging road with respect to electoral representation to get here today.

Again, I have a tremendous amount of respect for the NDP House Leader and for their caucus. I know that they were the government that handled this the last time. To hear the NDP Leader speak - I'm not going to challenge him this evening, but his comments about where we should go, his comments about what's wrong, and his spin on what electoral representation looked like - with all due respect, that's the reason we're here today. That's the challenge; we have to lead this.

As the member for Argyle-Barrington said, it started in 1991. That's the whole point. We have to set up the bones for this and stay out of the way. We can't talk about what it means to us, we can't talk about what we think it should be; we have to use that independent body that we select to get this done properly. That's the whole goal, that's what we're going to do and that's why we have been wide open with this process. We have been wide open with input from the Opposition.

There are some things, certainly, that will be contentious. We based this Bill No. 99 on the Keefe report. It wasn't our place as a government to pick and choose which things made sense and which things didn't. We chose to include it all and let Law Amendments, the stakeholders, and the Opposition Parties have their say about what we could change to make it even better, if that's the case. We weren't going to pick and choose.

I know there are some questions around the non-contiguous ridings. Those concerns are valid, so we look forward to conversations about what that should look like, if it should be included in the legislation or not.

There are also questions about whether the MLA select committee should pick the range of seats that would be included in the study. I don't know how any MLA select committee, or anyone, could identify what the appropriate number of seats is. That's a conversation that we have to have collectively as a committee to figure out how we would shape that.

Of course, what that select committee will look like in terms of unanimous decisions and how we're going to get to a point where we all agree on something - for me, personally and frankly, I can't imagine that we're not going to land there. We have all been reasonable through this. We're all reasonable people. We just want to do what's right for the Acadian community, for the African Nova Scotian community, and for the people who will come after us. This is not for now; this will be for the next election, but it's going to be for a decade, and it will come again. We have to make sure that we get this right.

I do look forward to Law Amendments; I do look forward to the process by which the public will have input. This is a very important decision. The commission that comes forward, the commission that is constructed, will reshape electoral fairness and electoral representation for many years to come for all of our communities, for every one of us. When these decisions are made, they will impact every single riding, here on the peninsula in Halifax, in metro, in Cape Breton, and in all parts of the province - all corners will be impacted by this. This can't be something that has meddling from a government or from Opposition or from anybody. We have the parameters for what this should look like from the Keefe report. We now have Bill No. 99 before us and we're going to go from here.

Again, like so many other things, the point of blaming and pointing fingers and trying to decide who was right and who was wrong, who is going to do this better - those days are over. This is too important. We have been through a court battle, for heaven's sake. Let's put all of that behind us, let's work together. We will be unanimous. We'll go through Law Amendments, we'll listen to each other, we'll come out with the ultimate decision, and we'll pass a bill that reflects what Nova Scotians want it to be. Nova Scotians will see each other in their province by way of electoral representation.

I do look forward to working with the members across the way, with our own government, with the good people here who have put their names on a ballot and want to be MLAs. We want to represent all Nova Scotians, and this bill will help us do that.

With that, I close second reading on Bill No. 99. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 99. 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. 107.

**Bill No. 107 - Labour Standards Code.**

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

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 107, an Act to Amend Chapter 246 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Labour Standards Code, Respecting Leaves of Absence, be now read for the second time.

I would like to take some time to share with you amendments we're making to the Labour Standards Code to better support victims of domestic violence. The Labour Standards Code currently provides for a number of employee leaves, including bereavement leave, compassionate care leave, critically ill child care leave and crime-related child death or disappearance leave. However, the code does not currently provide leave to assist employees in domestic violence situations.

Mr. Speaker, we are taking action to change this. Changes to the Labour Standards Code, which we have consulted stakeholders on over the last year, will include a leave for employees in domestic violence situations. This leave will provide support for those seeking safety from their abuser and allow victims the time they need to address the complex situations of domestic violence without the added stress and fear of losing their jobs.

The changes we're introducing will provide an unpaid leave for a period of up to 16 continuous weeks and 10 intermittent or continuous days for victims of domestic violence. This leave will allow victims to seek medical attention, obtain services from a victims' services organization, obtain psychological or other professional counselling, relocate temporarily or permanently, or seek legal or law enforcement assistance.

Additionally, the legislation allows leave for an employee to seek medical attention, obtain victims' services or professional counselling, relocate and seek legal or law enforcement assistance in situations where the employee's child is a victim of domestic violence. "Child" is defined in the bill as under 18 and a child, foster child, step-child, or a child under legal guardianship. This legislation's scope including situations where the employee's child is a victim of domestic violence is an important part of those affected being able to find independence and support both themselves and their families.

Another important piece of the legislation is the broad definition of intimate partner. In this bill, "intimate partner" is defined as spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend, dating partner, sexual partner, or other individual in a similar relationship. We know that domestic

violence affects relationships of all types, and we want to ensure that this legislation reflects that.

We are also very mindful of the sensitive nature of the information an employee may be sharing with his or her employer. Along with job protection, we are also introducing measures to protect the victim's privacy. A general confidentiality provision is being adopted to ensure employers will keep all employee information private.

Mr. Speaker, as we move forward, we will continue to consult with stakeholders and work to further outline the regulations that will help shape what documentation will be needed for this leave and how the verification process will work. We recognize that both employees and employers require guidance on this kind of documentation, which is appropriate.

When defining the regulations, we want to ensure the verification process is not burdensome and does not cause stress for victims seeking leave, employers, or service providers in the province.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides a level of job security that does not currently exist. It also raises awareness of the very difficult circumstances that employees may be living with.

We carefully considered whether this leave would be paid or unpaid. The Labour Standards Code sets statutory minimums for employment standards across the province. All of the leaves which are currently provided in the code are unpaid. This is important context for us to consider when making this important decision. We're always trying to strike a balance between providing the right protections to our employees and ensuring that our businesses can effectively manage and provide these important protections. The domestic violence leave we are proposing is the minimum standard. There is nothing which prevents an employer from providing a paid leave benefit greater than the minimum set by the law. Mr. Speaker, in our consultation we found exactly that, many corporations were stepping up to the challenge and providing even more.

Mr. Speaker, all that said, we do not underestimate the difficulties some employees may have in accessing the leave in a situation where they will be losing pay. That's why we've approached the federal government, together with our colleagues at the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, and are seeking its agreement to extend EI benefits to employees who require domestic violence leave.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, this legislation is not intended to be burdensome on the victim, the employer, or any service providers. In order to provide time for awareness and education, and give employers the time needed to adjust their HR policies or practices, these amendments will be subject to proclamation, and we anticipate a period of approximately six months before they come into effect.

Mr. Speaker, we believe these changes are a positive step forward. As long as domestic violence remains a societal issue, we need to ensure victims and their children have access to the supports they need. These proposed amendments help them do that.

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to stand and speak to the changes to the Labour Standards Code, Respecting Leave of Absence. As the minister said, some of these standards, it's a good step forward. It's a first step, but we just heard the minister talk about some of the leaves that are provided now that are unpaid, but some of those leaves, people are eligible for Employment Insurance and other forms of pay, to make sure they can get through these times of difficulty and not have to suffer financially.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think the federal government, who does provide some of these other pays for some of these leaves that go on, should be consulted and I think it should be with the federal government, and the provincial government, making sure that some of these people who apply for these leaves don't suffer financially.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the creation of this leave that gives job protection and flexibility for people to take time away from work to deal with these situations, is a great theory, it's a great first start. As the minister said in his press release, "As long as domestic violence continues to be part of our society, we need to ensure victims have access to the supports they need, when they need it." Well, some of the supports they need when they need it is financial stability as well; 16 weeks with 10 extra weeks intermittent is great. If they can't have financial stability within this leave, a lot of people will not leave the situation of domestic violence.

Mr. Speaker, as - I'm going to pronounce this name wrong - Miia Suokonautio, Executive Director of the YMCA in Halifax says, "These changes are an important first step in addressing domestic violence in Nova Scotia."

Mr. Speaker, when we look at other jurisdictions - the minister already went through the key elements of the bill, the definition of domestic violence, who qualifies for domestic violence - but we heard yesterday in Question Period, there are only two other provinces. In the minister's own bill briefing, there are at least three provinces that have paid leave. There's Manitoba, that has five paid days, Ontario has five paid days, and Québec, that introduced a bill last week, has two paid days. If you look at the federal government, they have 10 days of leave, with five paid days.

Mr. Speaker, we're not trying to put a burden on business and society here, we hear that if the amount of people who registered for domestic violence were to get five paid days, it would be just about \$1 million. If we're serious about preventing, controlling, and helping victims of domestic violence, we would look at some way for employers and employees to be compensated, so that people can get the help they need.



Mr. Speaker, if that's the case, \$1 million in a budget of \$9 billion, is not a big pile of money. If we're serious about doing that, we would look into it, and if we can make sure that people will report, and will get the help they need, I think that's money well spent.

[7:45 p.m.]

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

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, gender-based violence is an issue in Nova Scotia. One woman in 12 faces violence from an intimate partner, boyfriend, or husband, and intimate partner violence has a serious impact on the lives of Nova Scotians.

Though it should be obvious, daily stress levels are elevated when women have been violently victimized in the preceding 12 months. More than one-quarter of spousal victims - 27 per cent - and non-spousal victims - 26 per cent - used medication to cope with depression, to calm them down, and to help them sleep. This was significantly higher than the proportion of women who are not violently victimized.

Survivors need time: time to get away, time to reassess and recalibrate, time to heal. But for most women, especially working women, time is not free.

When victims of violence know their job and income are secure, they feel more confident about seeking help. Paid leave means that people have access to time off to do things like go to court, talk with legal advisers, meet with domestic violence counsellors, find child care, or do other tasks that they may need to normally do during work hours.

Workers in a domestic violence crisis need all available leave. Ideally, a worker should be able to access gender-based violence leave before depleting any other bank - sick leave or vacation time or time in lieu. The feds have announced they're doing five paid days for domestic abuse victims in federally-regulated workplaces. Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick are currently looking up what provisions they have.

According to a number of public policy studies, where paid leave is available, employees tend to take off less time than they're actually entitled to - typically an average of two or three days to deal with legal and medical concerns, to move, or to improve their safety.

Intimate partner violence doesn't only affect people who have full-time jobs with a decent income. It's not enough to know that you won't lose your job if you take time off to deal with an incident of gendered violence. Leaving a domestic violence situation is expensive in terms of time and money. You have to be in touch with lawyers and social workers, possibly find a new place to live, bank accounts, figure out what's happening with your children, and so on.

Research shows that escaping an abusive relationship takes 141 hours, with almost all necessary tasks having to be undertaken and completed during normal business hours. It's not as simple as walking out the door, as so many may think. You have to have a plan, and for that plan, you need money.

Survivors of violence have often been isolated by their abusive partner - their friends, their family, their acquaintances have been alienated. In these cases, work can be a place where you have people you are seeing on a regular basis notice differences in you, who are able to check in on your safety. Feeling supported at work, both emotionally and financially, can make a big difference in someone's well-being in a difficult situation.

This bill could be so much stronger if it included paid leave for survivors of domestic violence and their family members. I look forward to hearing comments for this bill at the Committee on Law Amendments. Thank you.

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

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to stand today to speak in support of Bill No. 107. I know from all of those who I've spoken to who are stakeholders in the area of domestic violence that they are also all in support of this bill, and I congratulate the government on bringing it forward.

In 2010, there were 3,209 women and men who were assaulted. That's the number of people we're potentially talking about helping, but then when you add in their children, we're multiplying that by at least one or two. We're talking about 10,000 people who are going to have greater security in knowing that if they have to make the difficult decision to leave a partner who they've been dependent on for years or decades, they will have extra security in doing so.

We also know, for those who have worked with victims of sexual and domestic assault, that the most dangerous and stressful time is always within the first few days or weeks of leaving a spouse. Women are six times more likely to be killed by an ex-spouse, and those violent assaults often happen after a woman has made the courageous decision to leave, so that is the time when she needs the most support.

So, we've come a long way. I know in the 1980s, when the police introduced the no-drop policy where, if the people had suspicion of abuse you didn't need the woman's testimony to go along with the charges, that the police could go ahead if there were reasonable and probable grounds, and we know that there are an awful lot of women who are grateful for that because on their own they would have been pressured to back down. I hear about that a lot from people who are seeking help for health issues because domestic assault very rarely happens just once.

It's like a fall in the elderly - it doesn't happen once. You just maybe only hear about the worst incident, not the years of the intimidation and degradation that destroys somebody's soul and their belief in themselves that they even have the right or the ability to leave. But I have been talking to some people in terms of whether this is enough for victims of domestic abuse and I agree that it is a start; it's a good start. I do think that step number two has to be towards paid leave, and I know that you've already alluded to the fact that that is hopefully coming down the road - but you have to do step one before you can get to step two.

I have talked with some caseworkers who deal with those, with domestic abuse situations, and the issue of not leaving because of their job isn't always even brought up in certain situations. So, there are certainly other limitations like educational level and even job opportunities that limit somebody's ability to leave where the family happens to be living - if you're an immigrant and you don't have any other family support; if you are in the military and you've been posted out West and your family is out East, or vice versa. I don't want us to make the mistake of thinking that this is the only thing we need to do. It is certainly an important step but there are all sorts of other reasons why people do not leave an abuser, so we need to continue to keep the focus on that. I know that the Council on the Status of Women and the Department of Community Services is also keenly interested in this.

One of the things that we know is that victims of sexual assault are now going to have lawyers who are better trained in that area, and we know that there is a family law court now which is going to help women have more confidence as well.

There are a couple of things in the bill that I do want to talk about a little bit because it's not quite clear how the rules are going to be. Just like with marijuana legislation, I'm wondering how we are going to go about educating employers, as to someone comes to you and expresses this, what are the proper steps? And the same thing, again, for health educators because often it's during our interview for something totally unrelated that this issue may come up, or if it's a teacher who has heard from a child that dad did something to mum, what's the teacher's responsibility and how are we going to educate them as to what they're going to be responsible for? If somebody tells me they want to commit suicide, as a health professional I'm obligated to report that to the physician. If somebody tells me that this is happening to them, what is my obligation to them in terms of telling them about all of these opportunities?

One of the things I am concerned about is that we are talking about unpaid protected leave, but one of the provisions is that somebody is going to have to continue to pay their medical benefits and, for some, especially those of lowest income, they may not have the financial ability to do that. So, in addition to paid leave, I'm also wondering whether there is a provision down the road - and maybe Community Services might get involved - where, if you're below a certain income level, there might be an ability to pay those medical benefits.

One of the provisions here on Page 2 says in the position held by the - this refers to that if an employee wants to come back to work, the employer shall permit the employee to resume work in a position held by the employee immediately before the leave began, or where the position is not available, in a comparable position. I'm wondering, what happens in the case where there's only one employee - so, if I work for one person and I'm the only employee and I leave and they fill it temporarily and I come back, then does that disqualify the employer from having to give me protected leave? I'm wondering about those provisions.

I'm also wondering - when we talk about if somebody has an employer who does not grant them the leave, they are allowed to make a complaint to a director, but I'm wondering how quickly you can make that complaint. We know we're talking about maybe the first 10 days, so if an employer says no, I'm not giving you that off, how quickly are we going to be able to get their issues heard? That's another concern that I have.

Finally, one of the other issues that comes up is talking about confidentiality by the employer, because you are going to be giving very intimate details to an employer, someone who may be very well known in the community, you may live up the street from the person that you've hired. I wonder what the penalty is for an employer who violates that confidentiality. It doesn't stress in here what exactly that is going to be.

There's a few other gaps in here that I think we need to address after Law Amendments Committee, and I'll bring those forward at the time. I do want to say that I am very pleased to see this moving forward, that both the adults, as well as the children, are going to have greater protection, and I'm hoping that we are going to be able to roll this out in such a way that the employers are going to embrace this, and I look forward to Law Amendments Committee. Thank you.

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

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, lots of great discussion. I'd like to thank all the members for their input. In terms of the intent of the bill, a couple of questions did come up, and I can see how they would. In terms of the intent of the bill, the position would be it would be safe for the employees. So, whether it was backfilled and there was only one employee, this bill would provide the protection.

As well, when we did talk about intimate details being shared, the other intent of the bill - which will be fleshed out in regulations - the example I gave is the individual employee is only going to have to advise the employer that they are in a situation of domestic violence. They are not going to have to provide details, they are not going to have to provide a doctor's note or any statement from the police.

We were very cognizant of the fact that we don't want the individual to have to relive any pain. We want them to be able to provide a minimum amount of information, and the employer, as well, to respect that and not share it with other employees at work in the future.

In terms of the penalties, that will be for regulations. These are sensitive matters, and I think the employers will respect that privacy, as they do today, because that is the proper thing to do.

Just very quickly, in terms of the process and talking about the paid and unpaid leave, how we got here was - as members pointed out - Manitoba on June 1, 2016, introduced legislation and they were the first province that introduced this legislation. When they introduced it, they did have five paid days of leave there.

The previous minister, the current Minister of Community Services, upon learning about this legislation brought it into the department and asked the department to look into it. We were, along with other provinces - you probably saw what Manitoba did - started going down the road of consultation. We consulted last summer and in that consultation, we started off from the point of view of we like this legislation, let's get it in place. When we did consult we did not consult on the paid leave, we consulted on the protection of an individual's job.

Having said that, that doesn't mean that in the future we can't consult on the paid leave and I've expressed that we are more than open to that, but we didn't want to hold up the legislation. We didn't have the benefit of the other provinces that came forward.

As we talk about Ontario, their legislation was just passed on January 1<sup>st</sup>. It was just introduced in January 2018, and Québec introduced their bill last week, where they are giving 26 weeks of protection and two days of paid or unpaid leave. I personally don't know if two days is the right amount. I do understand why five days was chosen, because that's the gap to get the EI. That is also the hope - and that's something we did discuss and why we pushed the federal government - if we can get that gap covered, then most definitely we will be pushing forward full steam ahead with the paid portion of those five days.

We are looking at consulting with businesses in the future. But as legislators, whenever we're passing legislation, we need to have the balance there. We had not gone out and actually signalled to the business community that there would be a financial burden that they would bear.

I didn't want to say, let's hold the legislation, and let's go out and consult for the next six months. I wanted the legislation passed because I knew that, as any piece of legislation in this House, we can always improve it in the future.

[8:00 p.m.]

With that Mr. Speaker, I close debate on Bill No. 107, and I look forward to feedback at Law Amendments Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 107. 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 Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 108.

**Bill No. 108 - Cannabis Control Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 108, the Cannabis Control Act, be read a second time.

In April 2017, the Government of Canada introduced legislation to legalize recreational cannabis. In the time since, provinces and territories have been working together and with the federal government to ensure each jurisdiction is ready for legalization. Nova Scotia set several key principles to guide our work. The top principle Mr. Speaker, was to protect the health and safety of Nova Scotians, particularly children and youth. We also sought to encourage responsible use and minimize harm, create a well-regulated legal market that minimizes the involvement of organized crime, and seek out national or regional consistency where possible.

The legalization of cannabis is a unique file, and it may be comparable only to the end of Prohibition. It has required us to work closely with our counterparts across the country to identify the issues that we need to address. There has been some past work, Mr. Speaker, that has helped guide us. Washington State legalized recreational cannabis in 2011, while Colorado did the same the following year.

One lesson that officials from these states imparted on us in Canada was to go slow. It was best to start with a tightly regulated market in the beginning and make changes down the road if you needed to. They said clearly that too much too soon was not the way to go.

That advice, Mr. Speaker, has guided us. Our key concern has been public health and safety.

With that in mind, we launched broad public consultation on key issues in October. This consultation included an online survey and stakeholder consultations across the province. In the end, we received 31,000 completed online surveys from Nova Scotians. This gave us valuable information about our citizens' views on legalization as a whole, legal age, retail and distribution model, public consumption, impaired driving, and public education. We received written submissions from 24 organizations including the Canadian Cancer Society, Injury Free Nova Scotia, the IWK Health Centre, MADD Canada, the Nova Scotia Health Authority, and the Retail Council of Canada. I want to thank each of these organizations for the time they took to put those submissions together and provide us with their views.

Mr. Speaker, we also had 10 stakeholder sessions across the province. These were well attended, with almost 200 people representing 49 organizations and 41 municipalities. The organizations at these sessions ranged from police and universities to investment property owners and medical experts. The insights we received through this consultation were invaluable to us as we created our legislative framework. Thank you to everyone who took the time to let us know their thoughts on this very important public matter.

I encourage all members of this House to take the time to read the summary of our consultation. It's very much reflective of the many issues and varying viewpoints government considered in creating this legislation.

When government released the summary of this consultation in December, we also announced the first key policy decisions around legalization in Nova Scotia. I had made the commitment, Mr. Speaker, to make announcements as decisions were made. I felt this was important, as many people had questions, and as one can see from the legislation, we knew the framework would be wide-reaching. I would make subsequent announcements in January and March.

Within government we established a steering committee to help guide the creation of our legislative framework. This committee included representations from the Departments of Justice, Health and Wellness, Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, Service Nova Scotia, Finance and Treasury Board, and Communications Nova Scotia. Few departments haven't had a hand in this legislation. I'd like to take a moment to thank all those across government who have contributed to putting this framework together. As I said, it reaches across government and needed the input of many people.

The new Cannabis Control Bill establishes rules related to the sale, distribution, purchase, possession, cultivation, propagation, and harvesting of cannabis in Nova Scotia. To do this, it enacts new legislation and amends seven other pieces of legislation.

This new bill has two parts. The first, which is the responsibility of the Minister responsible for the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation, establishes the NSLC as the sole authorized seller of cannabis in Nova Scotia. It gives the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation

the power to wholesale, store, distribute, and sell cannabis; requires the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation to comply with federal requirements; and adds promotion of social objectives for responsible consumption to the NSLC's objectives.

The second part of the bill is the responsibility of the Minister of Justice. This part establishes many of the laws around cannabis, including legal age, possession, cultivation, and use in vehicles. It also establishes the penalties for breaking these laws.

Generally speaking, there are four key areas around the legalization of cannabis: retail and distribution, legal age of possession and cultivation, consumption, and road safety and impaired driving. I'll take a few moments to outline each of those elements within the proposed law.

Recreational cannabis will be distributed and sold in the NSLC through the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation. This will be done in NSLC stores online and Part I of the Cannabis Control Bill establishes the NSLC as the sole authorized seller. The NSLC has the experience and the expertise to distribute and sell a restricted product, ensuring our public health and safety goals are achieved. They have an existing social responsibility mandate and the infrastructure in place to support province-wide retail operation.

During our stakeholder meetings, participants were overwhelmingly in favour of the public distribution and retail model. They told us the NSLC allows Nova Scotia to best protect children and youth and that it made sense to use a Crown corporation that already has retail experience; 49 per cent of respondents to our survey agree or somewhat agree with this approach.

Corporate social responsibility will be a core value that guides how the NSLC sells cannabis. The NSLC will comply with all federal requirements with regard to how cannabis is sold and advertised. This includes selling cannabis produced by an authorized producer, not selling cannabis to a young person, keeping appropriate records, and taking measures to reduce the risk of cannabis that they possess from being diverted into the illicit market. Staff will be trained to help customers make informed, responsible choices. There will be clear signage to educate and inform customers about the dangers of co-use, and there will be no cross-promotion of alcohol and cannabis.

The area where cannabis is sold will be separated from the rest of the store and cannabis products will not be visible to people in the rest of the store. Individuals under 19 years of age will not be permitted in this particular area. Ensuring cannabis is sold in the safest possible manner is a priority for this government, and I know the NSLC shares this belief. Public safety is our priority, particularly around youth.

I know the NSLC has been doing a great deal of work to prepare to retail cannabis, including work to secure supply. NSLC has been meeting with cannabis producers regularly and recently hosted a formal information session. Through this work, they've



learned there are 35 producers, both local and national, that are interested in doing business in Nova Scotia. They will soon release an Expression of Interest as the next step to secure supply. I anticipate some additional announcements in the future to keep Nova Scotians informed about the retail system.

When cannabis is legal, Nova Scotians will be able to purchase it in nine of the NSLC stores: Amherst, Dartmouth, Halifax, Lower Sackville, New Glasgow, Sydney River, Truro, and Yarmouth. Brick and mortar is one aspect of how Nova Scotians will be able to access cannabis. Aside from the nine NSLC locations, legal-age Nova Scotians will be able to order cannabis online and have it delivered to their home and grow up to four plants within their home.

I know there have been some questions about online sales of cannabis and, while more details will be coming, I want to assure all Nova Scotians that safeguards will be in place. Many are surprised to find out that, currently, medicinal cannabis is sold online and delivered through the mail system. There is already a well-established system that checks ID and verifies age to ensure that cannabis does not get to anyone but the intended recipient. All provinces in Canada will offer online sales with home delivery, and we will work to ensure our system is as safe as any.

Through this legislation, we propose a legal age of 19 for cannabis use, purchase, cultivation, and possession. We believe, and our consultation has told us, that setting the legal age above 19 would make it harder to eliminate the illegal market for cannabis. We know that younger adults consume cannabis and setting too high a legal age would cause these people to continue to purchase from the illegal market, an illegal market that sells product that is not regulated. Mr. Speaker, that is not acceptable.

Age 19 also ensures regional consistency with New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador, which is also consistent with our legal drinking age. With the exception of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, all provinces have chosen to align the legal age for cannabis with the legal age for alcohol. Age 19 is also supported by law enforcement and 75 per cent of respondents to our survey. Age 19 strikes a balance between harm reduction and keeping it out of the hands of youth.

In terms of personal possession in public, Mr. Speaker, federal legislation sets a limit of up to 30 grams of dried cannabis, or equivalent, for adults outside their home. The Cannabis Control Bill does not change this limit in Nova Scotia. Federal legislation sets fines and other penalties for possession above this amount, which vary, depending on the amount of cannabis in possession.

The same is true for home cultivation, Mr. Speaker. Federal legislation allows adults to grow up to four plants per household. The Cannabis Control Bill does not change this limit in Nova Scotia. Federal legislation sets fines and other penalties for cultivation of more than four plants, which vary, depending on the number of plants.

Keeping cannabis out of the hands of youth is an important aspect of this legislation. Through this legislation a young person found in possession of less than five grams of cannabis will have the cannabis seized and be fined up to \$150. Police may also opt to notify their parents or guardians, and restorative justice may also be an option. Under federal law, possession of more than five grams by someone under the age of 18 will be prosecuted as a criminal offence under the Youth Criminal Justice Act.

The Cannabis Control Bill outlines the penalties youth who possess cannabis will face and, more important, the penalties those who provide cannabis to youth will face. Under this legislation a person who sells or distributes cannabis to a young person may be fined up to \$10,000.

The same fine is in place for someone who involves young persons in the commission of an offence related to cannabis; someone who sells or distributes cannabis accessories to a young person may be fined up to \$2,000; anyone selling cannabis illegally may be fined up to \$10,000; those who operate an unauthorized store that sells cannabis may be fined no less than \$10,000 and up to a maximum of \$25,000; those who purchase cannabis from someone other than the NSLC may be fined up to \$250; and those who know and resell or distribute cannabis to an individual who is, or appears to be, intoxicated may be fined up to \$1,000.

The Liquor Control Act is being amended, Mr. Speaker, to bring provisions and penalties for alcohol in line with those proposed for cannabis, where possible. Many stakeholders, including MADD Canada, told us that it was important that penalties for cannabis and alcohol lined up.

In the area of consumption, although cannabis is being legalized, Mr. Speaker, it's important to remember that its consumption can have serious public and individual health implications. We consulted widely to inform our legislative framework and heard from Nova Scotians that they supported some form of public consumption, with restrictions. Stakeholder groups told us we needed to protect the public and the rights of non-users who shouldn't be impacted by second-hand smoke. Others told us that a complete ban would discriminate against those who would not have a place to consume legal recreational cannabis, like renters whose buildings ban smoking.

Mr. Speaker, many expressed a need for an approach similar to alcohol and tobacco - strong restrictions, but the ability to consume in some locations. Our online consultations showed a considerable level of support for some public consumption. Seventy-three per cent of respondents agreed with some outdoor public use of cannabis with restrictions; 60 per cent of parents and 60 per cent of health care professionals who responded supported some outdoor use; and 35 per cent of respondents supported a complete prohibition to outdoor public use.

[8:15 p.m.]

Support for some public use, Mr. Speaker, was lower among those who opposed legalization and higher among males and those between the ages of 18 and 34. The result surprised us, and we took more time to explore the issue. Some public consumption would require a balance between cannabis being a legal product and the public health impacts it could have. Parallel to our work on cannabis legalization, the Department of Health and Wellness has been working with stakeholders for some time on strengthening the Smoke-free Places Act. Nova Scotia has done a lot of work over the years to make non-smoking the norm in Nova Scotia, which contributed to a decline in current smoking rates from 29 per cent in 1999 to 18 per cent in 2015.

As I announced last week, a strengthened Smoke-free Places Act will include additional restrictions for all types of smoke, and govern cannabis use in line with tobacco. Smoke of all kinds, including cannabis, is already prohibited in all indoor public spaces and workspaces and many outdoor spaces, including schools and daycare grounds, bar and restaurant patios, and within four metres of entrances or intake. It also prohibits smoking in vehicles where children are passengers.

The proposed amendments will expand the Act to include no smoking or vaping of cannabis or tobacco on or within 20 metres of playgrounds located in an outdoor public space, a publicly-owned sport and recreational event or venue located in an outdoor public space, public trails and provincial parks, and on provincial beaches, except for within the boundaries of a rented campsite, and in vehicles used as part of one's job or work. This does not apply to a personal vehicle used for work purposes if they are the only person using the vehicle for work purposes. Cannabis cannot be consumed by anyone in the vehicle.

The bill also confirms that municipalities have the authority to pass bylaws that put additional restrictions in place. The stricter rules will apply. Through our consultation, we heard from landlords who were concerned about how legalization might impact their lease properties. For them, cannabis represented a significant change in how they do business. We also heard from residents who were concerned about how cannabis use by their neighbours might impact them. The Residential Tenancies Act allows landlords to put reasonable rules in place about the enjoyment of their building and damage to their property. It is through this that many landlords currently restrict pets and smoking.

Through our discussions, including recent conversations with the Investment Property Owners Association of Nova Scotia, it became clear that there would be a gap between when cannabis is legal and when landlords could amend leases. To that end, we've decided to put a transitional provision in the Cannabis Control Act. This will allow landlords to amend leases, to put reasonable rules in place about recreational cannabis smoking, as defined in the Smoke-free Places Act, and cultivation. Landlords must provide tenants four months' notice of this change prior to April 30, 2019. When the landlord

provides this notice, the tenant may then choose to terminate the lease. The tenant has one month to give the landlord three months' notice to terminate. We believe this approach gives landlords the mechanism they need to set the rules, while also being fair to tenants who may not agree to the new rules.

Finally, road safety and impaired driving. Perhaps the most common concern I hear about the legalization of cannabis is the risk of people driving impaired. Let me be clear: driving while high is not only dangerous, it is a crime. This legislation provides strong sanctions for those who drive while impaired. Cannabis use of any kind in vehicles, including motorized boats, will be prohibited by the province. All drivers, including medical users, must not be impaired when driving. Passengers cannot use cannabis in any form in the vehicle, and cannabis must be stored in a closed, fastened package, and out of reach or not readily available to anyone in the vehicle. This is in line with restrictions on alcohol in vehicles. In these circumstances, a person may be fined up to \$2,000 for consumption or improper storage.

Through amendments to the Motor Vehicle Act, the province is putting administrative sanctions, like licence suspensions, in place to ensure road safety. It is also important to note that corresponding federal law may also apply, resulting in additional penalties, including imprisonment. Law enforcement officers are on our roads every day keeping us safe. They enforce drinking and driving laws now and, all too often, are also getting people off the roads who are impaired by other drugs.

Through this legislation, officers will have authority to decide how they handle drivers they suspect of being under the influence of cannabis. The Criminal Code sets out that drivers suspected of impaired driving may be required to undergo a standard field sobriety test, which is a series of coordinated tests that are often administered at the roadside. If a driver fails the SFST, a drug recognition expert - often referred to as a DRE officer - may conduct additional tests at a secondary location to determine if the driver is impaired. I am pleased to say that per capita, Nova Scotia has more DRE-trained officers currently than any province or territory in the country.

After completing the SFST, if an officer believes they have grounds to lay a charge of impaired driving, the driver's licence is immediately suspended for 24 hours. The driver will be ordered to provide a bodily-fluid sample, and a charge for impaired driving will be pending, subject to results. If the results confirm impairment under the Criminal Code, a charge will be laid and the person's licence will be suspended for 90 days.

When someone is convicted of impaired driving, the driver is subject to the following penalties: a first offence is a fine not less than \$1,000 and a one-year licence suspension; a second offence within a 10-year period is imprisonment of up to 30 days and a three-year licence suspension; a third offence within 10 years is imprisonment of up to 120 days and a five-year licence suspension; and a fourth offence is permanent revocation.

It is very important to note that additional penalties may apply if there is bodily harm or death, if a child is proven to be in the vehicle, an additional 12-month revocation, or the driver has frequent driving suspensions.

If after completing an SFST an officer has reason to suspect a driver is under the influence of drugs but does not have the grounds to lay a criminal charge, they have the authority to immediately suspend a driver's licence. These suspensions are seven days for the first offence, 15 for the second, and 30 days for the third. This approach is similar to how drivers with alcohol in their system, but are below the criminal legal limit, are presently handled.

Like alcohol, there will be a zero tolerance for drivers in the Graduated Driver's Licence Program and, where a driver fails either or both an SFST or the DRE, they will be subject to sanctions, including restarting the phase of their program.

There are also a number of housekeeping amendments being made to the Motor Vehicle Act to reference new criminal code sections, offences, terminology, and definitions.

Mr. Speaker, before I move from road safety, I want to say what an honour it has been to be joined at my bill briefing this week by representatives of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). I appreciated taking the time to join us: Andrew Murie, CEO of MADD Canada; Susan MacAskill, the Chapter Services Manager for Atlantic Canada; and Anissa Aldridge, a member of MADD's board of directors for Atlantic Canada.

I just want to highlight a comment that Mr. Murie made that illustrated for me that we are on the right track. He said that our proposal was the most comprehensive that MADD had seen in the country. That vote of confidence demonstrates the importance of the work and the time we have taken to get this right.

In conclusion, I've outlined the new legislation in the Cannabis Control Bill, as well as amendments to the Liquor Control Act, the Smoke-free Places Act, and the Motor Vehicle Act. There are also housekeeping amendments to four additional Acts. The Education Act is being amended to add the use and possession of cannabis to a list of unacceptable student behaviours, in line with how alcohol is represented.

The Insurance Act is being amended to bring the Act in line with the amended Criminal Code of Canada with regard to impaired driving. The Safer Communities and Neighbourhood Act is being amended to add illegal possession, consumption, purchase, sale, distribution, cultivation, propagation, and harvest, or other uses of cannabis, as a prohibit-specified use under the Act. Finally, the Summary Proceedings Act is being amended to add reference to the new Cannabis Control Act to Schedule B.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words about the importance of public education and awareness. It has been topical and I respect the opinions and views that my colleagues have shared. Cannabis use in any form has risks, including cognitive, motor, and memory impairment, mental health problems, dependence, and the risk of injury. Its use can be especially harmful to the developing brain of children and youth. We recognize that government and its partners have an important role in educating the public in the rules around cannabis legalization, and the potential impacts of using it, especially for children and youth.

The federal government has already launched two major campaigns. People can find a number of resources on our website: [novascotia.ca/cannabis](http://novascotia.ca/cannabis). This includes the Cannabis Talk Kit, which helps parents talk to their teen about cannabis, with 180,000 distributed to date; and Weed Myths, a campaign by the Nova Scotia Early Psychosis Program, to bust some of the common myths about cannabis.

Mr. Speaker, there's also a link to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's Lower Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines, which provides guidance on how to make safer choices. This includes using less potent product, avoiding smoke products, using cannabis less frequently, and avoiding use if your family has a history of psychosis or substance abuse.

Mr. Speaker, we all have a role to play in educating ourselves and our children about cannabis, and I encourage everyone to take the time to learn more and have those discussions. To that end, over the past several months we have been working with our partners in government and outside government to put a plan together. We're also working with the federal government, MADD, law enforcement, and the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation to ensure our efforts are coordinated and that we make the best use of available funding.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward in the future to sharing more about the efforts as this bill unfolds. With that Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing from my fellow colleagues on this important bill.

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

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for his remarks, and to congratulate him on the fact that it is a very comprehensive, complex, complicated piece of legislation.

I want to say that I have great respect for the minister. I think when we look back last session, when we went through the accessibility piece of legislation, the cyberbullying piece of legislation - there has been a lot in the minister's department to oversee and get right. As we know at the end of the day, we were in favour of those two bills in the Fall.

But quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I think we're in free fall with this one. We're in big trouble, we really are.

I think first of all, one of the things I heard the minister say a couple of times, there are more details to come, there are more details to come. We're going to legalize this come July or maybe August - who knows, maybe September now too - and we don't even have an educational awareness campaign to roll out. That should be out three months, six months prior to this becoming legalized. (Interruption) It's not ready, he confirmed it.

Look, I know it's in there to do it, but I confirmed in Estimates that it's not there. It brings me great concern when we don't have that. We're going around saying that our number one priority is to protect youth, to make sure that their well-being and their health is going to be protected. I don't feel comfortable in voting yes to this piece of legislation, because I don't see anything in there that's going to protect my children, or your children.

It's interesting - 50 per cent of children will more than likely have the opportunity or try smoking marijuana before they're 18, and we have no awareness campaign, no educational campaign ready to roll out.

[8:30 p.m.]

Now I am going to reserve most of my comments for third reading. What we do know about this drug is that not everyone reacts the same way. Mr. Speaker, this much I know is true and that's why it's so important to have the educational and awareness aspect ready to go. I will say it again and again - and I know that I am belabouring this aspect, but it really will stick with me, I am sure, for the rest of my life. I cannot believe that we are basing most of this piece of legislation on a faulty, inefficient, ineffective, online survey of perhaps 30,000 - I believe was the number that was thrown out, of the people logged on.

Again, I'll tell you, and I said it yesterday and I'm not proud to stand here and say it, but I know a lot of teenagers who went on there and filled out the survey hundreds of times. It's shameful. Our first mistake was investing in a company that put this survey together online that literally, I know could be done within a half hour, according to my son. He said, Mum, I could do that, I could put that up in a half hour - yes, no, yes, no - are you 18? No, okay, go back out. Go back in - are you 18, 19? Yes. It was the most unsecured online survey I have ever witnessed.

One of the other things that deeply concerns me, and I'm hearing from municipalities, is with regards to policing. We all know that it's going to increase policing, as it should; that's just a given. But they are feeling somewhat not supported in this and that the financial attachment to ensuring that they are doing their job - is it going to be downloaded onto the municipalities? What level of amount of money is going to be given to the municipalities for policing? What about policing in schools?

As well, we know that in the U.S. it was actually passed by the courts that if you go to work, the employer has the right, randomly, to test and see if there's any THC in your blood and, if there is, they can fire you right on the spot. We have nothing here for our employers to determine what they are going to do. There's a lot of confusion around that. I am on and I take a certain amount - I take a cannabis pill for arthritis, let's say, and I go to work. Am I going to be judged? Am I going to be fined? Is my job in jeopardy? There are no guidelines for the business owners and I think this is something we have to give a lot more consideration to.

Unfortunately, we ignored the chief medical officers of this country; we ignored their recommendations. We all know they wanted to set the age limit at 25. (Interruption) Yes, I've been corrected - "we" didn't ignore it. They ignored it.

I feel well, why did we even bother getting them involved? I mean we all know that the frontal lobe is not completely developed until you are 25. They compromised and said okay, I think we could settle for 21 and, again, they ignored it. They ignored the age limit. I think that it was the easy way. It was out of convenience to ignore the age limit.

Look, everyone is entitled to their own opinions but not their own facts. Sadly, we didn't listen to the facts in drafting this piece of legislation. Too many people think they have an individual entitlement to their own set of facts. Actually, Mr. Speaker, I think that's the modern trouble with truth.

We speak about the spirit of wisdom being conversation, but this government didn't actually go and have conversations fairly with Nova Scotians. They want to say, we did have consultations. Yes, you did the online survey from October 6<sup>th</sup> to the end of October, and you went around the province and met with 200-some people who were collected through the municipalities. Parents didn't get to speak. Youth didn't get to speak. So there weren't truly proper consultations. It's very disappointing to know that we didn't hear those who are deeply concerned about this becoming legalized.

I know and you know that change is the only thing that is absolute, but we also know that change draws resistance. I think in this case with the change to legalize this, people are not feeling that we're prepared. People are accepting that it's going to happen, but they are not accepting the fact that we are prepared because we're not.

We're rushing this. We're not ready, and I know that there will be real and devastating consequences to basically limiting ourselves in getting this piece of legislation right. We're all going to have to face that. I wish that we had the political will, the moral courage, to do the right thing. That would be to set the age limit at 21.

I think what happens in these cases is that we too often look across the country - and I applaud the minister, if that's the case that we have so far, or he has been told that this is the most comprehensive and well-set-out plan. I congratulate him on that. I think it



is a good start. However, we are far from being prepared to roll this out and not meet unintended consequences that I think are going to open up Pandora's box, and we're going to be in deep trouble with this.

I think that what happens is, we often accept the familiar and definitely fear the unfamiliar. I hope the minister will listen carefully at Law Amendments. I hope that the minister will consider that going back and listening to more Nova Scotians is not a bad thing. Trying to set the tone of making Nova Scotians realize they can be involved in this piece of legislation will only have benefit in the end.

I hope that my colleagues will have an opportunity to speak to this. I know that I look forward to Law Amendments and hearing the presenters. I hope the minister will take a step back and perhaps sit down with a few individuals who have some ideas on how we can improve this piece of legislation. Perhaps there will be some amendments, and I hope that everyone will give those amendments some consideration. So on those words, I will take my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: I'll keep my remarks brief this evening, I know many of my colleagues are waiting to speak.

To begin, we're happy to have a piece of legislation before us. We knew that this was coming, we've been waiting. It is, as the minister said, a very comprehensive bill. I would echo some of the comments we heard about the magnitude of the task before us and the shortness of the time, although the goalposts keep moving on that one.

We continue to have questions to that end about implementation. One of the places where we've been zeroing in on those questions in the Budget Estimates process is costs. So despite questions in Question Period, in Budget Estimates, with the Minister of Justice, with the Minister Responsible for the Nova Scotia Liquor Commission, we have yet to see any hard costs associated with this.

As representatives of the taxpayers of Nova Scotia, I think we deserve to understand the cost of the roll-out of this enterprise and where those costs are going. I know in my own neighbourhood, Mr. Speaker, there is a Nova Scotia Liquor Commission being renovated to accommodate cannabis sales; the renovation is happening. We know that staff are being hired. The minister mentioned, which I hadn't heard previously, that education materials are being produced.

We have no details about that, and in the absence of any other details, the clearest way we can ask questions about that is to find the line in the budget where those things are reflected, so that we can dig into them in more depth, and we just don't have that opportunity. That's frankly been frustrating for us.

The other question that I have for the minister, as we look at this piece of legislation is, why aren't we thinking about local economic development opportunities connected to this industry? It seemed a foregone conclusion at this point that cannabis will be legal, but I asked the Minister of Business, what were all of the Crown Corporations under his purview and his own department doing to encourage local production, to use some of the fallow production facilities around the province for this purpose? The response, Mr. Speaker, was nothing - we're doing nothing.

We know that there will be a shortage of supply - the federal task force has said that, other people have said that, and we know that that's true. If that's the case, in a province where we know that economic development is a challenge, with a government who consistently trumpets their interest and ability in that particular file, why aren't we looking at that, Mr. Speaker? Why aren't we being innovative in that particular way?

Our Party is also concerned about what we suspect one of the unintended consequences might be of this legislation, for whom in fact this substance is becoming legal, because of the complications around the ability to consume cannabis in rental properties. To give the minister credit, I know that they've been working hard on this file, that they have made allowances so that a tenant can leave without prejudice if their told that the rules in their building are changing. Nonetheless, the reality is, Mr. Speaker, if you own your own home you can consume cannabis, and if you rent, you can't.

Whatever you think about the legalization of cannabis, that just seems patently unfair, on the face of it. If we're going to have something that is legal, it doesn't make sense, quite frankly, that some people would be able to use it and other people wouldn't. Based on the minister's comments tonight about motor vehicles, it seems the same would be true there.

Last, I'll echo the comments that we've heard before in this Chamber around education. You know, I've listened carefully to the minister talk about the trajectory we've seen with tobacco and that tobacco awareness campaigns and the fact that tobacco is legal, has in fact, allowed the government and advocates in particular to take a front seat to safe and responsible use and ultimately reduction of use.

That may be true, it may be that we have the opportunity here, but as my colleagues have said, we haven't seen anything, we haven't seen any details about an education campaign. We haven't seen any supports. I know there are many in the education system, which are really in high schools, who are very concerned about this - teachers, support staff. We're concerned, frankly, that people aren't necessarily going to have the tools they need.

With that, I'll finish my comments and just say that I am - we all say this at the end of our remarks, but I genuinely am looking forward to hearing from people at the Law Amendments Committee because I do think, as the Leader of the Official Opposition has

said, the public survey portion of this particular engagement was lacking to say the least. I think that while we know that stakeholder groups were consulted, that MADD Canada was consulted, that the Investment Property Association - I mean the government did their work to a certain extent, but I, for one, am very interested to hear what the public has to say on this file.

[8:45 p.m.]

So, with those comments, I'll take my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, do you know what troubles me most about this legislation? The way it's being marketed to the public. We've heard the Minister of Justice say that the main purpose of this legislation is for the health and safety of Nova Scotians, especially children and youth.

Mr. Speaker, we know that for some people no use of marijuana is safe. We only need to look to the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia, there is evidence that cannabis can have harmful effects on developing human brains which are in development up to about the age of 25; this includes effects on learning ability.

Here's one, Mr. Speaker - cannabis may precipitate psychosis in predisposed individuals. So how can the government be putting this legislation forth, and how can they be stating that this legislation is for the sake of the health and safety of Nova Scotians, especially children and youth? (Applause) I think it is wrong for the government to be doing that; I think they should stop saying it.

I think about a comment made by a member of the government side a couple of weeks ago. It was a suggestion that well, have you guys done polling on this - are you willing to put your position in a campaign platform? Mr. Speaker, it was as much as to say that the public is onside with this.

Mr. Speaker, my concern with that is we don't really know that, but assuming the public in the terms of what the member was probably suggesting, that the majority of the public is onside with that, does that make what is happening with this legislation right?

I don't think it does. This week we celebrate the anniversary of Martin Luther King, 50 years ago this week. There was a leader, someone who stood up against perhaps what in some parts of the United States probably the majority of people believed in a lot of ideas that he believed were wrong.

Mr. Speaker, to suggest that an issue of this importance, which could have this impact - I think especially of young Nova Scotians - one of the main reasons why I cannot

support this legislation is the age that has been chosen by the government, knowing that marijuana, in one in 25, can trigger psychosis. Knowing that, I don't care what the polls say, I think this legislation sends the wrong message.

I think that yes, the government is faced with the position of a Prime Minister who believes in legalization, but after years of telling young people to say no to drugs, the government in our province is now going to say yes to the legalization of marijuana, yes marijuana is okay. What a conflicted message that is, Mr. Speaker. Could the government not have thought about that a little bit more?

I know the members opposite have made up their minds. They probably made them up a few weeks ago when they looked at this bill and they looked at all the angles. I can appreciate that the minister gave a fairly lengthy speech tonight. He covered a lot of ground, a lot of the things they thought about. But did they think of the simple things, the simple things that I've mentioned thus far? Mr. Speaker, I would encourage them to think about it some more.

The worst message that this legislation sends is about normalization, that marijuana is okay. To top it off, what's even worse than that is for the government to come out and say that they're doing this for the health and safety of Nova Scotians, especially children and youth. That is wrong.

I think about people who are users of marijuana. I think about police chasing them around. I can understand decriminalization. I can understand that. But to go and legalize marijuana sends the wrong message. Legalization is not going to solve a lot of these so-called issues of marijuana.

For instance, we know now from this budget that there are no profits associated with marijuana, so legalization is not a windfall for the government. It does not solve that issue. Safety - does it really solve safety when one in 25 people who try marijuana can end up triggering psychosis? Their brains ruined forever - it's not solving that.

I also think about productivity in the economy. One of the other things that the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia have said is that some cannabis users develop a habit of frequent use which they have difficulty ceasing. I have seen this myself in people I know. It changes their lives. Imagine the impact not just on them but on the economy of our province.

There's no windfall in the sale of marijuana, but I would also suggest to you that the productivity of our province will be changed as a result of this legislation and as a result of saying it's okay, that marijuana is okay, and the normalization that this legislation will create for marijuana. Legalization is not going to help any of those issues.

I will close by saying this legislation will not protect the health and safety of Nova Scotians. I would say it especially will not protect the health and safety of children and youth in Nova Scotia. Ultimately, what this legislation is about and what legalization is about is rolling the dice on your brains.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: I, too, want to say a few words about this subject. As this House knows, this is not an academic issue for me. We have lived through it as a family, having a son who had a psychosis due to marijuana usage, in our opinion. We watched him as he went through the process of getting off of marijuana and going precisely through all of the steps of withdrawal. We witnessed that too. We're fairly convinced that that was the problem. It's fairly well established.

In fact, here in Nova Scotia, we have one of the leading researchers on psychosis and the developing brain in Dr. Phil Tibbo. Several times in this Legislature I have tabled some of his articles. I will not do so again tonight.

I heard the Minister of Justice elaborate on some of those same points near the end of his comments, and I appreciated him saying that. I take umbrage with one of the comments he made very early on. He said that through the government offering marijuana, they would be offering a safe product. I don't believe that statement is founded in any fact, and it implies something that I do not think is true. In fact, it's the THC content in marijuana that is the issue. The government's product will equally have THC content, as does the product that comes off the illegal market.

I just want to say that I think that is a very misleading comment, and my colleague for Inverness took umbrage with those statements too - that it is about the health and welfare of our children that this legislation is being put forward.

I believe that the reason this House is doing it is simply because it's been forced upon us by the federal government. I believe that this government would not be bringing this legislation forward right now on its own if it had a choice. So, I recognize that there was an imperative to get this done, and I believe in my heart that even the government doing that did not do so willingly - simply had to address it.

I will say that I respect the efforts that the government has made on the part of safer driving and working with MADD and the fines and all of that stuff. I do respect that effort that has been put forward there by the Minister of Justice.

The idea that we will see a reduced level of usage in youth is unfounded, I think. I have an article here that says there was a study of countries where the legislation and the legalization of cannabis was liberalized, and they found, in fact, an increased amount of usage among young people. So, we send a message to young people that at 19 it's safe, and

unfortunately, we know that there are going to be people who are going to try it at 19, and as my colleague mentioned, a certain number of them will have very adverse effects.

The World Health Organization says some of them will experience psychosis and schizophrenia. The World Health Organization has said that schizophrenia is as debilitating to your life as quadriplegia. So the health care costs to our society, for some of this stuff, for psychosis and schizophrenia that will result from this, are profound.

We see an increase - and we've acknowledged it when we've talked about education - how mental health issues are on the rise with our young people. I don't believe all of them are attributable to marijuana usage, but I do believe some of them are. We know that the cost to society is immense. So while there may be a profit on one hand - and we know that the profit margin was entered into revenue. The expected profit in this year's budget of, I believe, some \$21 million, almost, was entered into the revenue line. We did not see any equivalent cost-of, but the cost of this stuff to our society is profound.

I just want to read some of the effects here. It says that while adults are susceptible, teenagers' developing brains are at greatest risk. "The Canadian Paediatric Society cautions that marijuana use in youth is strongly linked to 'cannabis dependence and other substance use disorders; the initiation and maintenance of tobacco smoking . . .'"

If you're smoking one thing, you'll start smoking another thing. The effects of smoking are profound on our society, and we have a record in Canada of making very good efforts to have smoking cessation, right? Most of us know that in the past 20 or 30 years, there's been quite a significant drop in the number of people that smoke, and smoking has a profound impact on your health.

In fact, I was talking to an ambulance attendant recently, and the attendant said to me - I found this rather shocking. I don't know if it's substantiated or not, but this lady said that between 80 and 90 per cent of their calls are to people who are smokers. Our ambulance attendants - I said, that can't be right. Anyway, I don't know if there's any truth, but that's her anecdotal evidence - someone who had been in the industry for 20 or 30 years.

The cost of smoking is huge on our society. We've made tremendous efforts in how we package smoking products, and we're not doing that with marijuana, but we know that marijuana is smoking too. In fact, smoke inhalation of any sort is very harmful to your health. Whatever you are smoking, if you are inhaling smoke, that is extremely harmful to your health. So the idea that we are not going to have at least the same type of laws around the packaging and display of marijuana products, or cannabis products, that are going to be smoked, and 90 per cent of cannabis usage is smoking, we are at least not going to have as strict laws around it as we have for cigarettes, is kind of mind-boggling.

[9:00 a.m.]

We're going to have a lot of the same issues with marijuana smoke going into people's lungs as we have with cigarette smoke. Maybe not precisely, maybe there's not tar in it, but there's a lot of combustible material going into your lungs, and we know that if you are a firefighter I think you'll know that the number one cause of death because of fires is smoke inhalation, so it's a profoundly negative thing.

Here we are, putting forward a product and we're saying that we're going to offer a safe product through our stores. I think we have to look at what type of packaging - we should have at least as strict packaging on our marijuana products and be at least as strict about advertising as we have for cigarettes. We're going to have all the same problems with marijuana smoking as we have with cigarette smoking, maybe slightly different ones.

We know we are going to have some more different problems because of the drug content of marijuana. We know that marijuana causes mental illness, including depression, psychosis - it can be a factor in it. Not everyone is affected, but what you can say about it is a mind-altering drug will alter the mind. Now here we are legalizing a mind-altering drug. They will have impaired neurological development and cognitive decline because of the use of marijuana, diminished school performance, and diminished lifetime achievement.

I dare say that as all of you would know, people in your community, people you went to school with, who got involved in drugs, and you could say that about them, unfortunately, and have profoundly negative effects on their life. There are some profound effects on this.

The idea that by legalizing it we are going to eliminate the illegal market, I have to question. We know that with cigarettes, we have - in fact, you may be surprised to know that approximately 40 per cent of the cigarette market in Ontario is the illegal market. Cigarettes have been priced high enough that there's a profit margin for the illegal market. In fact, my friend in the industry, I have a friend who was the President of the Ontario Tobacco Growers Association back when that existed, he was a tobacco consultant in Zimbabwe, and he tells me that cigarette companies can make a profit at \$1 a package. They make a profit at \$1 a package.

The illegal market in Ontario is \$2 a package, so they are making more than double on this. This is the sort of reality of cigarettes, I can tell you that the reality of growing marijuana is likely similar numbers. I am probably uniquely qualified to comment on that, I grew summer savoury all my life and probably it's a green plant that you grow and dry. I'm quite convinced that I could make a profit growing marijuana at four cents a gram. I can make a profit. You tell me, John, you grow that stuff, you do all the work, you hire people. I would be growing it out in the field - I don't have a lot of greenhouse experience - but even if you quadruple that number to 16 cents a gram, I could make a profit growing

it in a greenhouse. I know I can make a profit growing it for four cents a gram on the field because, in fact, we are wholesaling our summer savoury for about four cents a gram. That's the reality.

There's a lot of money to be made here. The government is going to make some money, but the illegal market is not going to go away, because if they are willing to risk imprisonment and fines to sell cigarettes - and how many illegal cigarettes are coming into the province right now? I don't think we have the same problem as Ontario, not to the same extent, but the Minister of Justice would know that it's a reality, we are not going to easily get rid of the illegal market, unfortunately, and we send the message to our young people - you are 19 years old, hey, it's legal to use, go ahead, it's safe, right?

I say that I would prefer if we were to have - my preference, of course, would be that it would be decriminalized, as my colleague said, that's my personal preference, and so be it. Decriminalize - because I don't actually think someone with a few grams in their pocket should have a criminal record.

But here we are legalizing it. The Canadian Medical Association were in favour of 25. They said they would accept age 21, and THC restricted to 25 would be fine. I know the argument is they're young enough to go to war and fight for us - I mean, they're old enough to do that. Government shouldn't be dictating to a 21-year-old what they can do and can't do.

However, most of us are older than 21, and you go get on your bicycle - we'll tell you to wear a helmet. Why are you wearing a helmet? Because if you fall off your bike you're going to have a brain injury, and that's going to cost society something. So we figure we'll tell you to wear a helmet, because we're going to save money.

Well, this is the exact same problem with marijuana. It's going to cause a certain number of people - not everybody - but a certain number of people have some pretty serious effects on their brain, and it's going to cost us a lot of money. It's going to cost us money as a society to pay for that.

We're going to have health care costs associated with that: diminished lifetime performance, heartache, and there are a lot of different types of cost. So here we are, why couldn't we have made it 21, then? I realize that this is about - anyway. As I said, it's a painful subject for me, personally.

I think that I'm disappointed that we're going this way. I realize that it was not something that this government chose for itself, this route, our provincial Liberal Government. It's a federal dictate, as unappealing as it is. The reality is it's very widely available. I heard someone say that there are approximately 5,000 places in Nova Scotia right now you can buy marijuana.



So, it's not going to go away readily, the illegal market. The cost to our society will be profound. I can hope that we can see what happened with cigarette smoking. There was a concentrated effort to change society's view about it. I hope that we can get there on marijuana too. Thank you.

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

MR. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I do recognize where we stand federally. We've been given little choice in this, and on a personal level - and I think a lot of this comes down to personal levels - I personally do support the legalization of cannabis both for medical, which it is already, as well as recreational. I do want to say that I find that I'm somewhat disheartened that instead of taking the opportunity to look at 21 - not just for cannabis, but I think that this would have been an opportunity for this province to actually be ground-breaking across Canada, and open up and look at other options around smoking as well as alcohol reform.

There are three provinces in this country where the legal age for alcohol is 18. Everywhere else it's 19. I think that we had an opportunity here where we could have opened this discussion up and actually had a discussion right across the table in regard to smoking as well as alcohol. There have been numerous studies that show that the mortality rate in particularly males after the age of 19, after drinking age, is 10 per cent greater than prior to that, and I think that we are really missing a boat.

There was a study that was done in the University of New Brunswick - I'm sorry, the University of Northern British Columbia - and that study came back, as well as medical health representatives from across the country have all said, that the drinking age should be raised as well. I think we had an opportunity here to review everything and instead what we're doing is we're taking the lowest denominator.

It seems to be the easiest way out, and the easiest way to deal with it is just to make marijuana 19 as well, even though all the experts, all the health critics, all the studies are all saying 25. They're making a compromise at 21, and here we go forward at 19. I think we had an opportunity here. We would have been ground-setting across this country. We would have been the first province to even open up and review the regulations that are currently in place and the irony, I believe, is that the age was the one thing that we - although we are mandated that we do have to start selling it, we are given some opportunity on what age as a province we set it at. I think we could have led across the country as a province if we had the fortitude to do that.

I'll leave it with that. I look forward to hearing what people have to say during Law Amendments Committee.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, there's just a few points that I will identify. I do appreciate the thoughts and views of my colleagues although they differ with the government position.

A number of my colleagues made reference to the federal level and the provincial necessity or compulsion to follow that legislation. I think what we're speaking about in principle is two different positions. When we talk about the federal level, there are alignments, certainly. We know that the Official Opposition and their federal colleagues believe in being tough on crime and mandatory minimum sentences. There's a different opinion among the government of the day, both provincially and federally. I know that fuels a lot of the differing opinions, and I respect that.

One of the points that was mentioned was that we're rushing this. The interesting irony is, when the federal legislation first came out, and Nova Scotia was doing the work behind the scenes on the bill to do the research and to understand it, we were criticized for being late. We have been very methodical about this work. We have been informed by the work of other provinces and territories. We have been informed by the work of U.S. states that have already gone down this road.

Although I respect the opinions that have been expressed, I must say, and I said from the outset, this is not a race. This was never a race. This was about getting it right. This was about informed decision-making. I believe we have landed on that mark.

There was reference to why not an economic development opportunity? The simple answer is, not at the expense of the public health and safety of our youth, quite frankly.

I know there was a lot of attention to the comments that I made around public safety. I'm trying to envision what my colleagues would suggest in the absence of a regulatory framework that gives us some latitude to manage access by youth. We see a framework around alcohol, and quite frankly it works. Yes, young people still have access to alcohol but at a much lower level of exposure. (Interruptions)

I understand why people would be confused with the statement. But what would my colleagues suggest? Do we abdicate our responsibility as elected officials to make the tough decisions that we recognize not everybody will agree with? (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Justice has the floor.

MR. FUREY: I can't imagine, and I've seen it. I've seen in my previous profession, how this has unfolded, how this has played out and there is unfettered access to an illegal, unregulated, unknown product. Children as young as 12 years old, and in the absence of

some regulatory framework that access will continue. I know, I know, Mr. Speaker, in my heart that is not what my colleagues want.

[9:15 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, there is some need for some regulatory framework to try to have some control, as our colleagues in Colorado have suggested, and allow that to evolve and mature, recognizing that there will be change coming forward. I accept that and I do respect, in spite of the fact that we differ, I do respect the opinions that my colleagues have expressed on that point.

I would say as well, specific to the comments around health care costs and we are experiencing, if we want to be reasonable in doing that assessment, that with that unfettered access, we are creating those problems now. I would suggest, with a regulated legal framework, and a strong public education and awareness campaign, similar to what we've seen with smoking cessation, that we will at the very least, Mr. Speaker, be able to manage those health care costs and not leave that unfettered access to drive those costs. I absolutely agree with my colleague when he speaks about health care costs and I respect that, but I think there's another lens that we have to put on that. I say this in the best interest and public safety of our young people.

Mr. Speaker, I know we will continue to have discussions on this subject through Law Amendments Committee, and I know that my colleagues have very, very strong opinions and I do respect that, but respectfully I disagree. We will continue to have dialogue through the Law Amendments Committee, and I know we will have further discussion in third reading.

With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, I move that we close debate on Bill No. 108.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 108. 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 the evening. I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow, Friday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Following the daily routine and Question Period, the House will resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Supply, and with time and energy permitting, we will go to second reading on Bill No. 114 and third reading on Bill No. 76.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to adjourn to rise tomorrow, Friday April 6<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

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

[The House rose at 9:19 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 1142**

By: Hon. Zach Churchill (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas The Store Next Door is a Social Enterprise operated by the Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options; and

Whereas The Store Next Door provides employment and training opportunities for people with disabilities and believes in, and advocates for, full inclusion of the workforce, with individuals being paid at least minimum wage for all manufacturing work completed; and

Whereas The Store Next Door has garnered international attention and much success by making new products, especially furniture, out of hockey sticks;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate YACRO and The Store Next Door on their continued important and inspiring work in our community and encourage everyone to donate their no longer used or broken hockey sticks to The Store Next Door in Yarmouth.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1143**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Finance and Treasury Board)

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

Whereas hockey for youth, both males and females, is a family event in rinks across Nova Scotia each season, and many tournaments are held in memory of great Nova Scotians who have contributed to their communities and schools; and

Whereas the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bates/Merrill Friendship Tournament recently hosted 28 teams from New Glasgow, West Colchester, Truro, Dartmouth, and Cumberland County; and

Whereas the Truro Bearcat Atom Green Team, of which Garrett Casey (4) is a proud member, played hard, showed great sportsmanship, and won the tournament with a 3 to 1 victory over the Cumberland Rams;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature congratulate Garrett and all young Atom players and their coaches on a very successful and exciting tournament.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1144**

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Environment)

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

Whereas the St. Margarets Bay SLAM U16 Division 1 Team recently won the gold medal at the Halifax Metro Basketball Regional Championships; and

Whereas credit goes to head coach Derrick Hearn and assistant coach Mitchell Hearn for promoting a strong and inclusive team spirit in their players; and

Whereas Nate MacLeod, Lashaun Young, Angus Whyte, Connor Aalders, Muhammad Bensalim, Aidan MacDonald, Vedran Lujic, Kaiden MacEachern, Shaun Embrett, and Ben Ruitenberg secured the win for the team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the SLAM U16 players and coaches on their win and wish them all well in the future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1145**

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Environment)

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

Whereas breakfast programs have been found to decrease class disruptions and increase student achievement; and

Whereas the St. Margarets Bay Lions Club recently donated \$500 to provide breakfast for 200 to 250 students at Beechville-Lakeside-Timberlea Junior and Senior Elementary Schools who receive great benefit from the Breakfast Club; and

Whereas with the assistance from many different groups, including local churches and D and Jo's Market, the program continues to provide students with healthy breakfasts, an opportunity to develop leadership skills, and a place to alleviate stress;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking the St. Margarets Bay Lions Club and other local groups for their support and wish the Breakfast Club all the best in their future endeavours.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1146**

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Environment)

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

Whereas a group of women lead by Ellen Ryan of Prospect, Nova Scotia, are taking part in the tradition of making handmade quilts; and

Whereas the group has recently completed a beautiful and intricate quilt they generously donated to the Prospect Peninsula Residents Association to raise money for the community; and

Whereas all money collected from ticket sales on the quilt will fund the PPRA, a community organization formed in March 1983 that holds wonderful free events such as the Canada Day celebrations in Prospect Village;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the quilting group on their recent accomplishment and wish them great success in their future projects.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1147**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Barry MacLeod is president and co-owner of Chill Street Fresh Beer and Cider Market located in the Sobeys supermarket in Elmsdale; and

Whereas Chill Street Fresh Beer and Cider Market is the first store of its kind in Canada, a craft beer and cider experience in a supermarket setting; and

Whereas everything is done onsite so customers are offered a fun and educational experience in the world of craft beers literally feet from their grocery aisle;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Chill Street Brewing on receiving the East Hants & District Chamber of Commerce Marketing Champion of the Year 2017 Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1148**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas after the birth of her second child, Allie Huybers began a search for an effective way to stay fit and work from home; and

Whereas her research led her to an online fitness coaching program called Beachbody that allowed her to accomplish not only her fitness goals, but income goals as well; and

Whereas her business abilities transformed the physical and financial lives of many of her clients by helping them to accomplish their lifestyle goals;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Allie Huybers Fitness on receiving the East Hants & District Chamber of Commerce Home-based Business Excellence of the Year 2017 Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1149**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas ProTx opened its doors in Elmsdale just two years ago offering physiotherapy, massage therapy, and chiropractic services; and

Whereas the combined experience of the professionals at ProTx measures over 50 years in their chosen fields with a mission of "Community First"; and

Whereas the caring and compassionate approach of the ProTx team ensures that their clients are receiving not just the best and most effective treatment, but are also increasing their health literacy to enable them to make more informed decisions about their health care needs;



Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate ProTx on receiving the East Hants & District Chamber of Commerce Healthcare Service of the Year 2017 Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1150**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Elmsdale Landscaping is a family-owned business that began in 1954 with the production of nursery sod; and

Whereas Elmsdale Landscaping has continued its founders' business model of providing not only superior sod but also soil, mulch, compost, and now their famous "big green bag"; and

Whereas Elmsdale Landscaping has grown to employ over 150 people serving corporate and residential clients across the province while still creating product with quality green organics;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Elmsdale Landscaping on receiving the East Hants & District Chamber of Commerce Green Leader of the Year 2017 Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1151**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas McNeill's Shell is a second-generation family owned and operated business that has been serving the communities of East Hants for over 55 years; and

Whereas the automotive industry has gone through many service related changes in five decades; and

Whereas McNeill's Shell keeps up with the changes by continuing to invest in and improve their business by supporting their team members encouraging them to grow to their personal and professional potential by training and mentoring;

Therefore be it resolved that Members of the House of Assembly congratulate McNeill's Shell on receiving the East Hants & District Chamber of Commerce Employer of the Year 2017 Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1152**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas Pam McNeill of Elmsdale became inspired by the memories of her grandfather's abundant fruit and vegetable garden and opened her own café in 2010; and

Whereas her café called Cup of Soul Cafe serves only the freshest of local ingredients whenever possible, including homemade bread, treats, and local meats and produce just like the meals prepared from her grandfather's garden; and

Whereas Pam McNeill's friendly service and outgoing nature and her delicious, nutritious lovingly prepared fare has made the cafe a popular gathering spot and entertainment venue;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Pam McNeill on receiving the East Hants & District Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year 2017 Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1153**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas in 2014, Beth and Brent MacDonnell of Enfield took on ownership of a business called Shooters Bar and Grill; and

Whereas the MacDonnells had a vision for their business to focus on customer service and community by supporting many local hockey, soccer, softball, baseball, rugby, players, parents and teams and to provide a venue for many fund raising and charitable activities; and

Whereas Shooters Bar and Grill has become a famous gathering spot and has donated to over 40 players and teams in the past year alone.

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Shooters Bar and Grill of Enfield on receiving the East Hants & District Chamber of Commerce Community Booster of the Year 2017 Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1154**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Natural Resources)

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

Whereas the owners of the Sweet Shop Chocolate Shop, Nancy and Greg McTiernan are classically trained candy makers and make their candy using the finest ingredients and in small batches from their shop in Elmsdale; and

Whereas the Huffington Post named the Sweet Spot Chocolate Shop one of the best chocolate shops in Canada; and

Whereas the McTiernans have grown their business to be a popular visiting and shopping experience for not just East Hants residents but also for corporate gifts, employee recognition and brand marketing for small businesses;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate The Sweet Spot Chocolate Shop on receiving the East Hants & District Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year 2017 Award.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1156**

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas in 2018 the Musquodoboit Harbour Railway Museum celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; and

Whereas this important railway line connecting communities from Eastern Passage to Middle Musquodoboit is affectionately known as “Blueberry Run” representing an important transportation link for the movement of the people and goods to the communities it served; and

Whereas a group of dedicated local volunteers have been able to preserve the museum in our community so that locals and visitors alike can experience and see one hundred years of railway history;

Therefore be it resolved that Members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Musquodoboit Harbour Railway Museum on its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and its continued service to the entire Eastern Shore.