



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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First Session

TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2018

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 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. Just before we begin the daily routine, the honourable member for Dartmouth North on an introduction.

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: I would like to introduce some very special guests who are seated in the Speaker's Gallery today. Morgan and Krista Watts, if you could please stand. Morgan is from Dartmouth North originally, and in 1996-97, was a player for the Humboldt Broncos. He is now a coach for Atom A and Peewee for the Dartmouth Whalers. Krista and Morgan both have three children who are big hockey players.

We welcome you as people all over the country are mourning the loss of all kinds of members of the Broncos team. We're very grateful to have you here with us, and I ask my colleagues to give you a warm welcome. Thank you. (Standing Ovation)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent of the House to address the House before we begin the daily routine, and that the Leaders of the Official Opposition Parties also be given an opportunity to speak before that, and when we're finished that we observe a moment of silence.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much, and thank you to the members for allowing us to recognize the importance of sport. Time after time in this House, members stand up and recognize constituents who are doing extraordinary things. We all experience the opportunity growing up, how sport has brought us together, bound our communities together. We recognize those Nova Scotians who've gone on to do extraordinary things, representing the humbleness of this province on international stages and last Friday, this country was unified once again by sport with the terrible tragedy that happened to the Humboldt Broncos Junior A hockey team.

As a father of two kids who participate in all kinds of sports, there is no nightmare worse than what happened to those families and to that particular community, when so many of them did not return home, and the ones that have will have their life changed forever.

It has been an amazing period of time, though, to watch this, to watch the human spirit in the way it has resonated with Canadians, the way that people have responded to the communities, the way that individuals have begun to tell their story, and to watch out of that great tragedy such outpouring of love from Canadians - and around the world - such strength from parents and from some of those athletes who, in death, are demonstrating to us what it means to live. Some of those have continued to provide an inspiration for those of us who are trying to understand the complete impact of that tragedy on that province, on that town, and on those families.

On behalf of all Nova Scotians, I wanted to have an opportunity to say today to the families of the players, to the people of Saskatchewan, that the people of Nova Scotia stand with you in solidarity. We're here. As Sheldon Kennedy said, who was a member of a terrible crash 30 years ago, it's not the words that we need from people - it's that we just need to know you're standing with us.

I wanted to make sure on behalf of all Nova Scotians that those families, the people in Saskatchewan, know that we stand with them. We are here in the days ahead because that will be a difficult journey to go forward to continue that healing that will happen, and as was spoken earlier in the House before, it is my hope that the Holy Spirit will find his way into the hearts of those who are left to deal with the challenges those families will face, and give them the strength to build from today to move forward. Thank you.

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

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Premier for his kind and compassionate and heartfelt words. This definitely hit our home pretty hard this weekend.

In 1984, my brother was involved in an accident where he lost three of his best friends and a beautiful mother, coming home from New Brunswick from a hockey accident. We have a tournament every year in honour of those beautiful lives that we'll never forget.

Hockey is part of our national fabric, and I think we all have a special place in our hearts for hockey players. Every one of us has gone to the local rink to watch a son or daughter, niece or nephew, grandson or granddaughter play hockey. Just last weekend, I spent several hours myself here in HRM watching my son, Jack, and his team play. Every one of us has sat in front of the television on Saturday night to cheer on our NHL heroes, and every one of us is heartsick about the 15 people, 10 of them hockey players, who lost their lives in a tragic accident on Friday.

On Friday, the Humboldt Broncos were doing a quintessentially Canadian thing - they were taking the bus to a playoff game. Their tragic loss has triggered equally a quintessentially Canadian response. The overwhelming outpouring of emotion and assistance has been so touching, and I hope it gives the surviving players, their parents, and everyone in the Broncos organization some comfort during this terrible time.

[1:15 p.m.]

Hockey turns strangers into friends and turns teammates into family members; hockey gives us thrills and chills; and hockey is our heart. On behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party, I extend our most sincere condolences to all of those touched by this tragedy. Blessings to them all.

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

MR. GARY BURRILL: In the face of disaster of the sort that has come to the community of Humboldt, people naturally turn to the language of their tradition. In this moment, I recall the place in the Judeo-Christian scriptures where word of terrible loss is brought to the biblical figure Nehemiah, who registered its magnitude by saying simply: When I heard these words, I sat down and wept.

This weeping takes many forms: thoughts, prayers, donations, and the wearing and displaying of signs of support and sorrow. May a nation's weeping yield some small corner of strength and blessing to all who stand in the valley of this shadow.

MR. SPEAKER: I now ask that all members and members of our galleries please rise as we observe a moment of silence in remembrance of those directly affected by the events of this past Friday in Humboldt, Saskatchewan.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

We'll now begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I beg leave to table a petition whose operative clause says: "We, the undersigned are opposed to the Department of Natural Resources Harvest Plan for SH068112- A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H and want our government to terminate the plan for this forest to be harvested."

There are 111 signatures on this, and I have affixed my signature.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Law Amendments, I'm directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bills:

Bill No. 79 - Property Valuation Services Corporation Act.

Bill No. 82 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

Bill No. 84 - Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

Bill No. 87 - Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act.

Bill No. 104 - Research Nova Scotia Corporation Act.

Bill No. 106 - Insurance Act.

Bill No. 108 - Cannabis Control Act.

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

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

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: When I finish my resolution, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to have a moment of silence as well.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 1201

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

Whereas more than a century ago, an important chapter in our national heritage took place with the opening of the Battle of Vimy Ridge on April 9, 1917; and

Whereas soldiers from across Canada fought together side by side for three days to take the fortified ridge, which had been thought to be an impossible task, marking a moment that many say was the birth of our nation; and

Whereas our province's very own 25th and 85th Battalions are remembered for helping to bring the battle to an end and demonstrating Canada's courage and tenacity in the face of insurmountable odds;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly remember and reflect on the heroic sacrifices made by all those who served at Vimy and the more than 10,000 casualties suffered as we continue to honour them and all brave men and women who serve in the Canadian Armed Forces today.

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.

I'd ask for all members to please rise, as well as members of the gallery, as we observe a moment of silence in remembrance of those who laid down their lives at Vimy Ridge.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

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

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, permission to make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. KOUSOULIS: Today here in our east gallery are some of our safety leaders who have signed the Nova Scotia Health and Safety Leadership Charter, pledging to continue building a culture of health and safety throughout Nova Scotia.

I'd like them to stand and remain standing as they are introduced: Peter McLellan, partner at Stewart McKelvey and coordinator of the Nova Scotia Health and Safety Leadership Charter Steering Committee; Susan Hayes, CEO of the Annapolis County Housing and member of the steering committee; Karen Hutt, president and CEO of Nova Scotia Power and member of the steering committee; Stephen Sayle, CEO of Sayle Group and member of the steering committee; Carl Yates, CEO of Halifax Water and member of the steering committee; John Young, area manager of PCL Construction and member of the steering committee; and Stuart MacLean, CEO of the Workers' Compensation Board.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the House give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1202

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

Whereas the Nova Scotia Health and Safety Leadership Charter represents a commitment from leaders across Nova Scotia to the continuous growth of a positive workplace safety culture; and

Whereas the Nova Scotia Health and Safety Leadership Charter is founded on the principle that the effective management of health, safety, and wellness is essential to the operation of successful businesses and the long-term success of our province; and

Whereas Premier McNeil and I have signed this charter with the hope that our province will continue the momentum in making workplace health and safety a priority each and every day in Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House applaud the efforts of the safety leaders who have signed the Nova Scotia Health and Safety Leadership Charter, therefore committing to continue building a culture of health and safety throughout 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.

I'd just like to remind the honourable minister not to use the proper name of members of the House.

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 1203

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

Whereas the development of sport fishing in Nova Scotia as one of our province's most popular outdoor activities has benefited from the efforts of the Hants West Wildlife Association, which promotes awareness and participation in the sport through its work in the community; and

Whereas since 2009, the association has been delivering the Learn 2 Fish Program in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, with over 15 volunteers teaching the basics of sport fishing for hundreds of youth from every local elementary school, and inspiring youth to become lifelong anglers; and

Whereas Hants West Wildlife Association enthusiastically approaches any opportunity to promote sport fishing, and has led ice fishing sessions with youth, fishing lessons with women, and the organizer of Give'r A Try fishing event during the free fishing weekend;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in thanking the Hants West Wildlife Association and their members for their contribution to volunteer time and their dedication to introducing Nova Scotians to the excitement of sport fishing, and in the process make an important economic contribution to our rural economy.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Immigration.

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, before I make my statement I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. DIAB: With us in the east gallery we have Mr. Gonzalo Peralta, Executive Director of Languages Canada, who just flew down this morning from Ottawa. He's accompanied today by Ms. Sheila Nunn, President and CEO of East Coast Language College, Mr. Srini Pillay, Managing Director of Apex Language and Career College, and Mr. David Packer, Director of ESL Programs at Dalhousie.

I was pleased to meet with them this morning at the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration to discuss the great collaboration that we have going on in the Province of Nova Scotia. So, I ask all members to please give them the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Immigration.

RESOLUTION NO. 1204

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

Whereas Languages Canada is a Canadian organization representing Canada's two official languages, English and French, with three public and seven private Nova Scotia Chapter members; and

Whereas in 2016, Languages Canada had 2,902 students attending programs in Nova Scotia, with 1,255 of those students continuing in post-secondary pathways destined for further education in Canada; and

Whereas 60 per cent of all students attending any program through Language Canada, stay with a Nova Scotia family for an average of approximately 15.6 weeks each, the longest average stay of any province in Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in welcoming Mr. Gonzalo Peralta, and congratulate Languages Canada and all Nova Scotia Chapter members for their hard work in increasing the diversity of student population in Nova Scotia.

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 the Public Service Commission.

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, before I do my notice, may I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. INCE: In the east gallery, which is the gallery opposite me, we have seven young workers who have been hired by the Public Service Commission. I am going to read your names and I'll ask you to stand as I read your names please. Isaiah Olateru, Karlie

Kiverago, Claire Heisler, Amelia Jarvis, Bradley Cooper, Evan MacGillivray, and Corey Aalders.

I would ask that the House please join me in welcoming these young workers to the House please. (Applause)

[1:30 p.m.]

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1205

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

Whereas the Public Service Commission is creating opportunities for younger workers, to help them gain necessary work experience so they can compete for good jobs anywhere, including the Public Service; and

Whereas we began posting apprentice, co-op, internship, and summer student positions around the province in January, with 185 posted to date and more to be posted throughout the Spring; and

Whereas in the last 12 months, almost 40 per cent of all those hired or rehired into the Public Service have been 35 years of age or younger;

Therefore be it resolved that I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our colleagues who are working hard to market, recruit, hire, train, and mentor our younger workers into the Public Service, and I would also like to thank those younger workers who have chosen our Public Service as a place to begin their careers.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 1206

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

Whereas volunteers across Nova Scotia are active in a wide variety of sectors and are critical in establishing and maintaining support systems for the benefit of their fellow Nova Scotians; and

Whereas yesterday the 44th Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards recognized 80 of Nova Scotia's amazing volunteers, with each of them having an important impact on their fellow Nova Scotians and their communities; and

Whereas during National Volunteer Week, from April 15th to April 21st, many Nova Scotian and Canadian communities will host local volunteer celebrations through luncheons, receptions, and awards to acknowledge and recognize the contribution of volunteers to strong, healthy, and compassionate communities;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing the contributions of volunteers across our province who selflessly dedicate their time, knowledge, skills, and resources to the well-being of Nova Scotians and thank them for helping to make our province a place we all can be proud to call home.

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. 1207

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

Whereas Devonian Coast Wineries' Jost Vineyards, located on the Malagash Peninsula, received a silver medal at the 2017 National Wine Awards in Canada for their

Tidal Bay wine and a gold medal for the Devonian Coast Maple Wine, which is also a Quality Certified dessert wine by Fruit Wines of Canada; and

Whereas Devonian Coast's Mercator Vineyards, located in the Annapolis Valley, overlooking the historic dykelands near Grand Pré, received a bronze medal in the 2017 Decanter World Wine Awards for its Tidal Bay, a bronze medal in 2017 for the All Canadian Wine Championships for its Sauvage Sur Lie white wine, and a bronze medal in the 2017 Ultimate Wine Challenge for its EnCave Cinq Ans red wine; and

Whereas Mercator Vineyards has opened a new tasting room following a \$1 million restoration at an over-200-year-old estate that will create at least five new jobs, following a project that preserved the key architectural elements of the property, and will take visitors to a world of premium estate-select cellared wines that can rival the best the world has to offer;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Devonian Coast Wineries on the awards received by their vineyards and wish them continued success as they grow and enhance the reputation of Nova Scotia wines while creating jobs in rural communities.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. MOMBOURQUETTE: I am pleased to introduce five individuals who are 911 call takers with our public safety answering points or dispatch centres. We have four centres located across the province.

Joining us today in the east gallery is Heather Danch with the Halifax Regional Municipality. I'd ask you to please stand when your name is called.

As well, we have Donalda MacLean and Renée Labranche from the RCMP, and Ruth Nickerson and David Cunningham with Bell East Communications.

As well, they are joined by EMO staff. We have Susan Mader-Zinck with Communications EMO, and we also have Jane Gilson with EMO. I would ask all members of the House to please welcome them here today. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

RESOLUTION NO. 1208

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

Whereas April 8th to April 14th is National Telecommunicators Week, which provides an opportunity to recognize those who work in the public safety community; and

Whereas 911 call takers throughout Nova Scotia work in conjunction with their dispatch partners to provide a critical link between people experiencing an emergency and the first responders who are there to help; and

Whereas these dedicated and compassionate Nova Scotians assist more than 220,000 callers annually and are a key part of our 911 system;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the Legislature thank 911 call takers who take on this challenging and important role each and every day of the year, responding to Nova Scotians who are experiencing an emergency.

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 Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, permission to make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. KOUSOULIS: In the east gallery today, I would like to introduce some guests: Ossama Nasrallah, president of Saint Mary's University Student Association; Dr. Malcom Butler, Vice-President, Academic and Research at Saint Mary's University; and Tristan Bray, Executive Director at Students Nova Scotia, as well as his student association executive colleagues. Please offer them the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1209

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

Whereas Saint Mary's University's Student Union President Ossama Nasrallah was recently nominated for the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations' Future Prime Minister award; and

Whereas the award is presented to an individual who demonstrates the drive, determination, and ability of higher office holders; and

Whereas Ossama Nasrallah is an excellent student leader and role model who works tirelessly to ensure the concerns and needs of his fellow students on campus are brought to the forefront;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Ossama Nasrallah for his leadership and dedication to Saint Mary's University, and for being nominated for the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations' Future Prime Minister award.

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. 1210

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

Whereas sport fishing is one of the most popular outdoor activities in Nova Scotia, and sustainable development depends upon the dedication of volunteers like John Gibbons who contribute to special projects aimed at the long-term protection of this valued resource; and

Whereas at the recent annual convention of the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters, John Gibbons received a 2018 Sportfish Conservation Award, which recognized that over the past two years he has been a tireless volunteer through his involvement in the River Denys sea trout study; and

Whereas John is an exceptionally talented angler who used these skills to assist staff in the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture in the tagging phase of the River Denys project, and has spent hours volunteering before he starts his full day of employment as a locomotive engineer at the Cape Breton & Central Nova Scotia Railway;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in thanking John Gibbons for his tireless dedication to protecting and promoting the best interest and long-term sustainability of sport fishing in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

RESOLUTION NO. 1211

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

Whereas the Youth Project is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to providing support and services to youth around issues of sexual orientation and gender identity; and

Whereas this past Saturday, April 7th, the Youth Project held its eighth unity conference for members of gender/sexuality alliances; and

Whereas the conference focused on making safer spaces for youth of all orientations and identities by providing workshops, guest speakers, and skill builders for junior high and high school students;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House acknowledge the commitment and dedication of the Youth Project to make Nova Scotia a safer, healthier, and happier place for youth of all orientations and identities.

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 Natural Resources.

RESOLUTION NO. 1212

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

Whereas National Wildlife Week, April 8th to April 14th, is celebrated nationally and is an opportunity to reflect on the importance of wildlife and biodiversity to all Nova Scotians; and

Whereas this year the Canadian Wildlife Federation is asking Canadians to share their connections with wildlife online, using the hashtag #ThankYouWildlife, to celebrate how we are all connected with wildlife; and

Whereas sharing in that connection be it a brief experience, a favourite animal, or a life-altering moment demonstrates our deep connection with Canada's wildlife;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House, and all Nova Scotians, recognize the importance of wildlife and our province's unique biodiversity, and the need for shared stewardship of our natural resources.

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 on an introduction.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce in the east gallery a group of young ladies, very special young ladies - who are members of the Trefoil Guild-Girl Guides of Canada.

I would ask them to stand as I call their names: Josie Seaward, Shirley Knowles, Mona Sparks, Jill Hogg, Colleen Estabrooks, and Pat Rowlen. These ladies range in age from 70 to 92 years old and, over the years, they have contributed substantially to the young ladies of the Girl Guide movement in Nova Scotia.

I want to personally thank them and ask the Legislature to give them a warm round of applause for all the work they have done. (Standing Ovation)

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

MR. HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to call the members' attention to the east gallery, to the presence of my lovely wife, my rock of 38 years, Mary Lynne MacKay, who has joined us today. I would ask you to give her a warm greeting to the House. (Applause)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**GOODWILL GESTURES IN HONOUR OF HUMBOLDT BRONCOS
- RECOGNIZE**

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the generosity and compassion of the Dartmouth Barracudas, a Midget hockey recreational team in the Dartmouth Whalers Minor Hockey Association.

This weekend, the team was enjoying an end-of-season meal at the Mic Mac Bar and Grill when a Good Samaritan, who wishes to remain anonymous, paid the team's bill in honour of the Humboldt Broncos. The team then decided to donate the money they had planned on spending on the meal to the families affected in Saskatchewan.

I ask all members of this House to recognize the kindness and generosity of these gestures and, in the words of Dartmouth East resident Kenzi Donnelly, "There is still so much goodwill in the world."

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

[1:45 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

ATL. LIBRARY ASSOC.: ADEQUATE FUNDING - REQUIRED

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the efforts of the Atlantic Provinces Library Association to bring to our attention the importance of public libraries across Nova Scotia.

I was lucky last week to listen to an exchange between NDP federal Leader Jagmeet Singh and the youth services librarian at the Halifax North Memorial Library, Sarah Ziolkowska. I asked Sarah for permission to share some of what I heard. She recalled how, as a child living in poverty, the library was her lifeline, how she counted on the bookmobile, and how when she could actually get to a library every couple of weeks, she would bring a garbage bag and fill it with books.

I am so glad and grateful that youth in my community are served by such an empathic and passionate librarian and I add my voice to amplify the calls of the Atlantic Provinces Library Association for adequate funding so that all Nova Scotians can grasp that lifeline.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

LANGILLE, ABBIE: VOLLEYBALL ATHLETE - BEST WISHES

HON. KAREN CASEY: I rise today to recognize an inspiring young lady who has been invited to play in an overseas tournament with Canada's deaf volleyball team. Abbie Langille was born deaf but received cochlear implants at 13 months and had surgery again at age eight.

Abbie has been playing volleyball since she was a child. She currently plays for the Truro Cougars Volleyball Club. Her passion for and dedication to the sport has created the opportunity to travel and play in the tournament in France on May 15th. At the tournament, Abbie will have a chance to compete in front of new coaches and gain valuable experience.

Depending on her performance, Abbie may have the opportunity to participate in other international tournaments leading up to the Deaflympics in 2021. Abbie is an inspiration to all of us and shows us that despite barriers, anything is achievable with hard work and dedication.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that members of this House of Assembly join me in wishing Abbie the best of luck in the tournament and in her future endeavours.

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

N.T.L. ORGAN DONATION MO. - CONSIDER DONATING

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Today I rise to recognize national organ donation month. Here in Nova Scotia, donor week is April 23rd to 28th.

In 2017, there were 36 transplant recipients in Nova Scotia. However, over 1,600 people are added to the organ transplant waiting list every year in Canada alone. Up to eight lives can be saved by a single donor, as we saw in Humboldt this past weekend.

Everyone here is a potential donor. Even if organ donation is impossible, tissue donation is for nearly everyone, the oldest to date being 104. In public opinion polls, more than 90 per cent of Canadians are in support of organ donation and tissue donation, but only 20 per cent have registered. More than 250 Canadians die while waiting each year.

During national organ donation month, I hope all Nova Scotians think about this very important issue and consider donating the next time they fill out their MSI information cards.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

BERWICK CURLING CLUB: RELOCATION - BEST WISHES

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the relocation of the Berwick Curling Club from their long-standing headquarters at the Orchard Street rink to their new home at the expanded facilities at the Kings Mutual Century Centre.

With a membership exceeding over 200 and over 50 years of history, members of the Berwick Curling Club have formed countless bonds and created lasting memories on the surface of the Orchard Street rink. The club recently hosted a last rock celebration to honour their history at the arena that has provided decades of growth, friendship, and community engagement.

As the MLA for Kings West, I would like to pay tribute to the Berwick Curling Club and their decades of play on the Orchard Street rink in addition to wishing the membership all the best as they continue their traditions and create future memories at the Apple Dome.

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

BLINKHORN, WAYNE: VOLUNTEER OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, the Town of Shelburne has recognized Wayne Blinkhorn as its Volunteer of the Year.

Wayne is a long-standing member of the committee that organizes the annual Shelburne Whirligig Festival held each year on the town's historic waterfront. This year will mark the 18th year of the festival. He also volunteers at the Sandy Point Community Hall and the Osprey Arts Centre, and with the local Meals on Wheels program. Wayne's latest endeavour is participating in the restoration of the mill building on the corner of Dock Street and George Street.

I would like to offer my congratulations to Wayne on receiving this honour and applaud his numerous volunteer efforts in his community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**SUTHERLAND, TARA:
INDUCTEE, CDN. ATHLETIC THERAPISTS ASSOC. HALL OF FAME**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, Tara Sutherland has been the head Athletic Therapist at St. Francis Xavier University since 1996, and this June she will be inducted into the Canadian Athletic Therapist Association Hall of Fame.

Over the course of her career, Tara has been responsible for the health and well-being of hundreds of varsity and club sport athletes. She oversees the student therapists and teaches three courses in the Human Kinetics Department. She was the assistant coach of the St. F.X. Women's Rugby Team from 1998 to 2011, and worked with the National Women's Hockey Team when they won a gold medal at the World Championship in 1992.

She has become an expert in the field of concussions and in partnership with a local physician, established a concussion clinic which treats community members and athletes, and helps them return to their life's activity after suffering a concussion.

Mr. Speaker, Tara served the education community and the Board of Directors for the Canadian Athletic Therapist Association from 1994 to 2001, including as president from 1999 to 2000.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Tara on her upcoming induction. It is an honour very well-deserved.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

WHITE, RITA: 90th BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, all over Nova Scotia there are individuals who have watched small rural villages grow into sprawling, bustling, vibrant communities. Rita White of Enfield is a woman who I joined on Saturday to celebrate her 90th birthday, which was on April 4th.

Imagine life in Enfield since 1928, the year of her birth. At four, she could've hopped on a train at the prominent Enfield Station, and travelled to Halifax for 25 cents. She would've attended a one-room school house, witnessed vehicles navigating the Shubenacadie canal system to Halifax. She would've experienced the loss of community members during war time in the 1940s, and the creation of the Trans Canada Highway in the 1950s, and no less, the construction of the airport just kilometres away from the village in the 1960s.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. White also experienced - and I'm choking on this one - the raising of 18 children in Enfield, many of whom still reside in the area and who were on hand to celebrate their beloved mother's 90th birthday.

I would ask that all members of this House join me in passing along our belated best wishes to Rita White for a celebration of 90 years. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

HIGHLAND FLING COMM.: COM. FUNDRAISING - THANKS

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the Highland Fling Committee at the Cumberland Health Care Auxiliary Team. Their team is organizing their 36th annual event. This year, they are hoping to raise \$35,000 for two respirators in the ICU.

The Highland Fling Committee and its events are a major part of the fundraising drive and something members of the community can enjoy. Each year, the committee has raised money to help purchase new equipment for the local hospital. Having new equipment, we know, helps save lives. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank their team for their hard work, and helping to make things happen.

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

SANDY COVE WOMEN'S MARCH: INITIATIVE - CONGRATS.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, for the second year the people of Sandy Cove have organized a women's march to coincide with the international women's marches. This march was one of the smallest of the marches, but the number of marchers doubled to 32. The organizers preferred to show their solidarity to the movement, advocating social change by marching in their own community, instead of travelling to Halifax to a larger event.

Their small march was an example of how rural communities can support this movement in their own unique way. Last year, the march was featured as one of the marches in the New York Times, and the video of the march went viral. This January, the march again received a lot of attention including in the monologues of Stephen Colbert and Seth Myers.

Congratulations to the organizers for taking the initiative to organize their own march, not only have they shown their neighbours the importance of taking a stand, but they have been an example for our rural communities across North America.

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

WILLIAMS, EVANGELINE: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

MR. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, on April 2nd of this year the community of Upper Hammonds Plains lost Evangeline Williams, a woman known for her infectious smile and generous, loving spirit.

Evangeline was a faithful and dedicated provincial government employee with over 30 years of public service. Her personal highlight of her career was when she was tasked,

alongside with the present Executive Director Wayne Hamilton, to develop a strategic plan for the new Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs in 2003, because of her innate abilities, and her understanding of government and the Black community.

Mr. Speaker, to know Vangie was to love her, and she was a lady of grace and style who will be missed by all those who knew her as well as her family members.

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

RYAN, URSULA: MENTORING YOUNG MUSICIANS - THANKS

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a great teacher and mentor to the music community in Guysborough, Ms. Ursula Ryan. Ursula, an exceptionally gifted musician, chose to pursue a teaching career as a music teacher to share her talents with our children.

Ursula has worked constantly both in and out of the classroom to help our youth explore the wonderful world of musical performance, which has enriched the lives of hundreds of our young people. Ursula's students have consistently performed at the top levels and regional and national competitions over the past 30 years.

Thank you to Mrs. Ryan for her dedication to our youth, and sharing her wonderful talent with our young people.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

FATHER: 100th BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, today I want to send a special birthday wish to my father and to let him know how much he has brought meaning, love, and support to my life.

As the eldest in a family of six, I feel a special, everlasting bond with my dad. I've seen how much he has endured in his life and I've been inspired by his hard work and perseverance. He has not only helped me and the family, but has been a generous supporter of so many causes.

Looking back, I know how difficult the early years must have been. As an immigrant to Nova Scotia 60-plus years ago, I know how he struggled as he left his homeland of Lebanon in his early 20s to come to a new world where he worked day and night to build a future, never giving up in the face of adversity.

I'm so proud of him, he is truly a role model. Nova Scotia and Canada are incredibly lucky to count him amongst their own. Here's to making it to 100, Happy Birthday, Dad.

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

PALLIATIVE CARE: LACK OF FUNDING - UNJUST

MS. ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the condition of palliative care in Cape Breton-Richmond.

Danny Latimer has been battling cancer for several years. He has overcome surgeries and treatments in his battle with cancer. Danny and his wife Linda have been very vocal about his journey and have given me permission to speak on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, Danny's story has been shared in local and regional media, the story of how he was forced to remain in an emergency room bed for two days in the absence of palliative care beds and service at the Strait Richmond Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, last night I spoke with Danny's wife, Linda, who shared with me that she has been forced against both her and Danny's wishes, and at the end stages of Danny's life, to take Danny home. Danny's story is indicative of the lack of funding for palliative care across this province, and in particular, at the Strait Richmond Hospital.

Danny's story should never happen to any Nova Scotian. I take this opportunity to send Danny, Linda, their family, and staff at the Strait Richmond Hospital my heartfelt support and my commitment to end the injustices occurring in palliative care in Cape Breton-Richmond.

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

JONES, BRIAN: GREY CUP IN FALL RIVER - THANKS

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, Grand Lake resident Brian Jones thrilled old and young, including myself, by bringing the 150-year-old Grey Cup to Fall River for a celebration.

The Toronto Argonauts wide receiver and Dragons Football alum had the Grey Cup for 48 hours. Brian spent the afternoon taking pictures of himself and fans and the Cup. Fans were thrilled to see his football display, including the helmets that he wore at Dragons Minor football, Lockview High, Acadia, and the Argonauts.

Many aspiring young football players were inspired by meeting Brian and getting up close with the Grey Cup. Thank you, Brian, for sharing your win with the community, and being an inspiration to our youth athletes. Best of luck next season.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

NEWCOMBE, GENEVE: VOLUNTEER OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, Geneve Newcombe is a very well-deserved Volunteer of the Year for Port Williams. Volunteering is a lifelong commitment for Geneve. She has spent countless hours volunteering to ensure that female hockey is a priority at the local high school and provincial level. Her dedication has enabled many girls in her community to participate in all levels of hockey.

Geneve is also involved with agricultural education for students and believes that young people need to know where food comes from, and the value of those who produce it. Geneve is also committed to minor soccer, 4-H, Quilts for Hearts for Africa and her church community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this House to join me in acknowledging Geneve Newcombe, Volunteer of the Year for Port Williams.

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

[2:00 p.m.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

PREM. - LEGAL CANNABIS: PUBLIC SPACES - PROHIBIT

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

Yesterday, at Law Amendments, we heard from people across Nova Scotia raising warnings about the ill-conceived and potentially disastrous rollout of legalized cannabis. We heard growing concerns about the province's plan to allow the consumption of cannabis in public spaces.

John Traves, the director of legal, insurance and risk management services for the Halifax Regional Municipality, has suggested that cannabis consumption ought to be treated like alcohol where open consumption in outdoor public spaces is prohibited. Instead, this government has said as long as you're not on a sports field, light it up.

Will the Premier explain why his government has decided to allow such liberal consumption of cannabis?

THE PREMIER: Indeed, the minister has been working and consulting with Nova Scotians across the issue of implementing a product that's being legalized by the national government. Our role is to actually ensure that it's available in our province. We're doing it in what we believe is the safest possible way to ensure that it's safe for Nova Scotia families.

If she looks at the additions that we made around the Smoke-Free Places Act, it's not as simple as she would like to make it out to be, that you are able to smoke anywhere in this province. There are restrictions around where you can consume this product and we fully expect, Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians to follow the law.

MS. MACFARLANE: This just highlights the province's growing confusion over whether they want to treat cannabis like tobacco or treat it like alcohol. There's lots of confusion, Mr. Speaker.

You have to purchase it like alcohol, but you consume it like tobacco. Like tobacco, it can't be advertised, but like alcohol you can produce it in your own home. It ignores advice not to co-locate, and allows Nova Scotians to drink in a bar, step out, smoke a joint, and then walk right back into the bar. On golf courses even, you can drink a beer, smoke a joint and drive a golf cart.

Will the Premier explain why his cannabis policy stands to confuse everyone while actually protecting no one?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. The fact of the matter is this piece of legislation has been brought by MADD Canada, that says it is the most progressive legislation in the country. They stood with us to tell us that we are protecting Nova Scotians when it comes to the issue of this product.

This product will be made legal, it will be made available to Canadians, and to Nova Scotians. We're ensuring, Mr. Speaker, that this product is made available in the safest possible way in this province, and we're continuing to look to work with our partners to ensure that that is the case.

MS. MACFARLANE: Yesterday, at Law Amendments, a government member defended public consumption by stating that low-income Nova Scotians who will not be allowed to smoke in their apartments will need to go to the park.

I guess low-income Nova Scotians don't need better wages. I guess low-income Nova Scotians don't need reliable public transportation, or a doctor. I guess low-income Nova Scotians don't need better jobs, and low-income Nova Scotians don't need five days of pay when they're assaulted in their own home. Low-income Nova Scotians just need a better place to get high, Mr. Speaker.

So, my question is to the Premier: Is this really the best defense the government can offer for its poorly planned cannabis consumption?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the honourable member that the unemployment rate has actually gone down in this province. (Interruptions) I want to remind the honourable member that young Nova Scotians . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: . . . young Nova Scotians see a future in this province, Mr. Speaker, we bucked the trend when it came to out-migration. We have now an in-migration of young people in our province because of the very thing the honourable member is referring to, they see a good-paying job on the horizon in Nova Scotia and they're lining up to take them. Mr. Speaker, we've seen 100 physicians coming into our province and we're very happy to work with Doctors Nova Scotia to continue to provide opportunities. (Interruptions)

The fact of the matter is, unlike the honourable member, MADD Canada has stood with us and said this government is actually getting it right when it comes to the legalization of marijuana. Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I'm going to stand with MADD Canada.

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

PREM. - CNSOPB: BP APPL. - CHEERLEADER

MR. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, last week we learned that BP is spending around a \$0.25 million a day transporting its drill rig to Nova Scotia, despite not yet having final drilling approval from the Canada - Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board.

We also learned that officials of the regulatory board have been canvassing the South Shore municipal councils in support of BP's application, prompting the Honourable Wilfred Moore to describe the board as a petroleum industry cheerleader - and I'll table a copy of his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, since the Gulf Coast disaster, many people don't trust BP. With the petroleum board acting more like a promoter/lobbyist than a regulator, how can the Premier expect people to trust them, either?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, one of the things - the east coast of Canada, the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board has been recognized at the national level and the international level in ensuring that they protect the environment.

The reality of it is, there has to be a balance. We're going to ensure that if there is activity off our coast, creating good economic jobs, driving the economy of our province, it will be done in a way to protect the environment. We believe both of those can happen, but the fact of the matter is that the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board has the responsibility to ensure the activity off our coast is done in an environmentally safe way, and we will hold them to it.

MR. BURRILL: The people of our province have parallel concerns about the quality of regulation in the forest industry. When veteran forester Danny George first blew the whistle on old-growth forest being improperly clear-cut recently in Guysborough County, the Minister of Natural Resources assured us that there's a system to prevent this. DNR has since admitted that Mr. George may in fact be right, which raises the question of why and how the department did not and apparently does not know what's being cut on its own Crown land.

Does the Premier grasp that the public of the province has serious misgivings about the competence of the regulatory work being conducted in the Department of Natural Resources?

THE PREMIER: I certainly heard Nova Scotians' concerns about the activity in the forest sector in our province. I have also heard from others who believe we can continue to do further cutting.

With those two opposing views, Mr. Speaker, I have gone out and gotten a very independent voice outside of our government, Dr. Lahey, who is providing a report about the future of how we not only ensure that the forest environment is there for all of us to enjoy but at the same time we have a forest industry in a sustainable way. I look forward to that report coming back.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, this diminishing public confidence extends to environmental regulation as a whole. In 2008, this House settled the tire-burning question, unanimously passing a bill against it. When in power and approached by Lafarge, the present government backtracked on that position. When community members went to court to say that the Minister of Environment should consider the evidence of a third-party expert before approving tire burning, the minister took the position that this was not required.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier understand from the citizen court challenges to the CNSOPB, the DNR, and the Department of Environment that his government needs to do a much better job of upholding public confidence on environmental questions?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Environment is continuing to work as a regulator in our province and continuing to ensure that we strike the right balance, that the interests of Nova Scotians are heard when it comes to how we continue to do activity which provides economic growth and opportunity, while at the same time

sustaining our province and keeping it there for future generations. As the regulator, they strike that balance.

One of the challenges for the Department of Environment, no matter what decision they make, is that there will be those dissenting voices. The beauty in this province is that there are other mechanisms, if they don't agree with the decisions of the Department of Environment, to go down and appeal those decisions.

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

PREM. - LEGAL CANNABIS: MUNICIPAL COST - ASSIST

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is for the Premier. During his appearance before the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, Mr. Traves estimated that legalized cannabis will cost HRM millions of dollars. HRM has actually had no discussion with the province about what, if any, funding will be made available to offset the cost of legalized cannabis. These increased costs will force some municipalities to increase taxes or actually go into the red.

Will the Premier say once and for all when his government is going to assist municipalities with the cost of legalized cannabis, and when he is going to let them in on his plan?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, there has been consultation going on across the province, including here in HRM. The honourable member should know that. The person before Law Amendments Committee should have referenced that.

The reality of it is, there are costs associated with the legalization of this product. We know that there will be more equipment that will be required in police officers' vehicles across the province. There's advertising that we're looking for co-operation from them. We will continue to build on that.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, we're going to have a difference of opinion when it comes to whether or not this requires more officers. We will continue to make our case. We look forward to working with our partners as this product becomes legal.

MS. MACFARLANE: In addition, concerns were raised about the government's plans to allow municipalities to add additional restrictions on the public consumption of cannabis; this issue is actually twofold. First, there is the possibility that - as happened with cigarettes - the rules will vary widely from one municipality to the next. The second is that the local bylaws do not carry the same weight as provincial laws and are probably unlikely to be enforced with the same rigor.

We've heard repeatedly that this government is working with its partners on this issue, but from what those partners are saying and from what we heard in Law Amendments Committee, it doesn't seem that way. How does the Premier plan to address the issues that were raised yesterday regarding the enforceability of bylaws on cannabis?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the honourable member for the question. To go back, we've been engaging municipalities across the province. We continue to work as this product becomes legalized. When it comes to policing, there are some that have their own police forces, and there are others that use the federal force. We continue to work with our partners. We have a very different view when it comes, in some cases, to the cost of the implementation on an ongoing basis. We're prepared, though, to sit down and have that conversation with our municipalities.

One of the things we heard loud and clear from municipalities and law enforcement agencies is they wanted the ability inside certain parts of this province to actually make rules that pertain to them, like we do in Truro when it comes to smoking. There's no smoking on one of the main streets of Truro, quite frankly; that was put in by the Municipality of the Town of Truro. In this law, we've given that same provision when it comes to the purpose of using cannabis.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

EECD - INCLUSIVE EDUC.: IMPROVEMENTS - REASSURE

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. This weekend a radio call-in program asked Nova Scotians to comment on how inclusive education was working for their family. Dr. Strang, our province's Chief Public Health Officer, told the host about his 12-year old son who is significantly impacted by autism, is non-verbal, and has an intellectual disability. Dr. Strang said: There is no place for him in the current school system in Nova Scotia. I'll table that.

Mr. Speaker, how is the government's plan going to ensure that children like Dr. Strang's are included in our public education system?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: While there are, albeit, a small number of these cases, one case like this is far too much in our education system. This is exactly why we struck the Commission on Inclusive Education. It's exactly why we'll be moving forward with their recommendations to improve our system of education to be more inclusive, and that will entail more behavioural supports, special needs supports, mental health supports.

It will mean better training and professional development for our educators, two-thirds of whom have been told they have not been properly trained to deal with the diverse needs in our classroom. It will also mean tailoring our education system to meet the needs

of each of these children, instead of trying to fit them into the boxes of our current education system.

MS. CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, this is a child who can't be in a classroom. Dr. Strang's experience is that there is no capacity or flexibility in our education system to support families. The Commission on Inclusive Education has recommended increases in funding, specialists, and support over five years, to build the capacity of the system to fully meet the needs of all students.

Unfortunately, the minister has already announced his intention to cherry-pick from the recommendations, has been silent on the Phase I call for an autism strategy, and has also indicated that his government will not follow through on the recommendation to establish a Nova Scotia Institute for Inclusive Education, which could independently monitor these recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, given the government's lack of commitment to full implementation, what reassurances can the minister provide to families like the Strangs that things are actually going to improve?

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, in fact, we have indicated that we are pursuing all the objectives of the Commission on Inclusive Education's report. That means changing our system so that students like the one the member is speaking of actually will have available to them intensive, individual supports when that is appropriate, or smaller group learning opportunities, which is important for a number of our students.

It also means that we've budgeted for these supports to be in place for September. We've budgeted \$15 million, which is in line with the recommendations of the commission, to make sure there's more behavioural supports in our system to give these students better options and better supports. We all know this is a budget that the Opposition Parties have voted against.

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

INT. SERV. - FOIPOP WEBSITE: AVAILABILITY - UPDATE

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: My question is to the Minister responsible for the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The government uses an online portal to process the freedom of information requests. If a person or organization wishes to get information or make an information request they are forwarded to that FOI website. The government's website has been down for six days now, for an unscheduled outage. That's six days where members of the public have been either unable to request documents or examine those released documents.

[2:15 p.m.]

My question to the minister, can she please provide an update on why the website is not available and when it is expected to be restored?

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the member for the question. I'd like to clarify one point. The portal has been down. There is an issue with the portal, so our IT staff has taken it offline to fix that.

However, requests are still being processed. You're still able to make requests through email or through written submission. The requests already in with the office are being processed and the office is open and available for any questions a requestor may have about a request they have in the department.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Well, Mr. Speaker, it can be expected that websites will occasionally be down due to maintenance or a bug, but I tell you, six days of downtime seems a little outside the ordinary and greater than one would expect. A cynic would also view the extended outage as an attempt to possibly subvert the FOIPOP process, but I'll take the minister's comments to heart - I'm inclined to believe that it's just technical difficulties.

In either event, a certain level of redundancy would be expected from an open and transparent and accountable government so that citizens are not walled off from important information for a week. What backup systems are in place for the FOIPOP website and why did they not kick in to restore the website?

MS. ARAB: Mr. Speaker, our backups are the fact that our FOIPOP office is running and processing requests as we speak. You're able to email your request, you're able to write your requests in, and you're able to call the FOIPOP office to see what the status of your request is or get information on public requests. So it is business as usual within FOIPOP, apart from the portal.

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

INT. SERV. - FOIPOP WEBSITE: SYSTEM OUTAGE - INFO. PROTECT

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that answer, but quite honestly, most people are forwarded to the website in order to see it. I'm sure that if they really want the information, they will call the 1-800 number, but a lot of people will look at it and go, "Well, I'll come back tomorrow and maybe the website will be up."

We've going on six days now. Journalists, Parties, and members of the general public all rely on the site to review government business and activities, and the results of

the FOIPOP requests are posted publicly but the identity of the requester is concealed. If it's not available on the website, how are the rest of the folks able to see this? With the silence around the system failure, we don't know the nature or whether this private information has been compromised.

So I will ask the minister, can she confirm to us today that the personal information and payment credentials have not been leaked or compromised in the course of this unscheduled system outage?

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: I'd like to assure the member, Mr. Speaker, that safeguarding the public's privacy is of utmost importance. As I believe I mentioned to him last week during Question Period, we recently developed a comprehensive breach protocol that's already in place within government and will be rolling out this Spring.

In terms of our FOIPOP, I'm also happy that he appreciates the openness and the transparency of our procedures, but the FOIPOP office is still up and running. Phone calls can be made. There are people there who will answer, and your requests are still being processed.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: The minister is kind of missing that we've asked people to go to the website to get their information. The website is not there. People make their decisions accordingly.

I believe that the system has not met the basic standard of transparency. They could have told us a few days ago, "By the way, it's down. Here's how you deal with it."

With the massive breach around Facebook, the cavalier handling of personal data is much on the minds of Nova Scotians and Canadians and people around the world. The minister should provide a full accounting of the impact that it should have on users.

Will the minister table all correspondence - I'd do a FOIPOP, but I really can't at this point - will the minister table all correspondence between her department and IT services so that we know that a breach has or has not occurred?

MS. ARAB: I'd like to remind the member that he is able to put in a FOIPOP request either through email or written submissions. As information becomes available, I'd be more than happy to follow through on that with the member.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**H&W - HFX. MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION SERV.:
RELOCATION - EXPLAIN**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, we're very concerned about the lack of access to mental health services and addiction services across this province. In particular, in January, the Nova Scotia Health Authority made a decision to close the addictions office on Bedford Row, located in downtown Halifax. This closure has reduced access to services for those needing help with their addictions. This office has been in downtown Halifax for 25 years.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, why was this addictions office moved and relocated out of downtown Halifax?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Indeed, as a government, with our partners like the Nova Scotia Health Authority and other community-based partners, we are investing and supporting both mental health and addictions services. In fact, I'll refer the member to the work that's ongoing with our investments in opioid treatments, Mr. Speaker, methadone treatments, our naloxone kits, in partnership with the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia, to help individuals to avoid the negative impacts of a drug overdose on opioids.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, we're very concerned that decisions are not always made in the best interests of patients and those needing access to services. For example, a decision was made to stop funding a therapist providing a program called Affected Others. This program helped the therapist work with those affected by alcoholism and drug abuse, specifically the spouses and children. The money has been taken away for that program.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness the question, will the minister commit to restoring the funding for the program called Affected Others, and also the Addiction Services in downtown Halifax?

MR. DELOREY: It's important to note that the services that were offered at the site located in downtown Halifax that the member referenced are still being offered within the Halifax area, Mr. Speaker. So, that work and those services are still being offered by the Nova Scotia Health Authority, the employees that were working there. It's really just a matter of a change in location in that regard.

With respect to other specific programs and services being offered, we have a wide variety of programs and services being provided for people with mental health and addictions services. I would advise the member of one particular program that's, again, rolled out in communities across the province, in partnership with the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia, and other health care providers, that's the Bloom Program, Mr. Speaker.

We have a wide variety of programs and services to help people with mental health and addiction needs.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

H&W - ROSEWAY HOSP. (SHELBURNE): HOURS - EXPLAIN

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Residents of the Town of Shelburne are worried that the Roseway Hospital is going to be shut down. Recently, evening lab services were eliminated, and at 11:00 p.m. the doors to the hospital lock from the outside. According to the NSHA website, the Roseway is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Mr. Speaker, does the minister consider a hospital to be open if no tests can be performed and the doors are locked?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, the work that is ongoing in the area around Shelburne, we're pleased that there's work ongoing with the collaborative practice being built up. We're expecting the doors to open there in the Fall of this year, I believe. Providing the services and the supports expanded to family physician recruitment, providing care.

Mr. Speaker, I toured that facility, in addition to the lab services being provided there, there is also work, I believe, in other means of providing lab test results with health care providers through point-of-care systems and so on in our hospitals across the province.

So, the ability to perform tests is still available at many hospitals throughout the province, in addition to direct lab services.

MS. LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, we've seen cutbacks to local hospital services and I can tell you that it doesn't end well. Like the people of New Waterford, the people of Shelburne built their hospital from the ground up, through fundraising and donations. They ought to have a say in what kind of care is provided. However, with this new one-size-fits-all model, there's no guarantee that the health care they will need will be available, and residents are worried that losing control means losing their hospital.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister assure the people of Shelburne that their hospital is not under threat?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I assure all Nova Scotians that it is of the utmost importance and priority for the government, as well as our partners in the Nova Scotia Health Authority, the IWK, front-line physicians and other health care providers, to ensure all Nova Scotians get the health care services that they need in their communities.

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

ENVIRON.: CARTERS BEACH PRESERVATION - PLANS

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Environment. Last October, I asked the Minister of Environment if he had a plan for Carters Beach preservation before the start of upcoming summer season. At that time, he committed to installing permanent outhouse systems, if that's what the liaison committee wanted, but said it would be the municipality's responsibility to operate those systems.

The minister said there was a meeting scheduled for November, and suggested that he might have more to say after that meeting had occurred.

Will the minister please update the House today on what plans are going ahead to preserve Carters Beach this summer?

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Meetings are ongoing with the Community Liaison Committee for Carters Beach. We have already installed new interpretive signage to encourage responsible use of Carters Beach and locating the eco-sensitive areas of the location.

We will continue to have those meetings and will support the community as they go forward and make sure there is a balanced approach to ensure that the recreational opportunities exist for the beach and that there is good, solid protection in the area.

MS. MASLAND: Carters Beach has, once again, been listed as one of the top 10 beaches to visit in Nova Scotia. The beauty of this beach is undeniable, but it is at risk if there are no permanent solutions planned to protect the area from visitors.

Will the minister please tell this House when he expects a permanent plan to be in place that will address the concerns of residents and protect the ecosystem that is at risk?

MR. RANKIN: It is a balanced approach that the department takes with any beach or designated area. There are expectations that community does have access, but we have to understand that there are impacts from human activity in the area.

We have supported retaining a summer student for the community to expand community outreach to ensure that the educational components are out there so that people understand what impacts do take place, but that beach will remain as protected under the Beaches Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

H&W - NURSE PRACTITIONERS: LEGISLATION - UPDATE

MR. TIM HALMAN: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. This government has been promoting the push towards more collaborative care clinics and the recruitment of nurse practitioners to make up for the shortage of family doctors - a shortage that the government refuses to admit.

However, my office has been receiving calls from people who are desperate for primary health care, so they took appointments with nurse practitioners only to find out that nurse practitioners are not permitted to sign the necessary forms. This action resulted in those patients' removal from the 811 list - they did not receive the service they required and now they are back to the bottom of the list.

My question is this, if the government is encouraging people to go with nurse practitioners instead of a family doctor, why isn't legislation being updated to qualify nurse practitioners to sign the necessary forms?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: As we note, we continue to work across the province to expand access to primary care services.

We recognize that these services are best on a go-forward basis through collaborative teams working together, that includes health care practitioners like family practice nurses, nurse practitioners, as well as physicians and other front-line health care providers.

In terms of the scope of practice that the member is referring to, without specific details as to the nature of the content of the forms referred to, it would be difficult for me to make any kind of commitments in that regard.

MR. HALMAN: The minister and I could chat about that case.

I, along with the residents of Dartmouth, was delighted to see the announcement that Dartmouth would be receiving four new nurse practitioners. With 40 per cent of the family doctors in Dartmouth retiring within the next five years, it was reassuring to see this investment; however, during Budget Estimates when I asked the minister where these nurse practitioners would be practising and how many patients they would be taking, he didn't provide an answer.

So, I ask again, where will the new nurse practitioners allocated for Dartmouth be practising, and how many patients will each be taking?

MR. DELOREY: I believe the estimates are somewhere in the vicinity - for nurse practitioners as they build their practices - somewhere in the 800 patients range that would be expected on the nurse practitioner basis. Whether that will be different for the sites in

Dartmouth - I believe, in Estimates we talked about this and I indicated that I would be getting back to the member with that information. We are collecting all the information for those commitments that I made during Estimates Debate and will be getting back to the respective caucuses for that information collectively.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**CCH - COM. ACCESS-ABILITY PROG.:
CHURCHES INELIGIBILITY - EXPLAIN**

MR. JOHN LOHR: My question is for the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage. Last week, I tabled guidelines for the Community ACCESS-Ability Program. This program singles out churches as the only not-for-profit organization that is blocked from applying for funding to make their facilities more accessible.

On Page 2, the guidelines clearly state: "Ineligible facilities include federal and provincial government owned buildings, private homes/buildings, church sanctuaries, for-profit entertainment facilities." I will table those guidelines.

My question for the minister, Mr. Speaker, the minister has said this is different from the federal attestation policy - could the minister explain how disqualifying churches is in fact different?

[2:30 p.m.]

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to convey to the honourable member that we have three programs at the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage that support accessibility to churches, and these programs are all open now and available for application.

MR. LOHR: I thank the minister for that answer, Mr. Speaker.

Last week in a letter to me, the minister said that he had funded eight churches under the ACCESS-Ability program - and I'll table that letter. In this letter, the minister has also suggested churches could receive funds from the Community Facilities Improvement Program; I'll table. Under that program's guidelines, the following applicants and projects are not eligible: private-sector organizations; individuals; municipalities; hospital or health facilities; education institutions; religious or faith sanctuaries; and several other exclusions.

The minister seems to be admitting he's granting funds against his own rules. The rules should be changed, but right now it clearly states churches cannot receive funds. So, my question for the minister is, if the minister is already choosing to ignore his own rules,

will he change the rules next year so all churches and houses of worship are able to apply or is he going to continue to make up the rules as he goes along?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I believe within each of the three programs that I mentioned the criteria and the guidelines are very clear and what I would do is encourage the member opposite to go down to one of the local churches in his community, go to Gibson Woods and see how the program applies to a church.

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

**ABOR. AFFAIRS - NORTHERN PULP:
PICTOU FN COURT CASE - ADDRESS**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

It's become very clear that this government has not gone far enough when consulting our First Nations people about the environmental impacts of Northern Pulp's new effluent pipe and proposal, so Pictou Landing First Nation is going to court. They say that while some consultation has occurred, it has not been broad enough to satisfy the community and does not fulfill the province's duties in consult.

So, given this government's stated commitment to truth and reconciliation, my question for the Premier is , why does Pictou Landing First Nation need to take court action to demand adequate consultation?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chief Andrea Paul and all the members of Pictou Landing who have worked so hard with our government to deal with an issue that has been ignored for far too long.

The reality of it is that effluent is next to that community because it's an Aboriginal community. No other place would have been allowed this site unless it was an African Nova Scotian community, and I'm very proud of the fact that the men and women on this side of the House stood with me to make sure that we're going to deal with issues to take head-on. The fact of the matter is any changes when it comes to the treatment for the mill we have consulted not only with the Pictou Landing First Nation, we've consulted with the community. We're going to continue on a broader consultation.

If she actually looks at the court ruling of what's being brought into the court is actually related to the mill which is an ongoing entity, not related to the fact of what we're talking about in terms of the treatment plant.

MS. ZANN: Mr. Speaker, well if the Premier actually cares about environmental racism, he could actually pass our bill or our environmental rights bill.

This is not the first time this government has been found wanting when it comes to adequately consulting with First Nations of Nova Scotia. The courts have already ruled that the Department of Environment's approval of the Alton Natural Gas Storage project was procedurally unfair because the department failed in its responsibilities to Sipekne'katik First Nation.

The Premier is very fond of saying we're all Treaty people, so I have to ask the Premier, if we are all Treaty people, why wasn't Pictou Landing First Nation adequately consulted about Northern Pulp's new effluent proposal ahead of this?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my earlier question, actually they were. The fact of the matter is the issue before the court has nothing to do with the treatment centre; it has to do with the actual mill itself. But I want to assure the honourable member we are all Treaty people and, unlike the New Democratic Party, I didn't wait to get into Opposition again to put a bill before the House. I acted on it when I had the privilege to do what I'm doing.

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

PREM. - PALLIATIVE CARE: DEDICATED - COMMIT

MS. ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, when a loved one reaches the end of their life, we all want them to be treated with dignity, care, and compassion. Our dedicated health care professionals want that as well.

Danny Latimer, a terminally-ill Richmond County man, stayed on a stretcher for two days inside a busy emergency room at the Strait Richmond Hospital, where there are no protected beds for palliative care.

I'm going to table both an article in the *Cape Breton Post* and a letter sent by Danny's wife Linda to the Premier regarding their experience. I'd like to quote: "Here is my 66 year old husband, God bless his soul, that we can no longer take care of him at home." She goes on to say, "Don't just talk the talk; walk the talk and deliver."

My question is, does the Minister of Health and Wellness believe that it is acceptable or even possible for appropriate palliative care to be delivered on a stretcher in a busy emergency room?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for raising this important question in the House. End-of-life care is an important aspect of delivering

health care across our province. It is unacceptable at any time that someone at the end of their life is left in a stretcher in any of our hospitals across the province.

We're working with communities to provide a myriad of options that families have asked for, whether it's hospice care - in some of our communities, we're working with some of our health foundations, the auxiliaries, to ensure that we have palliative care facilities in our communities. We're also hearing from communities that want to care for their loved one at home. We're trying to provide those options.

But as a question that was brought before the House, Mr. Speaker, that family had come to the point where it required the assistance of our system. It's unacceptable that anyone at the end of their life is on a stretcher in a hallway in our hospitals.

MS. PAON: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to hear that the honourable Premier thinks that it's unacceptable to end their life on a stretcher. Perhaps we can then get something done about this situation.

The stress and anguish of living with a terminal illness is devastating to families. It is unimaginable that some Nova Scotians must spend their last hours on a stretcher, as has happened on the Easter weekend amid the chaos of an emergency room. That is not the palliative care that Nova Scotians deserve or expect from this government, and it's not the palliative care that constituents in Cape Breton-Richmond deserve.

Will the honourable Premier apologize to Danny Latimer and his wife, Linda, for the ordeal they suffered last weekend and commit to providing dedicated palliative care beds and needed resources to the Strait Richmond Hospital?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to reiterate what I said at the beginning: it's unacceptable for any Nova Scotian to spend the end of their life in a hallway on a stretcher.

The reality of it is that we've had a very fractured health care system. Palliative care is one of those that is very different - depending on where you are in our province, it was looked at very differently.

We believe that when a holistic way of looking at our health care system across the province - we're going to continue to work with our partners to make sure that those who are looking for end-of-life care get a number of options to provide which is the best way for them and their loved ones to be able to deal with the end-of-life situation they have, at the same time ensuring that, when they come into our health care system, they are treated with the dignity they deserve.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

EECD - PUBLIC SCHOOLS: SPECIALISTS - CRITERIA

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development has mentioned numerous times the importance of specialists in our school system and has committed to hiring them. It has become quite evident that schools have seen an increase of students with social and emotional issues. That is why having high-quality school psychologists and social workers is so important in today's schools. These specialists act as a bridge between the school and a difficult home life.

My question to the minister, will the minister inform this House how many psychologists and social workers his department is prepared to hire for the upcoming 2018-19 school year so that no child is left behind to deal with these issues on their own?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's question. In last year's budget, we did provide funding for the hiring of 20 new school psychologists or speech language pathologists in the system. In this year's budget, we are also investing \$15 million to implement the recommendations of the Inclusive Education Report, which will involve some of these special supports.

We did also engage Mount Saint Vincent to bring in additional outside support to deal with the backlog of student psych assessments that we had. That is a practice we would like continued, although I would like to inform the member that that has been grieved and that decision is in arbitration right now. The decision of that arbitrator will impact our ability to engage in that practice in the future. We believe that has been very helpful, because we processed about 291 cases in that specific regard.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately today many students don't have the coping mechanisms needed to survive a problem, let alone a crisis. School psychologists and social workers are vital to the development of many of our students in need. Many students enter our schools at a disadvantage due to their home environment or social or emotional issues. School psychologists act as advocates for students, providing compassion and guidance to ensure that students' emotional issues are addressed appropriately and promptly.

My question to the minister, will the minister inform this House about his department's criteria for placing these necessary specialists within our school system?

MR. CHURCHILL: We do rely heavily on the decisions of those front-line workers in our regional centres to inform us how those resources are allocated.

I'll also inform the member that we have extended our SchoolsPlus program. We are now close to 80 per cent coverage for students in this province, and that is linking our students to supports outside of the education system - in health, justice, community services - that are relevant to the particular case that they're dealing with.

I do believe that moving forward in order to implement the recommendations of the inclusion report, we do need to look to more supports outside of the education system. But again, when we have done that, that has been grieved by the union. We do need their support to engage in that activity moving forward because we have a lot of work to do to ensure that students are getting the supports they need.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

JUSTICE - LEGAL CANNABIS: LEGAL AGE - CONCERNS

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice has said in this government's response to the legalization of marijuana that the plan is for the health and safety of Nova Scotians, especially children and youth. But the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia says that there's evidence that cannabis can harm developing brains up to the age of 25, and it may cause psychosis in predisposed individuals, and I will table that information.

Has the minister found a supplier of some kind of magical marijuana that will not cause psychosis in the one in 25 young people who use it when it is legalized by the federal government and normalized by this government?

HON. MARK FUREY: I know this becomes a repetitive response, Mr. Speaker, but the facts of the matter are quite clear and quite simple for people to understand. We presently have an illegal, illicit market, where the quality and the content of that product is unknown. It contributes to the mental health issues that my colleague has identified. That's not going away. The attempt of our legislation, our bill, is to provide a framework of regulation for a legal product that enhances public safety.

I know that's hard for some people to understand, Mr. Speaker, but it's as simple as this: we continue with the illicit market, or we implement measures that provide some quality control to a product that we're not encouraging use of. We're simply identifying a safer, more reasonable way to enhance public safety.

MR. MACMASTER: Aw, doesn't that sound nice Mr. Speaker? There's a reason why it was illegal.

I don't understand why the government continues to say that they're doing this for the health and safety especially of young Nova Scotians. It doesn't matter if you buy your marijuana from an illegal dealer or, soon, from the NSLC (Interruption) It doesn't, and I'll tell you why. The Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia will tell you why as well, if this government will listen to them. There is no such thing as healthy and safe marijuana for those people that the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia has identified. Mr. Speaker, that is a fact.

Why does the government lead young Nova Scotians to believe otherwise?

MR. FUREY: I know my colleague is persistent on this particular point, but Mr. Speaker, we as a government are not going to abdicate our responsibilities to provide a safe environment.

The illegal market and the consumption of the illegal product is having devastating effects on our youth - we know that. I agree with my colleague, but that is not going away by government, regardless of who is in power, turning their eyes and mind away from that. The reality is, we have to put a framework in place that enhances public safety, educates the public on the consumption of these products, and consistent with efforts of the smoking cessation strategy, going forward, reduces consumption.

[2:45 p.m.]

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

LAE - FIRST RESPONDERS: WCB BENEFITS EXPANSION - TIMELINE

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, 56 first responders died by suicide last year across Canada. I know that the federal government has stepped up to the plate to ensure that members of those services that they provide, or are responsible for, get access to services. I know the government has made a commitment to expand the WCB benefits so that those who have been diagnosed with PTSD, like firefighters, police officers, and paramedics, can hopefully gain access to those benefits.

I'm wondering, could the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education indicate when those responders here in Nova Scotia will see the changes needed?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: We all agree in this House, as we saw with unanimous support of that bill, that our responders are integral to our society. We all have great thanks for them.

I can advise the member that upon the passing of that bill, there was a one-year period before all of the benefits would be in place for our first responders. That would be sometime this coming Fall.

MR. DAVID WILSON: With all respect, I think we could move a little quicker on this file. We have first responders who I speak to on a regular basis who are currently being denied benefits. Mr. Speaker, they don't have the luxury of having been a police officer maybe with the RCMP and gaining access to programs. They're being denied benefits. They're being denied support in the province.

I would like to ask the minister, could that timeline be sped up so that those men and women who are in a dark place today - today - will have the support of benefits through WCB?

MR. KOUSOULIS: I would be more than happy to work with the member on those cases and have conversations with WCB.

They know our intent, Mr. Speaker, from having conversations with them even before consultation was done. Consultation over the one-year period wasn't to have a year not to provide benefits. It was to have a year to actually look at perhaps expanding who we're going to provide benefits to.

I'm more than happy to get a copy of those cases from the member, take them to WCB, and have a further look into them. In my opinion, as in the member's, those individuals should have the supports they deserve.

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

PREM. - STRAIT RICHMOND HOSP.: PALLIATIVE CARE BEDS - COMMIT.

MS. ALANA PAON: I would like to thank the member for Argyle-Barrington for giving me his spot. I'm going to fly free here on this one since we have a bit of extra time.

It's unacceptable the way that palliative care is being treated in Cape Breton-Richmond and across this province, Mr. Speaker. It's unacceptable that people have to live the last days of their life in retrofitted storage closets and have to live the last days of their lives on stretchers in emergency rooms. In the particular case of Mr. Latimer, he was forced to go back home, and basically have his wife have to take care of him at the end of his life.

I would like to ask the honourable Premier yet again, or the Minister of Health and Wellness, will he commit to providing dedicated palliative care beds and resources to the Strait Richmond Hospital?

THE PREMIER: I want to tell the honourable member that it's unacceptable, the story that has been brought to the paper and that she brings to the floor of this House. When it comes to end-of-life treatment, we want to make sure that we have a number of options for Nova Scotians, whether it's hospice, whether it's palliative care in a hospital, or whether it's supporting families at home. I want to assure the honourable member that the Minister of Health and Wellness, the Department of Health and Wellness, and the Nova Scotia Health Authority will work with all of our facilities to ensure that we have the appropriate services in communities across our province.

MS. PAON: Being in a very vulnerable position to begin with, and being so unwell, and in Mr. Latimer's case - and I don't think they would mind because they have given me

permission to speak on this - he has metastatic renal cancer, and it's throughout his body. It's extraordinarily painful and extraordinarily difficult to watch a person go through in the last stages of their lives, as many of us would have had that experience.

He and his wife Linda do want the last days of his life to be at home in Petit-de-Grat in Cape Breton-Richmond. What is the Premier prepared to do to assist this family to give them a guaranteed palliative care bed?

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Public Bills for 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. 114.

Bill No. 114 - Gaelic College Foundation Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Gaelic Affairs.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I move that Bill No. 114, the Gaelic College Foundation Act, be read for a second time.

A Labhraiche Urramaich, bha mi bòsdail is mi a bha 'nam sheasamh an t-seachdain sa chaidh 's a' Phàrlamaid Bhig gus Achd Fonndas Colaisde naGàidhlig a thoirt a-staigh.

Last week I was proud to stand before the House and introduce the Gaelic College Foundation Act. Our government recognizes the importance of acknowledging Gaels, their language, and their identity.

The Gaelic College is an important linguistic and cultural institution in Nova Scotia that makes many contributions to our society, economy, and diversity. The Gaelic College was founded in 1938 and is the only institution of its kind in North America. The college is a world-class facility, fostering Gaelic culture and language through programs, festivals, and cultural workshops.

Some educational examples include continuing education programs like the Gaelic immersion courses, which are recognized by Cape Breton University, and summer and after-school programs. Economically, the college supports tourism as a Celtic Colours host site and the college's own KitchenFest! multi-day festival, and over 150 bus tours are scheduled to stop and visit in 2018.

The time has come to repeal the existing Gaelic College Foundation Act and replace it with Bill No. 114, which will allow the college to grow, meet its strategic goals, and continue to contribute to the strengthening of this province's culture.

The most significant change in the legislation deals with the composition of the board. Under this bill, the board will be reduced to eight members from 11. Currently, Executive Council appoints six members to the board, but that will be reduced to one appointee, with the remaining seven positions being elected by members of the Gaelic College Foundation.

This significant change will allow for greater opportunities for the Gaelic community in Nova Scotia to play a more active role in shaping and supporting the future of the Gaelic College in St. Ann's. We know that boards do important work that helps make Nova Scotia a better place to live and work.

This legislation will also change the date for when annual meetings must be held. Modernized meeting notice requirements clarify the roles of executive board members and remove outdated sections.

We have listened to and worked with the Gaelic College to introduce a bill that will allow the college to meet its current strategic goals, better support the Gaelic community, and build on its local, national, and international reputation.

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will take my seat and look forward to hearing comments from my colleagues.

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

MR. KEITH BAIN: I'm not going to attempt the Gaelic, but I know that last week, when the minister tabled the bill, the CEO was asked how he did as he spoke Gaelic, and the CEO's response was that he could use a little help. Maybe he can enrol in the Gaelic immersion program at the Gaelic College this summer.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand in support of Bill No. 114, the Gaelic College Foundation Act. This bill is just what the Gaelic College has been looking for. Along with some housekeeping measures that are included in the bill, it puts more citizens on the college board, replacing the government appointees, and brings the Act into modern times.

I want to thank the CEO of the Gaelic College, Rodney MacDonald, and the board, for putting the college on a firm foundation for many years to come. I also want to thank the government for bringing this bill forward. I look forward to it coming back to the House for third reading.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: I would like to echo the comments of my colleague the member for Victoria-The Lakes. (Interruption) No, no, I thought the minister did great. Bha mi a 'tuigsinn a h-uile sion.

I just wanted to make note that it is nice to see that the Gaelic College is bringing so many young people exposure to Gaelic, and teaching them Gaelic and really bringing Gaelic back into the college itself as a language to be learned. It is a place of learning. I think what they are doing there is working, I know many young people who are going and learning, and really, Mr. Speaker, that's what the purpose of the government's support of the Gaelic College, and the goal of those who are on the board of the Gaelic College, and who will be on future boards, through this legislation, of the Gaelic College.

What they're doing is working, we're very happy to see it, and we'll be looking forward to passing this bill through the Legislature.

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

The honourable Minister of Gaelic Affairs.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I move to close second reading on Bill No. 114, but before taking my seat, I do want to thank my colleagues, the member for Victoria-The Lakes and the member for Inverness, for their comments in support of this bill.

Certainly, I'd like to also recognize as they did, the work of the staff in the Office of Gaelic Affairs, the support out of Communities, Culture and Heritage, and others that were involved in the drafting of the legislation, which indeed, included representatives of the Gaelic College itself, that approached us to look at modernizing this piece of legislation.

They do fantastic work there, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my speech, but I'll just reiterate here at the end, that they do more than even just the fantastic work they do culturally and linguistically through their programs and services, but also economically. I think sometimes that gets overlooked by some people who may not truly appreciate the linguistic and cultural aspects of the Gaelic community, and the Gaelic College. There is time for us to stop and reflect also on the economic, through tourism and other initiatives. As I mentioned at the opening remarks of second reading, over 150 bus tours coming to St.

Ann's, the Gaelic College, as a result of that unique culture - and important culture - that they celebrate, and support strengthening in Nova Scotia.

With that, Mr. Speaker, again, as I noted, I move to close debate on second reading of Bill No. 114.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 114, the Gaelic College Act.

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. 118.

Bill No. 118 - Municipal Government Act and Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 118 - an Act to Amend the Municipal Government Act and the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, and the Municipal Elections Act, Respecting Parental Accommodation - be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, last week I introduced legislation to provide parental accommodation for elected municipal officials. Specifically, amendments will be made to Section 18 of the Municipal Government Act, Section 39 of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, and Sections 2 and 18 of the Municipal Elections Act to define parental accommodation. This would encompass pregnancy, birth, and the adoption of a child, allowing those who are pregnant, or have recently become pregnant, to miss three council meetings without risk of losing their seat, and without financial penalty for up to a maximum of 52 weeks, and allowing any elected official who was absent due to parental leave to return to committees on which she or he previously served.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that this is an issue that resonates with me personally. As a parent of two young children, I fully appreciate the importance of clarity with respect to parental and pregnancy leave in any workplace. In the case of our municipalities, it is important to find a balance that allows elected officials the flexibility to represent their constituents, while at the same time having families. I want people who might be interested

in entering municipal politics to know that they can do so with the assurance that they can also have a family without worrying about losing their seat.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments allow for greater flexibility and rights for municipally elected officials who are, or who may wish, to start a family. These changes will allow officials to have peace of mind and assurance that making choices for their families will not impact their ability to serve their community. It also removes a significant barrier that many Nova Scotians, especially women, face when deciding to enter politics.

[3:00 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, when our government embarks on an initiative that will mean change for our municipal partners, it is important for us to work with those partners, to hear their ideas, and to gain the benefit of their perspective. It is important to ensure that those partners have the opportunity to offer insight in developing proposed changes that will ultimately impact them.

To that end, Mr. Speaker, in December 2017, the parental accommodations committee was established. Committee members included representatives from the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia, the Department of Municipal Affairs, and the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Our legislation was shaped by the benefit of their expertise.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank everybody who has been involved with providing feedback to this bill. I feel strongly that the consultation process our government took part in prevented important issues from being overlooked, and I appreciate the role this process has played in developing this legislation. I would like to thank my MLA colleagues, the parental advisory committee, and everyone for their support around this important issue.

Most importantly, I want to thank Kings County councillor Meg Hodges and Kings County Deputy Mayor Emily Lutz for highlighting the fact that Nova Scotia ought to have clear requirements for municipalities around these accommodations. I stand on my feet today because of those two elected representatives bringing this issue forward on behalf of their community and all Nova Scotians, so I want to thank them publicly.

Ultimately, we agreed that empowering elected officials to make decisions about their families without public debate is, quite frankly, the right thing to do. This is an important and critical step towards encouraging greater participation in municipal government. I hope that more young people will feel supported should they decide to seek public office. I look forward to the comments from my colleagues.

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

MR. BRAD JOHNS: This is certainly a positive piece of legislation that is coming forward and one that our caucus supports. We feel it's about time that it does come forward to be addressed. We would be remiss if we didn't also recognize members of the NDP caucus who also had some discussions around this as well and brought forward a piece very similar to this.

I do feel that it's a very inclusive piece of legislation. I think that it is an issue that people don't realize that under the current system, you're only allowed to miss three consecutive meeting on council without the permission of council. Although I have never seen it happen, I suppose if you are not in the in-group, technically council could hold somebody up and actually have them removed from council for missing more than three. I'm glad to see that this recognizes parental responsibilities and takes that out of the hands of council and that there is no penalization either in regard to remuneration for council or committees, so I am glad to see that that is coming forward.

It's also very positive that it's a gender-neutral piece of legislation. It can be regardless of the gender of the person is who is on council - it addresses and allows both genders.

What I was curious about - and I know that this is second reading so it will go to Law Amendments Committee, and perhaps the minister can clarify for me. If you are not an elected official, currently under parental leave - I believe it's a year - either one parent can use the entire year, or the parents can divide it between the two of them.

I guess what my question would be is, I believe the way the legislation is currently worded, one parent would be able to take a year leave under traditional parental leave while the councillor would also be able to take an additional year, or at the exact same time take a year as well and still receive 100-per cent remuneration. I think that maybe there would be an opportunity there to incorporate it more in conjunction with current parental leave so that if I was to take leave, my spouse couldn't take it at the same time - it's kind of a double-dipping thing.

So I will bring that forward as a concern that I saw in the legislation, and certainly the minister can clarify that to me later. We wouldn't want to see that, the ability to give somebody on council something that is special or unique that other people, other residents, their members of the community don't have at traditional jobs. We certainly don't want to create a two-tiered system there, one for elected officials and one for everybody else.

So, other than that, we do support this legislation and we'll certainly look forward to hearing, hopefully, we'll have some members of different municipalities come out and speak during Law Amendments Committee. So we'll certainly look forward at that time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in support of this bill. Our caucus has been focused on policy changes that improve the lives of women in Nova Scotia, that lower the barriers of young people into politics, and we were pleased to introduce a similar amendment twice, in fact, once in the last sitting and once in this one.

We're very pleased to see the work that was done with Meg Hodges and Emily Lutz who have really been leading the way on this. They were here in the gallery in the last sitting supporting this work as well. We recognize that significant barriers continue to exist for women's entering into politics. In our caucus, we have three mothers of young children. I know there are fathers of young children here in the Chamber, but it's probably not by accident that there are fewer mothers of young children. It is more challenging.

We live in a world where we do not have gender parity in almost anything. We don't have it in this Chamber; we don't have it in pay. We don't have it in barriers to the workforce, and so anything we can do to remedy that situation is a good thing. I am happy.

I'll echo the comments of my colleague to see that this also applies to fathers and also to parents of adopted children. I, myself, am not concerned about any kind of double-dipping. I think the reality is, as we looked at this amendment and spoke to councillors and kind of did the due diligence, it became very clear that no municipal councillor is going to take a year off. It's not going to happen. If you take a year off, you're not going to get elected again.

The reality is that people should be able to choose how and when they come back to work after becoming a parent of a child. It doesn't mean they're not going to be doing their work; it means that they don't have to ask their colleagues to vote on whether or not they can miss meetings.

So, we feel like this is one step in lowering barriers to participation. It's a good one. We're happy to see that the UNSM was involved, and we're pleased to support this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to add my voice to the discussion on this bill and reflect a bit on my past history in municipal government.

I was elected to Wolfville Council in 2008 and attended my first UNSM Conference back that year in 2008. I have to say the demographics of UNSM at that time were quite stark with respect to the male dominance of municipal councillors and the males over 60. I'm very, very happy to say that 10 years later, that demographic has changed significantly.

We are seeing more women involved in municipal politics and, of course, we are seeing that also reflected here in this House. But also in 2006, Nova Scotia was fortunate to elect two young women from Kings County and that was due in part to Councillor

Pauline Raven working to support these two young women to be elected to Kings County Council. I think we can all agree that in Nova Scotia we are better off when we have more diversity in our elected houses, whether that be at the federal level, here in this House at the provincial level, or at the 51 municipal council tables of this province.

This issue came forward with these two young female councillors in Kings County as they were in the process of beginning and adding to their family. No family should ever, ever be required to ask permission to have a child, and that is in effect what was buried within the regulations in the MGA and the Halifax Charter with respect to absences. No couple should have to choose between having a family and being an elected official. It's for that reason that, today, we in this House are changing the laws to address this glaring omission in our Municipal Government Act and the Halifax Municipal Charter.

I would like to thank the honourable minister, his staff, and the members of the UNSM and the Association of Municipal Administrators who worked to bring forward these changes. Finally, I want to give, as others have done, a big thank you to Deputy Mayor Emily Lutz and Councillor Meg Hodges. They have blazed a trail here for us. They have identified a barrier that none of us really saw hidden within the many lines of that MGA and assisted us in removing that barrier.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: I, too, would like to say a few words about Bill No. 118 and echo the sentiments of my colleagues here in the Legislature. In the Annapolis Valley, we are very proud of our two young elected officials Deputy Mayor Emily Lutz and Councillor Meg Hodges. As my colleagues have said, these two ladies have kind of blazed the trail and exposed a weakness in the MGA. The rule that I understand was there was that after missing three meetings, a person could lose their seat and could be penalized.

I remember when I first heard of this situation, I called up the UNSM. I was talking to someone at the UNSM who said common sense would dictate that nobody would do that for someone who is having a child or adopting. I said, well common sense isn't that common any more. There can be moments in political life when there are very vindictive situations. In fact, I read of one in B.C. where a woman councillor was pregnant and missed meetings and lost the position she had due to that.

It is a very positive bill. It addresses a need that we didn't realize was there. As I have said, Mr. Speaker, we're very proud of our councillors. I can tell you that Councillor Meg Hodges, her young child has not missed very many meetings. In fact, she never missed very many meetings. As was mentioned in the House, any councillor who missed a year would be in jeopardy of not getting re-elected, but I can tell you that these two councillors, Meg Hodges and Deputy Mayor Emily Lutz, are all very capable and very bright. We're very proud to have them in the Annapolis Valley, and we're pleased to see this bill coming forward.

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

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I want to thank all my colleagues for their comments. I want to mention the member for Dartmouth South, who was active on this piece of legislation as well.

This is a very progressive piece of legislation. This helps us break down barriers and encourage more people to be assured that there are less barriers for them to seek public office.

There have been a lot of people involved this. Again, I want to thank the staff at Municipal Affairs who, time and time again, go out and travel the province to receive this feedback and work with our partners. I know a few of them are watching right now and are very proud of this piece of legislation.

We're working very hard to revamp and revise the MGA to make it more structured and more sensitive to the needs of elected officials municipally and municipalities across the province. We continue to do that work.

[3:15 p.m.]

In closing, there are two colleagues I want to thank very much for their support and direction through this. They are the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act and the Premier, who was very supportive of this when I brought it to his attention. He wanted to ensure that we developed legislation that was as flexible as possible to support our municipal elected representatives. To the Premier, I want to thank him as well.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I close debate on second reading of Bill No. 118.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 118. 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. 116.

Bill No. 116 - Financial Measures (2018) Act.

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

HON. KAREN CASEY: I move that Bill No. 116 be now read a second time.

Bill No. 116 provides the legislative authority for the measures in Budget 2018-19 and makes administrative changes to six other existing Acts. Two measures found in Bill No. 116 will establish key pieces of legislation: (1) the Innovation Equity Tax Credit, and (2) the Cannabis Tax Act.

In response to investors, changes to the Income Tax Act will create a new Innovation Equity Tax Credit. Beginning in 2019, this credit will spur more investment in high-growth Nova Scotia businesses that are well positioned for rapid scaling up to create jobs and for export growth. Bill No. 116 sets out the framework for the Innovation Equity Tax Credit. The Department of Finance and Treasury Board will work with the Department of Business to develop the details for that tax credit. Unlike the existing equity tax credit, it will be more narrowly focused and have a threshold more like those of neighbouring Atlantic Provinces. It will also include a five-year review to ensure that the tax credit is meeting its goal. The existing equity tax credit will continue this fiscal year and be phased out over time.

This FMA also provides the legislative authority to establish the Cannabis Tax Act. The new Act will authorize the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board to enter into a cannabis taxation agreement with the federal government. We are currently working with the government to finalize that agreement. It will give 75 per cent of a proposed federal cannabis excise tax to the provinces and the territories, and it will cap the amount that the federal government can realize under that tax. Revenue beyond the cap will be distributed back to the provinces.

Bill No. 116 also makes other amendments related to taxation. It will remove the \$10,000 limit on eligible medical expenses for financially dependent relatives found in the Income Tax Act. This will make the deduction consistent with the tax treatment of spouses and of children. It extends the limitation period for refund of overpayments under the Corporation Capital Tax Act to 10 years from four years, aligning it with federal rules. Bill No. 116 contains amendments to ensure that we are also in alignment with recent federal changes to the basic personal allowance. It changes language in the Income Tax Act to ensure that the basic personal allowance enhancement that we brought into government last year covers spouses and dependant amounts.

Bill No. 116 contains a number of changes to the Public Service Superannuation Act as a result of the mandatory five-year review of that Act. The review was completed in 2017, the first review since the pension plan was reformed, and the recommended amendments were received by the trustee in February. The amendments primarily relate to trustee board structure and administration of the plan. Key elements of the plan - contributions, benefits, and benefit eligibility - are not impacted.

The Act requires the minister to introduce legislation at the next sitting of the House of Assembly, that being this sitting, to implement the recommended amendments. Thus, I have included those recommended amounts in the FMA (2018), as required. One example of the recommended changes amends the language in the Act to remove outdated reference to the minister; another is to move the regulations to the plan text, which are legal documents that define the benefits, and administrative rules of a pension plan.

Bill No. 116 also includes administrative amendments to the Chartered Professional Accountants Act, the Gaming Control Act, the Revenue Act and the Pension Benefits Act. Under the Chartered Professional Accountants Act, amendments will correct an oversight, and allow foreign-trained accountants to use their legacy designation along with a CPA designation. The change for this request, Mr. Speaker, came from CPA Nova Scotia, to address this issue. The general intent is that CPA Nova Scotia will be able to assess equivalency legacy designations for internationally trained accountants, and permit these accountants to use the legacy designation in the same way that Canadian-trained accountants are required to do so.

An amendment to the Gaming Control Act will change the name of the Nova Scotia Provincial Lotteries and Casino Corporation back to Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation. The name was changed, but the corporation found that stakeholders never really accepted the name. The corporation has asked to have it returned to the old name.

Bill No. 116 will amend the Revenue Act to establish a Deputy Tax Commissioner. It will also outline a detailed procedure to deal with unclaimed vehicles seized by the Tax Commissioner. The Tax Commissioner is part of Service Nova Scotia. Another change to the Revenue Act, will provide authority for the Motor Fuel Tax Rebate regulations for the mining and quarrying sector. Those were introduced last year.

A change to the Benefit Pensions Act will clarify language related to the definition of a member, and to clauses involving a survivor's spouse. The Act will be clear that an absence of a written agreement, or court order, does not disentitle a spouse from a joint and survivor pension, or a death benefit.

None of these amendments, Mr. Speaker, will change the existing application of the Act. Bill No. 116 will make those legislative changes needed to implement our budget, and make other amendments to improve the Acts in our province.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I will take my seat. I look forward to constructive comments from the members opposite.

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

MR. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has said, the Financial Measures (2018) Act, Bill No. 116, flows out of the

government's budget, and a government's budget certainly is more than all the estimates, and all the accounting, and all the multiple volumes of projections. A government budget is also an encapsulation of a government's whole program. It's a statement - as the Ivany Report uses the word - of a government's project, in the "capital P" sense of that word, in which the word uses, as the Ivany report uses it, provides a sense of a government's enterprise, its overall work in general.

So, as we deal with this Bill No. 116, that flows out of the budget, I would like to make a few remarks of assessment about the government's project in this sense, as a whole, as we near the end of the first year of its second mandate.

I would like to begin these remarks of assessment by revising a position that I held previously. For quite some time, I was of the view that this government was defined by the fact that they only had one thought, one primary idea - namely to pay any price that must be paid, forego any opportunity that must be foregone, in order to fulfill their fixation with producing a budget fiscal surplus in every single budget, in every single year.

That, certainly, Mr. Speaker, in my judgment, is an obsession that much remains in place, but what we see in this government, as its program has been more revealed in more recent weeks and recent months, is in my view, the emergence of a second defining theme. Namely, a drive to consolidate power and centralize authority in a Halifax-based model of command and control. Effective which is to silence local and regional concerns, such that Nova Scotia is being governed increasingly, through this administration, as though it were not a province at all, but rather as though it were the City State of Halifax, and everything beyond a 30-kilometre radius of that is being democratically disregarded.

I would like to make a few remarks about these two defining fixations, each in turn.

First, the fixation with the accumulation of the government's budgetary surplus. Nowhere are the mistakes that this can lead to any more in evidence than in the fact that this government's budget has failed so completely to address the main underlying factor in Nova Scotia having the worst child poverty in Canada - namely, the desperate insufficiency of rates of income assistance in our province.

In the series, the range of evaluations and analyses and reviews which inevitably follow the issuing of a budget - as reviews and assessments and blogs and so on were published following the release of the budget that this Financial Measures Act flows from, there was one thing that was written in assessment of the budget that I found more striking and compelling than anything else. It was a short essay published on March 24th, which I will table, by one of the clearest and most conscientious and courageous voices about poverty in Nova Scotia: Nick Jennery, executive director of Feed Nova Scotia.

In Nick Jennery's evaluation of the budget, he gave full marks, as we in the NDP give full marks, to the government's forward steps in this budget regarding the ending of

the child support clawback. He gave full marks, as we in the NDP give full marks, to the government's improvements in this budget in the Poverty Reduction Tax Credit and to the changes in the budget that permit people receiving income assistance to retain more of their employment income when they are in a situation to receive employment income.

Mr. Jennery then went on to say that the government's failure to do the thing that is most required to alleviate actual hunger in Nova Scotia - that is, to immediately, seriously, boldly raise the income assistance level - the income assistance rates - that this failure, this absence he speaks of in his piece assessing the budget - and this is not my word, it's Mr. Jennery's word - he speaks of this absence, this shortcoming and failure in the budget, as being "heartbreaking."

In my view, Mr. Jennery has carefully chosen the right word here. It is a heartbreaking thing that Nova Scotia continues to have, in our whole country, the highest rate of food insecurity of any province.

That's not an abstraction when we say "the highest rate of food insecurity." What it means, simply, is that more people in our province than in any other province answer "yes" when they are asked, "Does the inadequacy of money in your home affect whether or not you are getting enough to eat?" More people in our province than in any other province say yes to that question. That is a heartbreaking thing. I think Nick Jennery has chosen the right word.

It is heartbreaking, too, that single, non-senior adults in Nova Scotia who rely on income assistance for their living, and who are without a diagnosis designating them as disabled, receive an income, in total, of \$7,349 a year.

Mr. Speaker, surely it is incumbent upon you and me and other MLAs to acknowledge that every member of this Chamber receives more than this every single month.

I think it is the right word used by Mr. Jennery. It is heartbreaking that this failure in the current budget to really address the disastrous insufficiency of income assistance rates in Nova Scotia followed on months of entreaties which were brought to the government's feet, on months of presentations made to government offices, on months of arguments and evidence that was put forward to the government on income assistance rates in this budget, in the Spring of 2018, to do better than this. These entreaties and presentations and putting forward of evidence came from some of the most experienced organizations and individuals that we have in the struggle against hunger in our province.

The Antigonish Women's Resource Centre, the Dartmouth North Community Food Centre, the Schizophrenia Society of Nova Scotia, Dalhousie Legal Aid Service, the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia, the Sisters of St. Martha - this is just to name a small selection of the organizations who had called, prior to the release of this

budget, on the government of the province for a major increase in income assistance rates in the 2018 budget.

[3:30 p.m.]

What else is it but heartbreaking that the response to all of these considered presentations was zero? And I want to say unequivocally, Mr. Speaker, that this heartbreak of which Mr. Jennery speaks, that I don't think any of this heartbreak is ameliorated in the slightest by the government's self-righteous references to increases in rates that they have made in years previous, or to the pixie-dust vocabulary of future transformation, or to the challenges of complex, systemic social assistance change.

I'll tell you what is challenging, what is complex, and what is demanding, far more challenging and more complex and demanding than any of the government's from on high entitled prognostications about reforms about to be made in the income assistance system, and that is providing for your children and providing for yourself when the cheques coming into the house cannot, no matter how you divide it, no matter how prudently you deal with it, cannot be arranged in such a way as to pay for rent and food and heat.

I wish to say in a way with maximum straightforwardness that in the face of 43,000 people in Nova Scotia being fed from food banks, \$29 million in this budget having been tucked away for the government's accumulated surplus ought to be regarded not as an accomplishment but as a moral condemnation. What we see increasingly as a defining mode of operation of this administration is more and more this obsession with producing a budget surplus has been enjoined by a second definition fixation; namely, the over-focused determination to replace local voices, regional voices in the decision-making structures of our province with command-and-control-hyper, Halifax-based super centralization.

Exhibit A, of course, is the dismantling of the district health authorities and their replacement by the super-centralized Nova Scotia Health Authority, a centralization which is being increasingly identified as a major contributor to the present health care crisis.

One of the most consistent voices against amalgamation and the delivery of health care services in Pictou County has, for many years, been Dr. Randy Burrill, my brother. At the time of the closing of the Pictou County District Health Authority and its merging into Nova Scotia Health Authority in 2015, I asked my brother, well, in your family practice in Pictou, what is the main difficulty that this is going to cause? He said this is a very easy question to answer - he said we used to have somebody to call, but now we have no one to call.

Now, of course, Dr. Burrill didn't mean that there was literally no person, literally no phone number, no desk in the Nova Scotia Health Authority where he or a Pictou County doctor could contact someone with responsibility for their area or for their concerns. What he meant rather was that formerly the decision-making authority had been lodged with

local voices who knew the regional landscape, knew the regional landscape's challenges, knew its personnel and that without that the space between the Halifax decision and the on-the-ground delivery was chronically and repeatedly wide enough that it had an ongoing negative impact on the delivery to patients of the health care service. That's Exhibit A.

Exhibit B, of course, is the obliteration, in these recent weeks, of all the local elected school boards in the province, and their replacement with a Halifax-appointed provincial advisory council on education. What a sad day March 31st was, when elected local school boards officially came to an end in our province, and 104 regional voices were officially rendered silent. Probably, Darren Googoo, now the former First Nations representative on the former Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board, said it as clearly as anyone when he marked that moment, March 31st - I will table a copy of his comments - by saying, "At the end of the day, we have lost a great thing . . . and that is a local voice - not just for the Mi'kmaq, not just for the African-Nova Scotian students, but for all members of our society. We have lost a regional voice."

Now, Darren Googoo is registering here what needs to be registered: a sense of the magnitude of what we in Nova Scotia have thereby been stripped of, which is nothing less than governance that is founded on an effective understanding of the integrity of "the local" in Nova Scotia; that is, governance that is founded on the effective understanding of the defining centrality of the local in the fabric of our whole province and governance which is founded on an effective understanding of the rich and wonderfully diverse character of the many regions of Nova Scotia.

There are three words that anyone needs to understand, who would make a contribution to the civic life of our province, and those three words are local, local, and local. Everything in Nova Scotia, ultimately in its character, is local, by reason of a very complex, interwoven series of cultural, geographic, economic, and historical factors. It is the case that within an hour's drive anywhere in our province, you more or less change republics. No capable, progressive, forward-looking administration can be accomplished in this part of the world unless local voices are raised and are heard and are honoured.

It's a little like, a few years ago, Mr. Speaker, when a woman in Upper Musquodoboit - which is on the border of Colchester and Halifax Counties and a stone's throw from the back end of Pictou County - when she applied to Vital Statistics in Halifax to be licensed as a local registrar of births and deaths, because the person in that community who had done that for many years had passed away. It was quite a drive to Truro, quite a drive to Halifax to pick up, when they were needed, those kinds of official papers. So, she made that application and the answer came back from Vital Statistics that her application to be a rural registrar of births and deaths had been denied, since the response said a rural licence issuer was already there in her area, said the correspondence from Vital Statistics. They already had someone doing that job in Musquodoboit Harbour.

The MLA for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley at that time, my friend Brooke Taylor, tabled in the Legislature for the benefit of the government, a map of Nova Scotia which made plain that the far end of Upper Musquodoboit is over an hour's drive from Musquodoboit Harbour, because Upper Musquodoboit is in the Musquodoboit Valley, and of course, Musquodoboit Harbour is on the Eastern Shore. I'm happy to report that following that presentation and tabling of the map in the Legislature, that woman was shortly thereafter able to receive the licence she had applied for.

It reminds me a little bit of - there's a small community right in the centre interior of mainland Nova Scotia called Dean - sometimes it's called Dean Settlement - and there's a road that leaves from Dean called the St. Marys Road. The St. Marys Road is the only road from inland Halifax County to a number of communities in Guysborough County: Cameron Settlement, Aspen, Trafalgar, and a number of others. For many years, it's been a very troublesome road. It's been chronically in very, very poor repair. I expect that the MLA for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie would have heard often about the state of the St. Marys Road. I know that the MLA for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley hears about it. It's chronically in very bad shape as it goes from Dean down through Trafalgar and through to Caledonia.

It happened one day, near the area where the St. Marys Road starts, that an old friend of mine, who was a pretty quick-witted person - and was particularly so when he had been drinking a little, which he was this particular day - he was out in his woodpile, and along came the longest RV you ever saw, longer than any of the houses on that part of the road. It had American plates and it stopped in front of my friend's house.

An arm came out of the driver's side, and the driver motioned to my friend to come over. When my friend, near the corner where the road starts in Dean, came over, a map was produced out the window of this great big monstrous RV, and the St. Marys Road was pointed to. He looked over to my friend, and said, that there, is that there a good road? My friend said, partner, if you're going to Trafalgar, she's the best road in Canada. That's local. That's the nature of our communities. That's the nature of our province. Local, local, local.

Understanding this, there are two roads that a Nova Scotia Government can go down when we take in the reality of how central the local and the regional is to the fundamental character and constitution of Nova Scotia.

A government, on the one hand, can choose to listen to local voices. A government can choose to honour and work with and proceed on the basis of an understanding of the primacy of the local and the regional in the province.

Or a government can choose, as this government has, to regard the local and the regional as troublesome and as problematic, and hence devote itself to overpowering and overwhelming the local voices and replacing them with the command and control centralization of the "Halifax City State".

The core thought I wish to register about the program, the enterprise, the “capital P” Project of this Liberal Administration, as it nears the end of the first year of its second mandate, is that it presents us with a deeply toxic combination of two mistakes: the error of austerity financing in a time that cries out for its opposite, investment, and the error of the hyper-centralizing model in a province the very character of which is defined by the integrity of the local.

The result is a government that has now cast the die of its second mandate with the elimination of the local, both in health and in education, and with its multi-year commitment to surplus generating budgets in the face of dramatic unmet need.

When these subjects come up these days, as they often do in conversation, there’s often a pause, and then the person in the conversation will say, half-apologetically because they didn’t know the answer: remind me, will you, when is the next election?

Not soon enough, Mr. Speaker, but thankfully, neither is it all that far away. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it’s a pleasure to rise today and say a few words on this bill. Basically, what we’re looking at here is a procedural measure to get the budget into place so when we go back and think about the budget - I remember on Budget Day, in budget lockup, being presented with the documents, turning to Page 1, seeing a surplus there: \$29 million, the third surplus in a row. I remember thinking, well, isn’t that nice? Isn’t that nice? Things must be just wonderful in Nova Scotia. Three consecutive surpluses. Everything is rosy.

Well, through the course of the morning I started to peel back the orange a little bit and scratch things back. I guess the rosiness of the budget is dependent on the glasses you wear, because when we started to peel back we would see, first off, a \$20 million profit from the sale of cannabis. I was reminded at that time - I asked the staff who were in, well, that’s the revenue side, where is the expense side? Surely it’s in here. I’ve heard the Premier pronounce time and time again that it would not be a money-maker for the province. Sorry, there are no expenses booked, was the answer - pure profit from the sale of cannabis.

There’s nothing in the budget for increased health care or mental health, nothing in the budget for increased policing. Nothing in the budget for the educational needs - even today, we heard the Minister of Justice saying to my colleague the member for Inverness that of course there will be a plan for education and that this wonderful plan that they will roll out at some point in time will see reduced consumption. Of course it will. But Mr. Speaker, there is no plan. There is no plan for education. Not only is there no plan for education, there’s no money allocated to come up with a plan. We know this government

can't do anything without a study on what the plan might be. So we know that it's just pure profit in there.

[3:45 p.m.]

The Premier said today in Question Period that basically we have to do this - it's coming down from the feds. I do sympathize with them. This is an order from on high, and I know that this government is trying to stickhandle through or manage through as well as they can. There are so many unanswered questions. It's a situation where I believe that one mistake often leads to another mistake often leads to another mistake, Mr. Speaker.

We will look back at this time. At some point in time, I'll be older than I am today, Mr. Speaker, much older. I will say (Interruptions) Thank you. I'll set them up, and my colleagues will knock them down.

The members in this Chamber will be sitting around campfires somewhere years from now with their friends and their family, and they'll say, I remember being in the Legislature when the sale of cannabis was made legal. I remember being there when it was made legal. At that point, when those discussions are taking place, it will probably be a very normal thing because the rules that this government sets today will create the new normal.

At one point in time not that long ago, it was normal to smoke on an airplane. It's not socially acceptable anymore to do that, Mr. Speaker. But there will be new socially accepted standards taking place. We know that one of the priorities of some of the members who sit on the benches in the back was that people be allowed to have a puff in the park. That's a normal that is important to some of the members opposite. They will create a new normal.

Myself and most of the people probably in this Chamber and in our friends' age group, those of us who do occasionally visit the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation, we will continue to do that and purchase the products that we are accustomed to purchasing. There's zero chance that I will find myself in the Liquor Corporation and say, gee, let me buy a few grams. That's not going to happen. But for children who are today 17, 18, 19, or 20 years old who are coming up, it may become the normal. It may become totally normal for them to pick up a case of beer and a few grams for the weekend because the rules that are set today will set the standards for the future. This is why we ask, why are we selling it in the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation?

Many experts caution against it, but this government is saying that's the "safest," I think was one of the words they used. But Mr. Speaker, I would probably choose a different word. I would use "laziest." It's one of the laziest ways to implement the sale.

This government can believe that they are taking some grandiose step to improve the safety of the province and its citizens, but they are not. There are many distribution models. If push came to shove, and they were forced to do this, there are many distribution models they could have considered. Why are they selling it in the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation? Because it's the easiest thing to do, Mr. Speaker. It's the path of least resistance. It's the laziest thing to do.

There are so many unanswered questions, I hope they're answered in time and that is when you take that away, when you take this cannabis windfall out of this budget, well the surplus starts to go up in smoke, Mr. Speaker. There was a \$29 million surplus, \$20 million of it associated with cannabis. Well, you take out the \$20 million, now you're left with \$9 million.

As we started to dig into just the numbers, just looking at the numbers on the pages in front of us, we discovered another big windfall. This is the year that this government hopes to join the National Securities Regulator. This has been talked about for a long time, and this government believes that if they sign up this year, they'll be able to arrange a deal with the federal government that will see a large one-time payment made to the province - I believe it was \$75 million.

When you take the \$75 million out of that well, Mr. Speaker, we're not looking at a surplus, we are looking at a deficit. I think when we talk about a deficit, that is more representative of how the people of the province are feeling. When we go around this province and we talk to Nova Scotians, we know that they're stressed out about their access to health care. We know that they're stressed out about what's happening in the education system. We know they're worried about their jobs. There are record numbers of people visiting food banks and record numbers of people unemployed or underemployed, trying to scratch out a living in this province and finding it very difficult.

So Mr. Speaker, \$10 billion, almost \$11 billion - it ought to be enough to run a province of less than a million people and provide the services that the people deserve and have a right to expect. Yet, it's not. Look at what's happening in health care - \$4.4 billion I believe, this year. Yet, pick a number, it's a big one whatever you pick - 80, 90, 100,000 Nova Scotians without access to a doctor. How does that happen? That happens when the money that's available is not spent appropriately, not spent effectively or efficiently.

So, as much as this government heralds their financial success, they ignore the fact that they haven't done a good job of providing services to Nova Scotians. They just haven't. If you ask the Minister of Health and Wellness, he will point to the Health Authority and say, ask the Health Authority. If you've asked the Health Authority, they will point to the department. Nobody is accountable.

When you have a \$4 billion-plus enterprise like our health care system, and you have zero accountability, I will tell you the result every single day of the week - people

dying on stretchers in hallways in hospitals. The money is there, but the management of the health care budget is awful. It's shameful. So we can look at the surplus, but we need to look beyond the surplus.

What's happening in our education system? Well, 18 per cent of our graduates can't really read. If you go around and you talk to employers and general members of society and ask them, do you think on balance our graduates are ready for the world, are ready for the workforce? What do you think they would say, Mr. Speaker? I think they would say they're not. People are worried about the education system.

There are so many aspects to the budget - it's a big complicated document for sure. We talked about, my colleagues have talked about - there was a question today in Question Period about the cleanup of Boat Harbour. I think, maybe three years ago, the liability that was booked for the cleanup of Boat Harbour was somewhere in the range of \$12 million to maybe \$15 million. Flash forward to today, Mr. Speaker - the liability carried by the province, \$135 million. Now I would ask the members, raise their hand if they think \$135 million will be enough to clean up Boat Harbour. Because that's what we're carrying, Mr. Speaker.

I don't see any hands, nobody's ferociously waving their hands - maybe a tentative wave there. The reality is, Mr. Speaker, I heard this week the number for the clean-up of Boat Harbour could start with a four - it could be \$400 million when it's all said and done.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I say \$700 million.

MR. HOUSTON: My colleague from Pictou West says \$700 million. It's going to be a big number, Mr. Speaker.

So for those of us that are fiscal conservatives, and we see three balanced budgets, it kind of gets the blood boiling a little bit. When you ask yourself, is it really balanced just on the face of the numbers? It's hard to say yes.

I worry we'll look back at these years and we will conclude that this was some of the worst fiscal management. I worry when we look back, when the clean-up of Boat Harbour is finally behind us, and done and dusted, and we look at the actual cost - I already took that \$29 million surplus and I brought that negative in a hurry with just two items, cannabis and a little trickery around hoping there's a deal signed with the feds on the National Securities Regulator. I already took it negative - imagine if you booked a higher number on Boat Harbour.

So, when we look back on these years, when we look back on these years, we could see these as some of the worst fiscal management years of our time. It might be right up there with - another time for that. I'm sorry.

There are a lot of lawsuits facing this province on account of the labour negotiations. When the lawsuits are settled, when the clean-up is settled, when some of the other issues that are circulating around all settle out, we might look back and say, just on the numbers, that was a terrible period. Not even counting the fact that we'll say, that was the management and people couldn't access a doctor, the school system was like that? We may look back and say that was a bad time in our history.

In terms of the FMA (2018), I was pleased to see when I initially looked through and saw some changes around the pension management and the pension aspects - I looked a little closer and there's some governance issues there around the board constitution and stuff, and that's all necessary and good. But I will say that pensions are one aspect of the management of this province that I am particularly worried about. This province would have billions, I believe, of pension liabilities matched up by billions of pension assets. What happens to that matching if there's some kind of market correction or some action in the stock market that drives down the assets? We could be looking at huge deficits there.

It's a big issue that many people really don't want to talk about because they really don't know it and understand it. I mean, people understand the crisis we're in in health care, and people understand the issues in the education system, and with community services, and all these different areas. People understand that, but there are potential black clouds out there that we need to be thinking about as a government when we sit in this Chamber.

What I would say is a headline news release that declares a surplus - that's nice podium talk, but I would just urge the members in here to seriously consider what the reality is of this province beyond that podium. We can do much better if the government digs into the health care system and the management thereof. We can do much better with some changes in the classroom, supporting teachers, supporting administrators or managers, supporting students. We can do much better with the money that is already there, if it is properly spent and wisely allocated. We can do much better.

[4:00 p.m.]

It saddens me to think that our financial future has now been hooked to cannabis because that's really what happened here. I'll finish where I started, with the Premier saying it will be revenue-neutral on the one hand, but on the other hand when the pencil hit the paper, happily booked a \$20 million profit. That is the single defining moment of this budget for me - when I heard that; when I heard that's what had happened. How quickly that profit was sucked in, and the profit really wasn't even supportable.

When we started to talk about how many grams that was based on, there was a real discrepancy between what the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation was saying as the grams they were hoping on selling, or planning on selling, I guess, projecting they would sell and what the Department of Finance and Treasury Board had booked to determine revenue.

They didn't even jive, Mr. Speaker, they didn't even jive, and it's a big, big item in this budget.

So, let's spend our time in this Chamber talking about how we can improve health care; talking about how we can improve education; talking about identifying the storm clouds that might be out there for this province, and addressing those and searching for real answers and solutions on those, Maybe we can start doing that, Mr. Speaker, in Question Period tomorrow. When we raise some issues, maybe we can have some constructive feedback on some of those and we can try to move forward on that.

With those few words, a tale of caution - and I hope I'm wrong - but someday, 20 years from now, Mr. Speaker, you and I may be sitting around a campfire lamenting about our time in this Legislature. Whatever we might be doing at that time, Mr. Speaker, we may be looking back on the time we spent in this Legislature today and talking about some of the cast of characters we sat with in the Legislature and some of the issues that we addressed. I hope, I sincerely hope we are not looking back and saying, boy, we sure missed the boat on that.

With those few words, I'll take my seat.

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

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to close debate on Bill No. 116, the Financial Measures (2018) Act.

I do want to conclude by saying, as a member of government, I am proud of the 2018-19 budget. I am proud of good fiscal management that our government exercises every day of every year; I am proud that we are a government that has learned to live within its means; I am proud that the next four years are projecting balanced budgets; I am proud that the economists and the academics from outside of Nova Scotia are looking to us and saying that we have built a budget that is wise and prudent; and I am proud that this is our third consecutive balanced budget.

I move that we close debate on Bill No. 116.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 116. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you call Bill No. 76.

Bill No. 76 - Mineral Resources Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 76, the Mineral Resources Act, be now read a third time and do pass.

During second reading, we heard from members of this House who spoke about this bill and I want to thank the members for Victoria-The Lakes and Halifax Needham for bringing their points forward. I look forward to hearing the closing remarks from members here today. On March 2nd, I had the honour of introducing amendments to the Mineral Resources Act to this Legislature.

The Mineral Resources Act is the legislation that establishes the rights and obligations around the responsible development of Nova Scotia's mineral resources. Our government led a substantial review of the Act, which had not been done since 1990. I am proud to say that this new, modernized, and simplified Mineral Resources Act will facilitate economic development. It will make Nova Scotia a more competitive jurisdiction and assist in cutting red tape for industry and government. The new Act was drafted following extensive research by the Department of Natural Resources staff, including jurisdictional reviews of mining legislation across this country. I can tell you that this was not a small job, and I want to thank members of the department for all the hard work they have done.

In addition, we received valuable input from industry, environmental, non-government organizations, the Mi'kmaq professional associations, the public, and other government departments during consultation of the bill. Updating the Mineral Resources Act fulfilled a commitment of the natural resources strategy. The legislation strikes the right balance between stimulating the economy, partially in rural Nova Scotia, and managing our natural resources.

I would like to take a minute to address some of the concerns raised before the Law Amendments Committee the other week. The committee heard from witnesses who were concerned that the bill doesn't contain the legislative tools to protect water supplies. Mr.

Speaker, let me assure you, as well as other concerned Nova Scotians, that Section 59(1) and 36(2) of the new Mineral Resources Act provide the minister with the appropriate tools to protect Nova Scotia's most sensitive areas, wherever they may be in this province. Those sections provide the minister with the authority to withdraw mineral rights and to not accept an application for mineral exploration licence or acceptance of such an application and exploration are not in the best interests of the Crown or the public. Those sections of the Act provide the minister with the tools to make decisions which balance the benefits of economic development with protecting the environment.

I know that Nova Scotians share our concerns for protecting the environment. It's a concern which is also shared by the mining industry. It's important to remember that the potential environmental impacts of a mine project are assessed within the environmental assessment process, and in some cases mining projects are assessed by a federal and provincial environmental assessment.

I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that the environmental assessment process managed by Nova Scotia Environment is robust, and it will appropriately assess the potential impacts of mining projects, and provides an important opportunity for Nova Scotians who wish to provide their thoughts to the potential impacts of new mine developments.

It's important, Mr. Speaker, to the people of Nova Scotia and to this government that we have the most up-to-date Act that helps us manage our mineral resources. The new Mineral Resources Act will serve the future of the industry and the province well.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to acknowledge the excellent work of the Department of Natural Resources once again for drafting, developing, and delivering this bill. The geoscience of mines and our policy planning and support services branch led the Mineral Resources Act review. Civil servants in those branches deserve our thanks for working in the best interests of our communities, the sector, and the government.

I look forward to proclaiming a new Act with updated regulation that ensures clarity for both industry and staff when working within the areas administered by the Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, again, it's my pleasure to rise and speak to third reading of Bill No. 76. As I mentioned in second reading, responsible resource development is critically important for moving our province forward. Mining is an industry that has and will continue to play a huge role in the future of this province. We have a proud tradition of mining across this province from Cumberland County, to Pictou County, to Cape Breton and more. The role of the government is extremely important in setting the conditions for a competitive mining sector here in Nova Scotia. So, modernization of the Mineral Resources Act has been greatly needed.

We're pleased to see that the government sees the need to ensure that the appeal process is fair and independent from the minister's office, and also bring clarity to industry on the role of the Registry of Mineral and Petroleum Titles, and this bill does just that. So, Mr. Speaker, with those few words, the Progressive Conservative caucus will be voting in favour of Bill No. 76.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to the Mineral Resources Act on third reading. At second reading, I pointed out that when the Liberal Party introduced the new Mineral Resources Act last year, it ignored significant concerns that were brought forward by several environmental groups, including The Nature Conservancy of Canada, the Nova Scotia Nature Trust, and the Sierra Club. Those groups pointed out that the Act does not adequately protect land that has been conserved in land trusts, and gives the minister the power to force the transfer of land against the will of the owner. Those concerns still stand, and though this government has an opportunity to address them now, when they're bringing forward amendments to a still very new Act, it did not do so.

At Law Amendments Committee, citizens groups brought forward similar concerns and again, the Liberal Party voted against considering them, and I was disappointed by this decision because it seems to me that the amendments that were proposed by Sustainable Northern Nova Scotia and supporting groups were very reasonable and common sense. They proposed two amendments: first, to clarify where mining is permitted and where it is not and, second, to ensure that mining does not undermine other social priorities.

Clarity on where mining is and is not permitted is a reasonable request. Businesses that might be impacted by mining can make investments with confidence in areas where they know mining will not occur - for example, investments in tourism operations - and mining companies and communities don't need to waste time with applications that very likely will eventually be rejected. The places the amendments suggest should be identified as off-limits to mining include prime agricultural land, municipal parks, private nature conservancies, and community watersheds. The second amendment was to ensure money activities do not undermine, again, other social priorities.

As Carole Ferguson told the Law Amendments Committee, she's not anti-development. She wants more jobs and she sees her neighbours and her community developing new economic opportunities all the time, but she doesn't want to see those businesses that are already thriving, and where investments have already been made, be jeopardized by mining and the uncertainty around mining in places that are not appropriate.

There are many forms of economic development, especially in tourism and agriculture, that are not compatible with mining development, and the province has a responsibility to steward our province's land and resources to support a diversity of

economic and social activities and limit how much contrasting activities undermine each other.

The amendments proposed by Sustainable Northern Nova Scotia proposes that citizens should be able to make requests to the Minister of Natural Resources to zone certain areas as areas where mining is not allowed or is subject to certain conditions. In other words, their proposals gave - would have given - local voices a voice in planning their own future economic development, and I think those were reasonable requests, and ones that I would have liked to have seen the government support.

I know well at least one of the presenters to Law Amendments Committee, Kathryn Anderson. I met her in 1997, when I lived, for almost two years in total, in Guatemala. I met her early in my time there, and Guatemala is a country that's very different from here, the majority indigenous, quite poor, extremely polarized, extreme inequality, and Canadian mining companies have gone in there and have pursued their activities, at times to great detriment to communities. I think it is always folly for us to believe, to trust, in corporate interests to protect social and environmental interests. Canadian mining companies operate around the world, and it is only strong regulation and strong enforcement that prevent environmental degradation and, even worse, human rights abuses from happening.

[4:15 p.m.]

I have often thought as a citizen, better here than there. Better that mining happen here than there because here, at least, we have greater democratic voice. We have stronger systems, stronger institutions, to ensure that communities are protected. But I have to say that, as an MLA, I have been educated about where our systems are still weak. I think some recent reports by the Auditor General highlighting concerns around enforcement around tracking of conditions that are placed on environmental assessments were part of that education for me. I had not anticipated that.

Frankly, for me, legislation which provides the minister with the tools to protect us is very weak. It's no offence to any given minister. Simply put, if it is always up to the minister's discretion, then anything is always possible. We know that governments change, ministers change, and priorities change. Surely a community should be able to prioritize, for example, sustainable forestry on a community land trust and know from the outset - when they are organizing themselves for a long-term, sustainable, community-driven initiative, just for example - that that project is not going to be undermined by eventual mining development. I think the proposals that came forward from communities would have put balance and that we have to trust more than just the minister to be a safeguard for our environment and for our communities.

I regret speaking on third reading knowing that this our last opportunity to voice our opposition to this bill based on the lack of support for really reasonable amendments that came forward from the community.

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: I would like to thank my colleague the Critic for Natural Resources for her comments. We both sat in Law Amendments and heard people come and make presentations. Several presentations made a lot of sense to us because they balanced the environment, community, business interests, and industry interests. We thought that they were very, very reasonable, which is why my colleague introduced them here in the House. Sadly, they were turned down by the government, voted down. That makes us sad.

When I first heard about the changes to the Mineral Resources Act that were going to be coming, it started off last November in the *Tatamagouche Light*, which had a story about mineral exploration work that was being conducted by the Department of Natural Resources and an announcement that DNR was holding an open house to provide information for interested members of the public. That was on Saturday, November 25, 2017, at the Warwick Mountain Snowmobile Club.

The members of the public from the area who attended were extremely alarmed by what they heard and what they learned there, and many of them contacted me. DNR had by then already closed off more than 30,000 hectares of land to mining claims, planning to issue a request for proposals in Spring 2018 - now - hoping to entice a large company or a consortium of companies to do further exploration with the goal of a gold mine.

The 30,000 hectares of land stretch from the Wentworth Station to Earltown and across more than half of the Tatamagouche watershed region. That region is attached to six other watersheds, and we're told that the rivers that flow from the Tatamagouche watershed go towards 38 different communities.

The French River flows to the Tatamagouche itself and provides the drinking water for Tatamagouche. Citizens there, residents there, are extremely concerned about the idea of a gold mine being put smack dab in the middle of their watershed. I have to say, two of the rivers - the North River and the Salmon River - come down to Truro, Bible Hill, Millbrook First Nation, and Salmon River - named after the Salmon River. North River, which is just above Truro, is called "North River" because the North River comes down there. So we are very, very concerned about this.

There were also plans that were announced at that time for promotion of the exploration opportunity at a prospectors and developers conference in Toronto for 2018, the following year - which is now, and that has already actually occurred. The staff from DNR explained to the folks who were gathered on November 27th that there would be a new Act and regulations proclaimed in Spring 2018 that would modernize the way in which mining was handled.

First off, I've got to say that that sets off alarm bells with me, because I've heard this before. In fact, I heard this from the past Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage when he introduced a bill a few years ago, saying that it was going to streamline and modernize the way that people who want to make changes to houses and old properties and heritage properties could do so.

At the time, I was the Critic for the NDP for Communities, Culture and Heritage, and I said, this is going to make it easier to tear down buildings, to demolish our heritage buildings. The minister assured me - no, no, no, that was not the fact, it was just to streamline everything, make it easier - whatever. I said, yeah, but make it easier for who? For the people who might want to buy up an old house and demolish it and put a big box apartment building there.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, in spite of his assurances that this was never going to happen, that wasn't the idea at all - since then, we have noticed an unabated spate of demolitions occurring at great numbers here in Halifax. In particular, of beautiful old houses, homes, and entire districts.

I have to say, I saw this coming when I heard the words oh we're just going to modernize and streamline it. That's what set off the alarm bells to me with this bill when I first heard about it.

What I am seeing and hearing is that the new Mineral Resources Act will actually not bring Nova Scotia into the 21st century, as is claimed. The bill sets up the same old failed regime of basically giving mining companies whatever they want. The Natural Resources Minister actually said so herself on March 9th at second reading, and I quote, "This signals to the global mining community that Nova Scotia is open for business."

Another quote: "The new Mineral Resources Bill cuts red tape . . . It requires less frequent industry reporting . . . It allows for more time to complete work on exploration . . . licences . . . It streamlines the process for resolving private land and access disputes." That means expropriation.

Gold mining is not compatible with a watershed of a community. No mine is ever, ever more valuable than clean drinking water and the fact remains that you just cannot drink gold. A gold mine and a mill with a tailings pond is not compatible with the successful economy that has been developed on the North Shore. I know because I have a summer place up there and I go to many different things in the summertime, and it's wonderful to see the creative economy and the green economy thriving and flourishing there.

I am certainly not anti-development and neither is my caucus. Nor are the people who appeared at Law Amendments - these concerned citizens through that whole northern region. That's why we adopted their amendments and brought them here to the floor of the House, because we said they make sense.

I actually see all my neighbours up there on that North Shore thriving. There is a new lavender business up there that is growing, Sheree Fitch now has a beautiful bookstore and dreamery, and Tatamagouche is thriving with artists. There is filmmaking taking place, as well. We here in the caucus believe in the creative economy. We believe that there is so much more that Nova Scotians can be doing rather than some of the old resources economy. If you can build on the tourism and build on the wonderful creative people in all the different art forms that Nova Scotians can create, we will bring people to Nova Scotia.

What do they want to see when they come to Nova Scotia? They want to see the beautiful, natural environment. They don't want to see gold mines and exploration areas that are roped off from the public. They don't want to see the clear-cutting. They don't want to see this. They want to see a beautiful, preserved, natural environment. We want more jobs, but we don't want to jeopardize the businesses that are already thriving and the investments that are already made.

Gold mines are also notoriously damaging to the natural environment. They leave a long-lasting environmental scar and a large financial cleanup cost. In fact, the environmental and financial costs of the giant mine in Yellowknife, a mine that was filled with 237,000 tons of arsenic trioxide, which is a deadly by-product of gold mining, threatened to contaminate Yellowknife's drinking water.

Mining Watch Canada estimates, using government data no less, that the liability for contaminated mining sites in British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, Ontario, and Quebec, alone, to be at least at \$9.1 billion. The problem here, and I need to make this clear - mining companies are not on the hook for these costs. We, the public, are. That is both provincially and federally, and we need to be very much aware of that. Why go after making a dollar in the short term when you are going to have to spend a lot more? And we are noticing that right now with Northern Pulp as we know, we are dealing with that now.

The Mineral Resources Act needs to provide more protection to watersheds and to communities. In fact, amendments that came forth provided us with an opportunity to see some of the great suggestions made by the communities. For instance, lands that should be restricted from any or all prospecting, mining-related exploration, development, or mining included First Nation reserves, except as provided by the Indian Lands Act of 1924; prime agricultural lands; municipal parks; existing or proposed parks and wilderness areas; national parks under the federal Canada National Parks Act; private nature conservancies; properties listed under the Heritage Property Act; sites protected by the Special Places Protection Act, which is archeology; and important water courses and wetlands; natural historic sites and monuments; lands designated in a municipal land use plan for a use that is inconsistent with mining exploration and development, such as for energy, transportation, or recreation; and community watersheds.

[4:30 p.m.]

Gold mining - in fact, I come from Australia. There was a lot of gold mining. There was a big gold mining rush there, way back when. My great-great-great-uncle was involved in a standoff with the landowners there. They were fighting for their rights because they were being taxed to death on tiny little pieces of gold-mining properties. They stood up for themselves, and many people were shot and killed. My great-great-great-uncle actually survived and went to jail for it, but he said he wasn't sorry. Then he learned how to read and write and learned some law and became a governor in Australia after he got out.

I understand the lure of the gold rush. I understand it completely. But gold mining has actually never really made any jurisdiction money for the public that lives there, for the citizens who live there. Some of the poorest countries in the world have become major gold producers yet remain some of the poorest countries in the world.

Canadian mines have a terrible environmental and social record internationally. Some of us fear that they may view Nova Scotia as a rural backwater to be manipulated. We wouldn't want to see that, Mr. Speaker, because we have a vision about Nova Scotia that is at its most pristine and beautiful. We don't want it to be exploited in this way, and that's why many people are afraid of what might happen without any amendments to this bill.

There are many environmentally and socially healthy types of work that build communities, while mineral resources development destroys them. Why spend money on possibly fruitless mining and ignore the growing creative economy and the rural prosperity that keeps jobs and money locally? Local, local, local. Some of these are carbon credits, maple products and maple water, haskap fruit production, blueberry production, organic farming, the Christmas tree industry, and tourism. These types of industries make a lot of money for Nova Scotia.

Community forests and sustainably managed forest will also keep Nova Scotia fresh and green and yellow and orange and red. Our Acadian forests are extremely important for the health of this province, not turning them into just a mono-culture, just growing pulp product or stacks of paper that people throw away. We don't want to see this happen in Nova Scotia, and that's why as the NDP spokesperson for the environment, I want to bring our attention to these things so that we can think about them as time goes on.

Investing in growing these already successful ventures keeps the jobs local. They keep the taxes and revenues local. They don't fracture communities or their drinking water. They don't destroy the natural beauty of Nova Scotia. Currently, companies involved in resource development self-insure their activities, and then they fight tooth and nail to downplay the damage to reduce remediation costs, which the province, the taxpayers, pay for in the end, as I have said.

Bill No. 76 attracted the attention of many people. The amendments that were submitted in particular by SUNNS, which stands for Sustainable Northern Nova Scotia, they support the rural economy with the obvious growth potential that it has already, as described just now. They want to keep water and all life safe and healthy.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the House that on May 5, 2016, the NDP caucus introduced a bill called the Environmental Bill of Rights. It was introduced by a former colleague of ours, MLA Denise Peterson-Rafuse of Chester-St. Margaret's, and it was ignored.

The following year I was the new Environment Critic and we introduced it again. I think we've introduced it now three times, and it's always ignored and not passed, but we believe that it is very important, because that bill lays out a process for public participation in government decision-making regarding environmental issues. It attempts to increase public awareness and access to information about potential projects.

It would also create an environmental commissioner, someone who would be responsible for a range of duties including assisting members of the public who wish to participate in the decision-making process. Members of the public could also submit complaints to the commissioner. It could be argued that Nova Scotia Environment's ever-increasing claim to be strictly a regulatory body creates a growing need for an environmental commissioner.

Finally, the bill seeks to create a right to sue for members of the public who believe that harm to the environment is imminent. Given that much of the concern about the current process is tied to public participation, access to information, and recourse options for project opponents, an environmental bill of rights would actually be sufficient to address many of the shortcomings of this current Mineral Resources Act.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, please remember these words: drinking water, clean pure drinking water, is very quickly becoming the most valuable natural resource on the planet. Water is vital for all life. Water is sacred, and remember this: you cannot drink gold.

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

The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Victoria-The Lakes and Halifax Needham for their comments, and the comments from the member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River.

I want to thank the Progressive Conservative caucus for their support of this bill, I certainly do appreciate that. It totally makes sense to me, these are few housekeeping items that we were dealing with. Certainly, the intent is not to open up the bill and fully discuss

everything about the Mineral Resources Act, that was done last year, and it passed in this House, Mr. Speaker.

I also feel a little bad for the members of the NDP caucus because of the cynicism of government - you know, worried about cynicism in government. Certainly, when you start looking back to things like Warwick Mountain and what was going on then, that development in Warwick Mountain started in 2011, during the NDP tenure in this House, and this is not something that's new, but a project that's been worked on for a long time.

The member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River mentioned about water being our biggest asset, and the biggest thing that we need to protect on this planet. I absolutely agree with her, and that has never been an intent at any time, even unintentional, we don't expect to see that there's going to be any damage at all, not expectation at all. I have a firm belief, Mr. Speaker, in our Department of Environment. I believe that the safeguards that we have with the Minister of Environment, and the department, will ensure that any development in the mineral resources sector will be done with the utmost safety of Nova Scotians and Nova Scotia in mind.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move to close third debate on the Mineral Resources Act, Bill No. 76.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 76, the Mineral Resources Act.

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

There has been a request for a recorded vote.

We will ring the bells until the Whips are satisfied.

[4:39 p.m.]

[The Division bells were rung.]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Are the Whips satisfied?

We'll proceed with the recorded vote on third reading of Bill No. 76. I remind everybody to stay silent until the vote is completed, and when your name is called, please stand tall and state a simple Yea or Nay.

[The Clerk calls the roll.]

[4:47 p.m.]

YEAS

Mr. Churchill
Mr. Furey
Ms. Regan
Mr. MacLellan
Mr. McNeil
Ms. Casey
Mr. Glavine
Mr. Delorey
Mr. Colwell
Ms. Miller
Mr. Kousoulis
Mr. Porter
Mr. Gordon Wilson
Mr. Hines
Ms. Diab
Mr. Ince.
Mr. Rankin
Mr. Mombourquette
Ms. Arab
Mr. Horne
Mr. MacKay
Mr. Jessome
Ms. Lohnes-Croft
Ms. DiCostanzo
Mr. Irving
Mr. MacMaster
Mr. MacLeod
Mr. Dunn
Mr. Bain
Ms. MacFarlane
Mr. d'Entremont
Ms. Smith-McCrossin
Ms. Paon
Mr. Houston
Mr. Orrell
Ms. Adams
Mr. Lohr
Mr. Johns
Ms. Maslund
Mr. Halman

NAYS

Mr. David Wilson
Mr. Burrill
Ms. Zann
Ms. Roberts
Ms. Leblanc
Ms. Martin
Ms. Chender

Mr. Harrison

THE CLERK: For, 41. Against, 7.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government business for today.

I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow, Wednesday, April 11th, between 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Following the daily routine and Question Period, we will debate Opposition Business.

I now ask the PC House Leader to give us tomorrow's agenda.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: After the daily routine and Question Period, we'll be calling Bill No. 100 which is the civics course Act; Bill No. 74, which is the Municipal Grants Act for increased policing for cannabis control; and Bill No. 115, which was the Motor Vehicle Act on the Dutch Reach.

I do now move that we do rise to meet again between the hours of 1:00 and 5:30 tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for adjournment for the House to rise today to meet again tomorrow, Wednesday, April 11, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

The House now stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 4:51 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1213**

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Jr. Steel recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Jr. Steel finished fourth, and had two mistake-free, zero deduction routines; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Owen Donnelly for his dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1214

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Jr. Steel recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Jr. Steel finished fourth, and had two mistake-free, zero deduction routines; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Layla Alders for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1215

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Jr. Steel recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Jr. Steel finished fourth, and had two mistake-free, zero deduction routines; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Scout Burns for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1216

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Jr. Steel recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Jr. Steel finished fourth, and had two mistake-free, zero deduction routines; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Kaylee Campbell for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1217

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Jr. Steel recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Jr. Steel finished fourth, and had two mistake-free, zero deduction routines; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Alexis Coldwell for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1218

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Jr. Steel recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Jr. Steel finished fourth, and had two mistake-free, zero deduction routines; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Brianna Coldwell for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1219

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Jr. Steel recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Jr. Steel finished fourth, and had two mistake-free, zero deduction routines; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Sara Jones for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1220

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Jr. Steel recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Jr. Steel finished fourth, and had two mistake-free, zero deduction routines; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Kelsey Keddy for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1221

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Jr. Steel recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Jr. Steel finished fourth, and had two mistake-free, zero deduction routines; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Paige McNeil for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1222

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Jr. Steel recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Jr. Steel finished fourth, and had two mistake-free, zero deduction routines; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Courtney Toney for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1223

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Jr. Steel recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Jr. Steel finished fourth, and had two mistake-free, zero deduction routines; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Isabella Wood for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1224

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Mini Braves recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Mini Braves finished third with two amazing performances; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Abrianna Linton for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1225

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Mini Braves recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Mini Braves finished third with two amazing performances; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Addisyn Garby for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1226

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Mini Braves recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Mini Braves finished third with two amazing performances; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Alexis Coldwell for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1227

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Mini Braves recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Mini Braves finished third with two amazing performances; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Ava Martell for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1228

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Mini Braves recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Mini Braves finished third with two amazing performances; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Ava Sampson for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1229

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Mini Braves recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Mini Braves finished third with two amazing performances; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Hailey Turner for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1230

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Mini Braves recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Mini Braves finished third with two amazing performances; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Leighton Trenholm for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1231

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Mini Braves recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Mini Braves finished third with two amazing performances; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all their hard work they put in, and team member Mya Irvine for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1232

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Mini Braves recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas the Mini Braves finished third with two amazing performances; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Olivia Lebel for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1233

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Mini Braves recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas the Mini Braves finished third with two amazing performances; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Rebecca Levy for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1234

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Mini Braves recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas the Mini Braves finished third with two amazing performances; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Shylah Parsons for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1235

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Kailey Arenburg for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1236

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Alix Balsom-Vardy for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1237

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Mullen Bona for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1238

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard

work they put in, and team member Scout Burns for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1239

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Kaylee Campbell for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1240

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in and team member Mallory Connors for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1241

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Julia Cotton for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1242

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Claire Donnelly for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1243

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Sophie Keddy for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1244

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Brit Levy for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1245

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Emma Porter for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1246

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Emma Taylor for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1247

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Lillian Thomas for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1248

By: Mr. John Lohr (Kings North)

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

Whereas the Valley Cheer Athletic team Senior Bulletproof recently competed in the CheerExpo Nationals in Halifax on March 25, 2018; and

Whereas Senior Bulletproof finished third in their division and were awarded an “Awesome Dance” award; and

Whereas training for cheer requires teamwork, commitment, and dedication;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in offering sincere thanks to coaches Megan Shepard and Kaija Cashin Brown for all the hard work they put in, and team member Isabella Wood for her dedication and commitment to the team.

RESOLUTION NO. 1249

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 the Debert Fire Brigade held its annual banquet to honour its members on March 3, 2018; and

Whereas these volunteers benefit the community and surrounding areas through their dedication, commitment, and many hours of training; and

Whereas Tyler Sparks received his Level 1 Certification;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tyler Sparks and express our thanks for his volunteer service.

RESOLUTION NO. 1250

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 the Debert Fire Brigade holds an annual banquet to honour its members; and

Whereas these volunteers benefit the community and surrounding areas through their dedication, commitment, and many hours of training; and

Whereas Chief Shane Slack received his 30 -Year Service Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chief Shane Slack and express our thanks for his many years of volunteer service and leadership.

RESOLUTION NO. 1251

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 the Debert Fire Brigade held its annual banquet to honour its members on March 3, 2018; and

Whereas these volunteers benefit the community and surrounding areas through their dedication, commitment, and many hours of training; and

Whereas Rod Hampton received his Level 1 Certification;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Rod Hampton and express our thanks for his volunteer service.

RESOLUTION NO. 1252

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 the Debert Fire Brigade holds an annual banquet to honour its members; and

Whereas these volunteers benefit the community and surrounding areas through their dedication, commitment, and many hours of training; and

Whereas Michael Hepburn received his 5-Year Service Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Michael Hepburn and express our thanks for his many years of volunteer service.

RESOLUTION NO. 1253

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 the Debert Fire Brigade held its annual banquet to honour its members on March 3, 2018; and

Whereas these volunteers benefit the community and surrounding areas through their dedication, commitment, and many hours of training; and

Whereas Ken Hepburn received his Level 1 Certification, the Wendell Barnhill Most Improved Fire Fighter Award, and was one of the three firemen who tied for the Fire Fighter of the Year Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ken Hepburn for his numerous awards and express our thanks for his volunteer service.

RESOLUTION NO. 1254

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 the Debert Fire Brigade holds an annual banquet to honour its members; and

Whereas these volunteers benefit the community and surrounding areas through their dedication, commitment, and many hours of training; and

Whereas Ian Jennings received his 10-Year Service Award and was one of the recipients of a three-way tie for the Award for Fire Fighter of the Year;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ian Jennings and express our thanks for his many years of volunteer service.

RESOLUTION NO. 1255

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 the Debert Fire Brigade held its annual banquet to honour its members on March 3, 2018; and

Whereas these volunteers benefit the community and surrounding areas through their dedication, commitment, and many hours of training; and

Whereas Brandon Slack was presented the Fire Officer of the Year Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brandon Slack and express our thanks for his volunteer service and leadership.

RESOLUTION NO. 1256

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 the Debert Fire Brigade held its annual banquet to honour its members on March 3, 2018; and

Whereas these volunteers benefit the community and surrounding areas through their dedication, commitment, and many hours of training; and

Whereas Damien Penny received his Level 1 Certification;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ian Penny and express our thanks for his volunteer service.

RESOLUTION NO. 1257

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 being a volunteer firefighter is a noble and admirable endeavour for an individual who must possess common sense, an excellent attitude, and a strong desire to help other people; and

Whereas working in a team is essential, and it is a tradition in fire departments to honour individuals who stand out and deserve recognition for their dedication and efforts; and

Whereas the Firefighter of the Year Award is presented to a person based on activity during the year in all aspects of the department: training, emergencies, being well respected and well mannered, having an excellent attitude, respecting fellow firefighters, using common sense, and supporting self-improvement;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Laura Mather on receiving the 2017-18 Elmsdale Fire Department Firefighter of the Year Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1258

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 being a volunteer firefighter is a noble and admirable endeavour for an individual who must possess common sense, an excellent attitude, and a strong desire to help other people; and

Whereas working in a team is essential, and it is a tradition in fire departments to honour individuals who stand out and deserve recognition for their dedication and efforts; and

Whereas the Fire Officer of the Year Award is presented to a person who demonstrates respect for fellow members, the ability to lead and motivate, respect for common sense, and respect for ideas and suggestions from fellow members; asks that no one do something that he would not himself do; and participates in all respects of training, fundraising, and emergencies;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Robert Morrison on receiving the 2017-18 Elmsdale Fire Department Fire Officer of the Year Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1259

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 being a volunteer firefighter is a noble and admirable endeavour for an individual who must possess common sense, an excellent attitude, and a strong desire to help other people; and

Whereas working in a team is essential, and it is a tradition in fire departments to honour individuals who stand out and deserve recognition for their dedication and efforts; and

Whereas the Fellowship of the Year award is presented to a member based on their ability to get along well with fellow members, who is always there when needed and required, never degrades fellow members, is cheerful and always doing their part to the best of their ability, and is congenial;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Laura Mather on receiving the 2017-18 Elmsdale Fire Department Fellowship of the Year Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1260

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 Bitar's Ristorante has been offering fine dining experiences to the people of East Hants and surrounding area for 20 years; and

Whereas local resident and owner Rob Bitar has created more than just a business but also a passion and a livelihood for dozens of residents of the community; and

Whereas having a restaurant of this calibre and quality in a community contributes to the overall well-being and economy of the area;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Bitar's Ristorante on receiving the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce Restaurant of the Year 2017 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1261

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 Corridor Community Options for Adults (CCOA) is a registered, non-profit organization that has been providing service to the area since 1970; and

Whereas CCOA is dedicated and innovative and continually improving their programs that provide employment, training, education, and opportunities for adults living with intellectual disabilities; and

Whereas CCOA currently supports 35 individuals and will be expanding to include more adults into their social enterprises which lift the spirits of all those directly involved and the community as a whole;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Corridor Community Options for Adults for receiving the East Hants and District Chamber of Commerce Non-Profit of the Year 2017 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1262

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of every community in Nova Scotia, and the people of the Municipality of the District of Digby are proud of the many dedicated individuals who give of themselves each day to make our municipality a better place to live; and

Whereas this year, the Municipality of the District of Digby has selected one of its outstanding citizens as Volunteer Representative of the Year, and this individual has given much in the way of time and energy to various organizations; and

Whereas through this individual's genuine warmth and caring towards others, he has become a valuable asset to the organizations that he has been involved in;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly congratulate Robert Gaudet for being named Volunteer Representative of the Year for his outstanding contribution to his community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1263

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of every community in Nova Scotia, and the people of the Town of Digby are proud of the many dedicated individuals who give of themselves each day to make our town a better place to live; and

Whereas this year the Town of Digby has selected one of its outstanding citizens as Volunteer Representative of the Year, and this individual has given much in the way of time and energy to various organizations; and

Whereas through this individual's genuine warmth and caring toward others, she has become a valuable asset to the organizations that she has been involved in;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Patricia Potts for being named Volunteer Representative of the Year for her outstanding contribution to her community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1264

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas volunteers are the backbone of every community in Nova Scotia, and the people of the Clare are proud of the many dedicated individuals who give of themselves each day to make our municipality a better place to live; and

Whereas this year the Clare community selected one of its outstanding citizens as Volunteer Representative of the Year, and this individual has given much in the way of time and energy to his community; and

Whereas through this individual's genuine warmth and caring toward others, he has become a valuable asset to the organizations that he has been involved in;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Roland C. Comeau for being named Volunteer Representative of the Year for his outstanding contribution to his community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1265

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the 2018 Karate Canada National Championships were held in Halifax, Nova Scotia on March 7th to 11th, 2018; and

Whereas Trysten Deveau, a member of the Bushino Ki Karate Club in Church Point won gold in the Kumite Individual Female - Senior - 55 kg division and the Kumite Individual Female - U21 - 55 kg division tournament; and

Whereas in addition to her two gold medals, Trysten also received a gold medal with Team Atlantic in the Kumite Team Female - Senior competition;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Trysten Deveau and wish her continued success in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1266

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the 2018 Karate Canada National Championships were held in Halifax, Nova Scotia on March 7th to 11th, 2018; and

Whereas Denise Thibault, a member of the Bushino Ki Karate Club in Church Point competed in the Kumite Individual Female - Youth - 40 kg division in this tournament; and

Whereas the hard work and dedication Denise has displayed was rewarded with a bronze medal in her division;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Denise Thibault for winning bronze at the 2018 Karate Canada National Championships and wish her continued success in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 1267

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 Bob Bona of Enfield works tirelessly in his community to support many organizations and business endeavours; and

Whereas Bob Bona has been instrumental in Hants East and in the province to create growth and change through his involvement with the local Chamber of Commerce, East Hants Development Commission, Federation of Independent Business, and many other associations; and

Whereas the Tom Parker Award recognizes an outstanding Chamber member for their hard work and dedication to the business community through volunteer work;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Bob Bona on receiving the East Hants & District Chamber of Commerce Tom Parker Chamber Member of the Year 2017 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1268

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 Barn is a bootcamp-style gym that opened its doors in October 2016 in Elmsdale; and

Whereas the vision of The Barn owners Emmett Blois and Bryan Gillis was to create a gym where anyone could walk in, be excited about their workout, and achieve results through a metabolic conditioning suitable for all fitness levels; and

Whereas The Barn has been recognized for outstanding achievement in growth, sales and marketing initiatives, new products and service, and community involvement;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate The Barn on receiving the East Hants & District Chamber of Commerce New Business of the Year 2017 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1269

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 Fundy Tidal Bore is one of the most powerful bodies of water in the world; and

Whereas Shubenacadie River Runners is a tidal rafting operation located at the mouth of the Shubenacadie River where thousands of thrill seekers enjoy a uniquely Nova Scotia ride of a lifetime; and

Whereas the trips are narrated by knowledgeable and capable guides explaining local history and geology thereby ensuring visitors receive an unforgettable experience;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Shubenacadie River Runners on receiving the East Hants & Districts Chamber of Commerce Top Tourism Business of the Year 2017 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1270

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 inclusion and diversity in the workplace is strongly supported and valued in East Hants; and

Whereas Timeless and Twist, a small boutique in Enfield, supports that belief by enabling an employee to bring their whole selves to the workforce and tap into their full potential; and

Whereas Timeless and Twist provided an opportunity for a person to be fully engaged and become a contributing factor to the success of the business by developing their own unique creative skills;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Timeless and Twist on receiving the East Hants & District Chamber of Commerce Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion of the Year 2017 Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1271

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 being a volunteer firefighter is a noble and admirable endeavour for an individual who must possess a common sense, an excellent attitude and a strong desire to help other people; and

Whereas working in a team is essential, it is a tradition in fire departments to honour individuals who stand out and deserve recognition for their dedication and efforts; and

Whereas the Junior Firefighter of the Year award recipient is picked by the membership based on activity during the year in all respects to training, emergencies, is well-respected, well-mannered, has an excellent attitude, respects fellow firefighters, has good use of common sense and supports;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate Owen Manuel on receiving the 2017-2018 Elmsdale Fire Department Junior Firefighter of the Year Award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1272

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 Faith Drinnan recently sold her marketing agency in Halifax to focus full time on weaving and her business, Sisterhood Fibres, in Tatamagouche; and

Whereas her 11.5 acre property which looks out on Tatamagouche Bay has an airy garage with a dyeing kitchen, numerous bundles of fibre and many spinning wheels; and

Whereas each of the 1,000 breeds of sheep produce a different brand of fibre, the wool in Drinnan's shop even contains the name of the sheep that provided it;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly congratulate Faith Drinnan for her very successful business venture called Sisterhood Fibres through which she offers weaving, felting, knitting, crocheting and spinning which she insists are all relaxing, enjoyable things that anyone can do.

RESOLUTION NO. 1273

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 Gary McKinnon from Debert began his bike racing career in 1971 at the Debert airport track and has been a weekend regular at Atlantic Motorsport Park near Shubenacadie since it opened in 1974; and

Whereas he won the 1999 Canadian Heavyweight Vintage Championship, the first race at Atlantic Motorsport Park in 1974 in the production class, and was the first racer to win three maritime Road Racing titles (1975, 1976 and 1984); and

Whereas he was inducted into the Maritime Motorsports Hall of Fame in 2014 and into the Canadian Motorcycle Hall of Fame at a ceremony in Montreal in 2017;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly congratulate 65-year old Gary McKinnon, the most veteran rider on the circuit, who has enjoyed bike racing throughout his life and plans to continue enjoying the sport he loves as long as he remains healthy.

RESOLUTION NO. 1274

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 the North River Fire Brigade held its 45th Anniversary banquet on March 10th at their newly-renovated firehall which now has space for three truck bays and will allow the purchase of a new heavy response truck, a 2018 Freightliner, that will replace the brigade's 1994 GMC emergency van; and

Whereas along with the additional work space, a new radio centre was added, equipped with a digital responder tracking system called IamResponding; and

Whereas the 45-year milestone was celebrated with a meal and brief messages from brigade members, present and former chiefs, County Mayor Christine Blair and myself, as MLA for Colchester North;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature recognize and honour the members of the fire brigade for their hard work, dedication and many hours of training and service to the residents of North River and the surrounding areas.

RESOLUTION NO. 1275

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 the residents of Masstown, a small, rural community in Colchester North, have created an inviting, relaxing outdoor park that can be enjoyed by young and old; and

Whereas there is water available year-round, a porta potty for those necessary stops, a cement pad with a basketball hoop, a field for playing baseball and picnic tables to eat at or just to sit and relax; and

Whereas the Masstown Community Association is currently selling tickets on a Mother's Day basket and the proceeds will go towards the community park;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature recognize this association for improving the lives of the residents of their area by providing services and opportunities for them to enjoy.