



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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**First Session**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 2018**

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:</b>	
Res. 1276, Foster Families: Continuing Need - Recognize, Hon. K. Regan.....	3886
Vote - Affirmative.....	3887
Res. 1277, Victoria Co-op Fisheries: Seafood Export Awards - Thanks, Hon. K. Colwell .....	3887
Vote - Affirmative.....	3888
Res. 1278, World Parkinson's Day: Raising Awareness - Recognize, Hon. R. Delorey .....	3888
Vote - Affirmative.....	3888
Res. 1279, Intl. Day of Pink: Discrim.-Free Workplaces - Promote, Hon. T. Ince .....	3889
Vote - Affirmative.....	3889

Res. 1280, Cole, Sheila: Eco-Hero Award - Congrats., Hon. I. Rankin.....	3890
Vote - Affirmative.....	3890
Res. 1281, Dental Hygienists Wk.: Essential Care - Thanks, Hon. R. Delorey .....	3891
Vote - Affirmative.....	3891
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS:	
Intl. Day of Pink - Stop Bullying, Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	3892
Legere, Stewart - Let's Not Beat Ea. Other to Death, Ms. S. Leblanc .....	3892
Furey, Mark - MLA, Lunenburg W.: Humboldt Ribbons, Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	3893
Sandy Pt. Com. Rec. Grp.: Volunteer of the Yr. - Recognize, Ms. K. Masland.....	3893
TAG: Com. Theatre - Unifying, Mr. B. Maguire .....	3894
Toronto Maple Leafs: Successful Season - Congrats., Mr. K. Bain .....	3894
Bluenose Coastal Action Fdn.: Eco. Stewardship - Thanks, Mr. H. MacKay.....	3895
Hatt, Cecil & Greta: Selflessness - Thanks, Hon. P. Dunn.....	3895
Jamieson, Christine/Horne, Nick: Volunteer Awards - Recognize, Mr. B. Jessome.....	3896
Pregnancy & Infant Loss: Motion 110 - Support, Mr. T. Halman.....	3896
Intl. Day of Pink: Com. Grps. Support - Celebrate, Ms. C. Chender .....	3897
Rashed, Hassan: Com. Service - Commend, Ms. R. DiCostanzo.....	3897
C.B. Co. Islanders Bantam AA: Cape Breton Cup - Congrats., Hon. A. MacLeod .....	3898
Sickboy Podcast: Living Well - Thanks, Ms. L. Roberts.....	3898
Randell, Donna: Volunteer of the Yr. - Recognize, Mr. K. Irving.....	3898
Nova Scotians without Family Physicians - Recognize, Ms. B. Adams .....	3899
Henningsen, Chris: Library Volunteer - Thanks, Hon. K. Regan.....	3900
Cottrill, Joanne: Fundraising for Haiti - Commend, Ms. E. Smith-McCrossin.....	3900

Jackson, Troy & Todd: Film, “Hoods” - Congrats., Ms. L. Zann.....	3901
Barnhill, Randy: 34 Yrs., Debert Fire Brigade - Thanks, Hon. K. Casey.....	3901
Leslie, Sarah: Volunteer of the Yr. - Congrats., Mr. J. Lohr .....	3902
Dartmouth Players: Fostering Creativity - Thanks, Ms. C. Chender .....	3902
Costa Rica Mission: Humanitarianism - Commend, Hon. L. Glavine.....	3902
Chisholm, Jake: Outreach Officer - Congrats., Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	3903
Cdn. Plasma Res.: Paying for Plasma - Ban, Ms. T. Martin .....	3903
40 n’ Change: Musical Grp. - Recognize, Hon. M. Miller .....	3904
Forward, Linda: Volunteer Awards - Recognize, Ms. B. Adams .....	3905
Gillis, Chantel/Burton, Kyle: O’Brien Awards - Congrats., Ms. L. Zann.....	3905
Toronto Maple Leafs - Best of Luck, Mr. C. Porter .....	3906
PA Players: “Mary Poppins” - Best Wishes, Mr. T. Halman.....	3906
NEOF: Supporting Youth Activities: Thanks, Ms. L. Roberts.....	3906
Stoyles, Jackie: Volunteer Award - Congrats., Hon. L. Hines.....	3907
Murphy, Ryan: Officiating Career - Congrats., Hon. A. MacLeod .....	3907
Intl. Day of Pink: Student-led Advocacy - Respect, Hon. L. Diab .....	3908
Roszel, Howard: Volunteer of the Yr. - Recognize, Ms. K. Masland.....	3908
Batchilder, Drew/Smith, Victoria: HS Blood Drive - Congrats., Hon. I. Rankin.....	3909
St. George’s Channel: Weather Stn. Initiative - Commend, Ms. A. Paon.....	3909
Schnare, Marjorie: 101 <sup>st</sup> Birthday - Best Wishes, Mr. B. Maguire .....	3910
Smith, Gordon: Maple Prod. - Recognize, Ms. E. Smith-McCrossin.....	3910
Hatt, Ellen/Rice, Kelsey: Acadia Axewomen - Congrats., Mr. B. Horne .....	3910
Larder, Beatrice: 90 <sup>th</sup> Birthday - Best Wishes, Mr. H. MacKay.....	3911

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

No. 652, Prem. - FOIPOP Web Portal: Breach - Timeline, Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	3912
No. 653, Prem.: Long-term Care Crisis - Address, Mr. G. Burrill .....	3913
No. 654, Int. Serv. - FOIPOP Portal Breach: Info. - Timeline, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	3915
No. 655, Int. Serv. - FOIPOP Portal Breach: Security Checks - Details, Hon. David Wilson .....	3916
No. 656, Int. Serv. - FOIPOP Portal Breach: Nova Scotians - Numbers, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	3917
No. 657, Justice: Cannabis By-prod. - Availability, Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	3918
No. 658, H&W - Health Auth.: Nurse Practitioner Recruit. - Priority, Ms. B. Adams .....	3919
No. 659, H&W - Plasma Collection: For-Profits - Ban, Ms. T. Martin .....	3920
No. 660, H&W - Cumb. Reg. Health Care Ctr.: Unsafe Cond. - Action, Ms. E. Smith-McCrossin.....	3922
No. 661, H&W - Rural N.S.: Nursing Shortage - Cause, Mr. A. MacMaster.....	3923
No. 662, H&W - Nursing Shortage: Working Conditions - Excuse, Mr. A. MacMaster.....	3924
No. 663, EECD - Classroom Support Staff/Specialists: Increase - Ensure, Ms. C. Chender.....	3925
No. 664, H&W: Physician Shortage - Pressures, Hon. C. d'Entremont.....	3926
No. 665, H&W: Health Care Delivery - Quality, Mr. K. Bain .....	3928
No. 666, H&W - N. Sydney: Com. Demonstration - Min. Attend, Mr. E. Orrell.....	3929
No. 667, Fish. & Aquaculture - Fed. Panel: Lack of Fishers - Response, Ms. L. Roberts.....	3931

**OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS:**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:**

No. 100, Education Act	
Mr. T. Halman.....	3932
Mr. B. Jessome.....	3936
Ms. C. Chender .....	3939
Hon. P. Dunn.....	3942
No. 74, Municipal Grants Act	
Ms. K. MacFarlane .....	3946
Mr. H. MacKay .....	3950
Hon. David Wilson .....	3954
Mr. J. Lohr .....	3958

No. 115, Motor Vehicle Act	
Hon. P. Dunn.....	3963
Ms. R. DiCostanzo.....	3965
Ms. S. Leblanc .....	3968
Ms. B. Adams .....	3970

## ADJOURNMENT:

## MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5):

Gov't. (N.S.) - Tourism: Continued Growth - Positive Effects,	
Ms. S. Lohnes-Croft.....	3974
Ms. L. Roberts.....	3976
Hon. A. MacLeod .....	3979

ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Thur., Apr. 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. ....3982

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

Res. 1282, Prospect Rd. Srs.: Com. Spirit - Recognize,	
Hon. I. Rankin.....	3983
Res. 1283, S.S. Atl. Heritage Park Soc.: Volunteer Bd. - Thanks,	
Hon. I. Rankin.....	3983
Res. 1284, ROC: Com. Serv. - Thanks,	
Hon. I. Rankin.....	3984



House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 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 with the daily routine, the topic for late debate tonight, as submitted by the honourable member for Lunenburg, is:

Therefore be it resolved that Nova Scotia's historic year in tourism and fourth consecutive year of growth will lead to more business opportunities, jobs for Nova Scotians, and more vibrant communities.

That's for late debate tonight at the moment of interruption.

The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. HALMAN: In the west gallery, we have Dartmouth East residents George Butt and John MacPherson. Both individuals give back enormously to Dartmouth East. They are always happy to provide wise counsel at our local Tim Hortons on the Waverley Road and throughout Dartmouth East. I ask all members of the House to provide a warm welcome to George and John. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: We will begin the daily routine.

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

**GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1276**

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

Whereas foster families give time and love to support children and youth when they need it most by providing children with the opportunity to have a lifelong family relationship; and

Whereas the number of foster families in Nova Scotia is on the rise, with the addition of 100 loving homes over the past year, bringing the current number of foster families to more than 660; and

Whereas although the number of foster families is increasing, we still need full-time and part-time foster parents from all cultures and backgrounds to provide loving homes for children in every region of our province;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly recognize and thank the many Nova Scotians who are stepping up to take on this important role, and that they encourage more Nova Scotians to consider becoming foster families by distributing the flyers sent to MLA offices or by spreading the word about the website [fostercare.novascotia.ca](http://fostercare.novascotia.ca).

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. COLWELL: With us today in the east gallery, we have Osborne Burke, the Manager of Victoria Co-operative Fisheries Ltd., and I might also add to that, he is a very dear friend and also a gentleman who has really helped grow Nova Scotia's economy through the fishery.

I ask the House to give him a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1277**

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

Whereas through the efforts of companies like Victoria Co-operative Fisheries Ltd., Nova Scotia has been Canada's number one exporter of seafoods for three years in a row, reaching \$2 billion in exports in 2017; and

Whereas Victoria Co-operative Fisheries Ltd.'s success in helping to grow Nova Scotia's global seafood presence is because of the tireless market development activities to promote their high-quality Nova Scotia seafood products, and their efforts were recently recognized with an award of excellence at the 20<sup>th</sup> Minister's Fisheries and Aquaculture Conference on the fishing industry; and

Whereas Victoria Co-operative Fisheries Ltd.'s active participation at international trade shows and missions have secured many high-value orders from worldwide exports for their products that have benefited the economies of their rural Cape Breton community and the Province of Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Victoria Co-operative Fisheries Ltd. for their hard work and their dedication to growing Nova Scotia's seafood sector, and the jobs and economic activity that they create.

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



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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1278**

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

Whereas Parkinson's is a complex brain disease that impacts each diagnosed person differently; and

Whereas understanding the disease and knowing what to expect can help people better manage their condition; and

Whereas today is World Parkinson's Day, a day to promote education and greater understanding of Parkinson's;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature recognize World Parkinson's Day by raising awareness of Parkinson's in their communities and showing support for those individuals and families impacted by this condition.

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 the Public Service Commission.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1279**

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

Whereas April 11, 2018, is the Day of Pink, the international day against bullying, discrimination, homophobia, transphobia, and transmisogyny across the world, which started right here in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Government of Nova Scotia is a large employer in the province that values and respects diversity, employee well-being, and safety; and

Whereas the government, through the work of the Public Service Commission, is committed to providing workplaces where all employees are treated fairly, equitably, and inclusively through their respectful workplace policy, guidelines to support transgender and variant employees, our Positive Spaces program, and employee networks such as Pride Nova Scotia and many more initiatives;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly acknowledge the importance of ensuring that our workplaces are free of any forms of discrimination, and continue to work together to make this happen.

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 Environment.

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. RANKIN: I would like to draw the members' attention to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us Sheila Cole, a long-time environmental activist who has spent many years on several boards such as the Ecology Action Centre for 10 years, as well

as the Environmental Health Association of Nova Scotia for 22 years. I'd like the members to give her a warm welcome before I read this. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Environment.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1280**

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

Whereas Sheila Cole has been recognized by the Nova Scotia Environmental Network with their Eco-Hero Lifetime Achievement award; and

Whereas this award recognizes Ms. Cole's career in environmentalism that has spanned more than three decades, with work in Nova Scotia, across Canada, and around the world; and

Whereas her work and devotion to the environmental movement has tackled such important issues as environmental health, climate change, toxic waste, air quality, and mining;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize Sheila Cole and congratulate her for lifelong commitment to environmental advocacy.

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.

Just for purposes of clarifying the record, that's a government notice of motion, not a congratulatory notice of motion, correct?

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1281**

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

Whereas healthy teeth and gums are intrinsically linked to our overall wellbeing; and

Whereas dental hygienists are an essential part of our health care teams; and

Whereas this week is National Dental Hygienists Week, a time to show appreciation for the work that dental hygienists carry out to help us maintain good oral health;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature thank dental hygienists for the important health services they provide every day to Nova Scotians.

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 on an introduction.

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, in the east gallery, I want to recognize a long-time friend, someone who I worked with at Cape Breton University, Philomena Sutherland. She lives in Sydney. She's here in the city for the day and she came to the Legislature. I just want to rise and welcome her here, and thank her for all of her support to me over the years since I was a student at CBU. (Applause)

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****NOTICES OF MOTION****STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**INTL. DAY OF PINK - STOP BULLYING**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, today is the International Day of Pink. On this day, communities across the globe unite to celebrate diversity and raise awareness to stop homophobia, transphobia, and all types of bullying.

The International Day of Pink originated from Nova Scotia when two high school students witnessed a male student being bullied because he was wearing a pink shirt. These brave students intervened in the situation and after witnessing this event, were compelled to do more to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying in society.

In the next few days, students came together to wear pink to stand in solidarity against bullying, and to highlight the extensive damage it does, especially to young people.

Wearing pink is an important symbolic gesture that we can all do to remain attentive in the fight against all types of bullying.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**LEGERE, STEWART - LET'S NOT BEAT EA. OTHER TO DEATH**

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, on this day of pink, a day to speak out about bullying, homophobia, and transphobia, I want to celebrate an incredible singer/songwriter, actor, dancer, poet, and producer, Stewart Legere.

Legere is a proud, queer artist whose show, *Let's Not Beat Each Other to Death*, is a moving tribute to members of the LGBTQ community who have been harmed or killed by acts of hate. Inspired by the brutal murder of Halifax's Raymond Taavel and an attack against an outspoken gay musician, the participatory experience is part theatre, part music, and a big, giant dance party.

In his own words, Legere wants to "pay tribute . . . to queer people around the world who have suffered bigotry and violence . . . the piece offers audiences the chance to remember, celebrate, think, and dance.

*Let's Not Beat Each Other to Death* premiered here in Halifax at the Bus Stop Theatre and has played major festivals in Canada and in May, Legere and his team will travel to the U.K. to play at Bristol's Mayfest and at Chapter Centre in Cardiff.

I want to honour Stewart Legere for his beautiful production, for all his artistic work, and for being a brave and inspiring leader in the LGBTQ community, for standing up against violence, and for offering audiences a chance to contemplate a more peaceful and hopeful world.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: I beg leave to make an introduction, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. LOHNES-CROFT: I'd like to turn everyone's attention to the east gallery, my CA Ruth Wawin is here, and being that later this month we will celebrate Administrative Assistants Day, I want to thank her for everything she does for me, as I think all of us feel about our constituency assistants. So, welcome to the House, Ruth. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**FUREY, MARK - MLA, LUNENBURG W.: HUMBOLDT RIBBONS**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank and commend my colleague and neighbour from Lunenburg West for his kind and heartfelt gesture of making Nova Scotia ribbons for the members of this House of Assembly to wear in support of all those who are mourning and touched by the Humboldt Tragedy.

This tragic event touches the honourable member personally. Mr. Speaker, as a parent, a former coach, and by his own service in the RCMP here in Canada, he knows first-hand of the experiences on both sides.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in thanking the member from Lunenburg West on his gesture of support for Humboldt, and may we all wish them #HumboldtStrong.

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

**SANDY PT. COM. REC. GRP.: VOLUNTEER OF THE YR. - RECOGNIZE**

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, this year the Municipality of Shelburne is recognizing the Sandy Point Community Recreation Group as its Provincial Volunteer of the Year.

This non-profit organization owns, operates, and maintains the Sandy Point Community Centre and lighthouse. In addition, these volunteers provide benevolence, social events, and fundraising for the local Sandy Point Community, and significant tourist population.

The original Sandy Point Lighthouse was first built in 1873 after a fire. It was rebuilt and relocated in 1903 to its current location, overlooking Shelburne Harbour. It is a

very important part of the Sandy Point Community and is enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize and applaud this group for all they do for their community of Sandy Point.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**TAG: COM. THEATRE - UNIFYING**

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I'd like to express my love and gratitude for all 660 foster families in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to recognize a very special gem in my community, the Theatre Arts Guild, or TAG, a local theatre guild that puts on fantastic masterpieces at the Pond Playhouse at 6 Parkhill Road in Jollimore. This month's presentation is *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Local theatre brings the community together and promotes local talent.

I'd like to thank all the volunteers, the board of directors, and artists that help make the Pond Playhouse a shining example for all.

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

**TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS: SUCCESSFUL SEASON - CONGRATS.**

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, in Canada and throughout the world, hockey is recognized as a sport that, since its inception, has occupied the hearts and minds of young and old alike.

Through those years, a rivalry has existed between the Montréal Canadiens and the Toronto Maple Leafs. But not this year, as Montréal fans will be on the sidelines hoping during the playoffs to learn from the tremendous talents of the Leafs. Being one of only two Canadian teams in the playoffs this year, the Leafs have shown their dominance all season long.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of the House join me in congratulating the Toronto Maple Leafs on an excellent season, and wish them well on the road to the Stanley Cup, along with passing along deepest sympathy to all Montréal Canadiens fans on their dismal season. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The Habs fan in me wants to take that one under advisement. (Laughter)

The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret's.

### **BLUENOSE COASTAL ACTION FDN.: ECO. STEWARDSHIP - THANKS**

MR. HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, since 1993, the Bluenose Coastal Action Foundation has been a strong voice for the restoration, enhancement, and conservation of our precious ecosystem along the beautiful South Shore of Nova Scotia. This volunteer-driven charitable organization's board of directors, its staff, and its members tirelessly pursue the mission of environmental preservation through research, education, and action.

Their vision is to promote a healthy environment in our thriving South Shore communities. They have worked in many important ecological areas over the last 25 years, including river restoration projects, endangered species work, climate change studies, and pollution prevention initiatives, such as active transportation and solid waste education projects.

I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating the Bluenose Coastal Action Committee on their accomplishments to date, and to wish them all the best in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

### **HATT, CECIL & GRETA: SELFLESSNESS - THANKS**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, Bill Estabrooks, the former member for Timberlea-Prospect, certainly would have something to say about my colleague's statement.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to bring to the attention of the House of Assembly the wonderful husband and wife team from Stellarton, Cecil and Greta Hatt. The Hatts had three children of their own who were all successful in their chosen fields.

Many years ago, the Hatts recognized that there was a young man in their community who was not only suffering with mental illness but also the victim of extreme neglect and abuse. They did what few other people would do and they took this young boy into their home, their lives, and their hearts. Charlie Noel would live his life in safety and love until becoming an adult.

We had the pleasure of getting to know about Cecil and Greta through our office and are pleased to now consider them both friends. I would ask the members of this House of Assembly to join me in thanking the Hatts for their incredible kindness and selfless acts during their lifetime.

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



**JAMIESON, CHRISTINE/HORNE, NICK:  
VOLUNTEER AWARDS - RECOGNIZE**

MR. BEN JESSOME: Today I'd like to recognize two kind-hearted and committed community members - Christine Jamieson of Waterstone and Nick Horne of Westwood Hills. This week they were recipients of Provincial Volunteer Recognition Awards.

Ms. Jamieson was recognized for her ongoing work to promote the Special Olympics FUNdamentals Program recruiting volunteers and new families. Ms. Jamieson is a leader at the Bedford-Sackville organization, and they can proudly state that they have the largest Special Olympics Youth Program in our province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Horne was recognized for his commitment in our community as an engaged participant on the Westwood Hills Residents Association and the St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association. Further, Mr. Horne is also the founder of the Anaphylaxis Society of Nova Scotia and works to raise awareness and places life-saving EpiPens in public spaces.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members of the House to join me in recognizing Christine Jamieson and Nick Horne of Hammonds Plains-Lucasville for receiving Provincial Volunteer Awards and, further, pay gratitude to our hard-working volunteers across our great province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**PREGNANCY & INFANT LOSS: MOTION 110 - SUPPORT**

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, in October I was so proud to stand with members of all three Parties and unanimously pass Bill No. 38, officially making October 15<sup>th</sup> Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day. At the end of April, in Ottawa, Motion 110 is being moved. This motion, much like our own Bill No. 38, is a non-partisan motion to improve the level of compassion and support for parents who have suffered the loss of an infant.

My friend and Dartmouth East resident Paula Harmon will be in Ottawa for this presentation. She will be representing her organization, Gardens of GRACE, and the amazing people behind Bill No. 38 that was passed here in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my support of Motion 110 and hope others in this House will join me in supporting this important initiative.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**INTL. DAY OF PINK: COM. GRPS. SUPPORT - CELEBRATE**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on the International Day of Pink, to recognize the organizations dedicated to supporting LGBTQ communities in Nova Scotia.

These include the 90 gender and sexuality alliance clubs led by students dotted around the province's high schools and community centres - the Youth Project in Halifax which supports youth and educates Nova Scotians around issues of gender and sexuality; South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre which provides space and supports to student population and the community at large; and the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project which has participated in numerous human rights cases involving same sex rights and was instrumental in bringing marriage equality to Nova Scotians.

We have a lot more work to do, but today let us celebrate the work that these and many other organizations do to support the LGBTQ community and to educate all Nova Scotians.

[1:30 p.m.]

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

**RASHED, HASSAN: COM. SERVICE - COMMEND**

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize a passionate young man from my riding who is committed to community service.

Hassan Rashed is a 26-year-old who emigrated to Halifax from Kuwait in 2009. Since then he has devoted much of his time to community building and volunteering. Hassan has volunteered with the Al-Rasoul Islamic Society since 2014, where he coordinates community-wide events and religious programs throughout the year. He also leads the society's youth initiatives, administers its social media presence, delivers public speeches, and teaches Sunday School.

Hassan took a leading role with the society in welcoming and settling Syrian refugees and still maintains ties with some of the families to this day.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the members of this House join me in commending Hassan for his impactful volunteer work and for being a positive role model for young people in his community.

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

**C.B. CO. ISLANDERS BANTAM AA: CAPE BRETON CUP - CONGRATS.**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Cape Breton County Islanders Bantam AA team, which recently captured the Cape Breton Cup with a 7-2 win over Cape Breton West on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

The Cape Breton County Islanders Bantam AA team was also named league champion for the 2017-18 season. The team next competes at the provincials, which are being held in Amherst.

I stand today to thank the Cape Breton County Islanders Bantam AAs, their coach, their assistant coaches, and their parents for all the hard work and the time that everyone puts into giving these kids the amazing opportunity to play their favourite game, hockey. What a great job.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**SICKBOY PODCAST: LIVING WELL - THANKS**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I have mentioned before in this House my love for podcasts. Today I want to shout out to Sickboy, a local podcast that has captured the ears and hearts of many. It's produced locally.

Jeremie Saunders is a multi-award-winning actor from here in Halifax who has cystic fibrosis, a terminal condition. When he was 10 years old, he read in a pamphlet that he would likely die by age 30. He is now 29 and co-host and co-producer of Sickboy, where he and two childhood friends, Brian Stever and Taylor MacGillivray, talk with others who are living with serious medical conditions. Recent episodes have featured guests, all young, who live with narcolepsy, depression, and Hodgkin lymphoma, just for example.

The Sickboy podcast is hilarious and insightful. I really appreciate the banter between these three men who clearly love and support each other and are breaking down our stigma about talking about illness and our fears.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**RANDELL, DONNA: VOLUNTEER OF THE YR. - RECOGNIZE**

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the tremendous volunteer efforts of Donna Randell.

As a mother of two children on the autism spectrum, Donna identified the need for recreational and social programming geared towards older youth and adults with special needs in her community, and she created Kaleidoscope to fill that gap. She has also

generously given of her time and energy to a variety of other important organizations and initiatives, including the Flower Cart, the Special Olympics, the Alexander Society, Outside the Box, and CAPRE. Recently, Donna was presented with a 2018 Provincial Volunteer Award as the representative from New Minas.

I invite all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Donna on that well-deserved honour and in thanking her for her commitment to improving the lives of her fellow citizens and building a more inclusive community.

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

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw everyone's attention to the west gallery, and I would like these two people to stand up. These are two people who have travelled to the Legislature to let us know that they do not have a family doctor. The first is Lisa Webb, and the second is Maurice Muise. I would like to thank them for taking the time to come down here today. (Applause)

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

#### **NOVA SCOTIANS WITHOUT FAMILY PHYSICIANS - RECOGNIZE**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: As you all know, I have the only constituency without a single family doctor. The following people would like you to know that they do not have a doctor: Rebecca Redden; Brenda Macleod; Veronica Latter; Ashley Whynot and her family of four; Many, MJ, and Josh Harris from Aylesford; Kim Young from Dartmouth; Emma Poliquin from Eastern Passage; Logan Doucette, Eastern Passage; Mary Eldrige, six years in Shearwater; Angela and Keith Gallant, Eastern Passage; Rebecca, Roddie, and Callum Reddin; Jessica Turpin and her husband and son, from Eastern Passage; Crystal Lace Frizzell; Carren, Wesley, and Isabella Frizzell; Malcolm O'Donnell; Cherie Chase; Rhiannon Verran; Emily Snow; Cindy T.; Pinky MV; Sarah Milbury, who left the military in 2015 and is still looking; Donna Jean Isnor from Windsor; Laura V. and her family of five; Brandy G. and three children; Lisa A.; Wanda Crosby and son; Catherine Old; Atiya, five years old, waiting since birth; Rhonda Vickers; David and Donna Long, Woodside; Cindy Travis; Jamie Graham; Toby . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for the member's statement has expired.

The honourable member for Bedford.

**HENNINGSEN, CHRIS: LIBRARY VOLUNTEER - THANKS**

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to tell this House about a Bedford volunteer who is making a big difference for newcomers.

Christopher Henningsen has been volunteering at the Bedford Public Library as a conversation group teacher. Chris has been instrumental in starting and maintaining the Intermediate Conversation Group on Saturday mornings at the library, hosting 15 to 20 people per week.

Chris is described as a great teacher and communicator. He's a patient and welcoming face at the library. It's no surprise that last year he was honoured by the Bedford Public Library for his commitment. Chris also volunteers with the Halifax Tool Library.

I'd like to thank Chris for being such a welcoming presence and for being so generous of his time. He makes a big difference in the lives of people learning English in our community.

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

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, in the west gallery I'd like Mr. Frankie MacInnis, of Creignish, to stand. Frankie is a constituent of my constituency, Inverness, and I know we are all, here, appreciative no matter what side of the stripe we're on, of people who help us at election time. Frankie has been a big help over the years to many people including myself and also the member for Cape Breton-Richmond, particularly in the last election.

We're pleased to have him with us in the House, and we'd ask everyone to give him a round of applause. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**COTRILL, JOANNE: FUNDRAISING FOR HAITI - COMMEND**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize Joanne Cotrill from Pugwash. She is a cook at the local high school and has started a fundraiser to help those in a school in Haiti.

Currently in Haiti the meals for 180 students are cooked over an open fire, and Joanne is helping to raise money for a propane stove for the school. She has previously raised money to help provide the children in Haiti with nutritional supplements, as well as food and utensils. Joanne first visited the country after the earthquake in 2010, and since then she has been involved with raising money so they can help rebuild.

I commend Joanne on her selfless efforts to help others.

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

**JACKSON, TROY & TODD: FILM, "HOODS" - CONGRATS.**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate two brothers from Truro, Troy Jackson and Todd Jackson, for their film Hoods, a short film based on a true story.

What do you get when you cross a clown, Dracula, and the KKK, who all show up at a Halloween party? One heck of a memorable life lesson. With humour and wit, two Black brothers survive a Halloween party in Truro as the only ones who have bothered to dress up - unless you count the two in the KKK outfits. Teen hood was never so good - not. Starring Asante Spivey, Khalil Spivey, Rebecca Ryan, Jared Blois, Lucas Rushton, Mariah Altair, Alec Smith, and Max French.

As Troy says, high school musicals at CEC and track and field kept him in school and grounded in a small town which could be very indifferent to Black youth. However, Truro is changing, Mr. Speaker, and we are so proud of our own Jackson brothers.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

**BARNHILL, RANDY: 34 YRS., DEBERT FIRE BRIGADE - THANKS**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, yearly the Debert Fire Department has an awards banquet to honour its volunteer members. Their commitment, dedication, and level of professionalism have benefited their community and the surrounding area.

On March 3, 2018, I was pleased to attend this year's banquet celebrating the 46 years since the creation of the brigade. It started with eight members and currently has 24 active members. A special tribute was given to Randy Barnhill, who has been an active serving member of the Debert Fire Brigade for 34 years. He holds the record for the longest consecutive running executive officer since the brigade's inception, with an impressive 29 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask members of the House of Assembly to join me in thanking Randy Barnhill for giving his personal time to ensure the safety of others in his own community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**LESLIE, SARAH: VOLUNTEER OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, Sarah Leslie is the Volunteer of the Year for Kentville. Her contributions, leadership, and dedication to the Friends of the Kentville Library Community Group was a driving force in their successful fundraising efforts. The people of the Valley and of the Town of Kentville have greatly benefited from her efforts. She and the friends of the Kentville Library Community Group now have a world-class library to show for all their efforts.

Her generous spirit and hard work are an inspiration to all. Mr. Speaker, I ask this Legislature to join me in congratulating Sarah Leslie, Town of Kentville 2017 Volunteer of the Year.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**DARTMOUTH PLAYERS: FOSTERING CREATIVITY - THANKS**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Dartmouth Players, the only community theatre in Dartmouth. The company has been producing amateur theatre by the community, for the community, for over 25 years.

Producing between four and five plays per season, the Dartmouth Players makes theatre affordable for audiences and provides a literal stage for local actors, directors, and technicians to practise their crafts. They also host charity performances where the net proceeds of the evening are donated to help local registered charities with their fundraising efforts. With over 60 plays under their belt, this group has proven its commitment to the arts in our city.

Please join me in thanking the Dartmouth Players for fostering creativity and community in Dartmouth, and wish them even more success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

**COSTA RICA MISSION: HUMANITARIANISM - COMMEND**

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend 10 youth from the Kingston-Berwick area who travelled to Costa Rica on a mission to assist with building a community centre for local children. During their mission, the 10 students visited with underprivileged families, formed relationships, and learned more about Costa Rican culture.

As the MLA for Kings West, I'd like to express my sincere appreciation to the members of the 2018 Costa Rica mission for their dedication to a successful fundraising

campaign, for undertaking compassionate humanitarian efforts, and for displaying their character and bringing credit to the Province of Nova Scotia through their volunteerism.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**CHISHOLM, JAKE; OUTREACH OFFICER - CONGRATS.**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Jake Chisholm on his new position as Outreach Officer for the Pictou County Chamber of Commerce.

Jake is an outgoing, energetic, and intelligent individual who will excel at meeting members and non-members face-to-face and letting the community know what resources the Chamber has to offer.

The Chamber is looking to increase the use of the hub space for members and non-members who may need space to meet with clients, or a place to work beside other entrepreneurs. Jack is interested in moving the community forward, working collaboratively, and he brings a passion for small business, which will certainly add to his success in this role.

I look forward to the positive benefits that Jake will bring to the Chamber and the community.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. MARTIN: I would ask my colleagues to look to the west gallery and bring attention to Kat Lanteigne, who is the Executive Director of BloodWatch.org. I would ask each member of the House to give her a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

**CDN. PLASMA RES.: PAYING FOR PLASMA - BAN**

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Canadian Plasma Resources has its sights set on Nova Scotia and we are not prepared to deal with the consequences. The national report that we are waiting for the results of will not be available until May 31<sup>st</sup>, and by then it may be too late.



The panel authorizing this report is comprised of hired guns working on behalf of the blood plasma export industry. There is no representation on this panel from the Canadian Blood Services, health care workers, or other concerned Canadians. When a Canadian Plasma Resources collection site opened in Saskatchewan, Canadian Blood Services lost 20 per cent of their donor base in that province. The same thing could happen here.

Nova Scotia has a unique place in our country's blood history. Former Health Minister George Moody broke ranks with the provinces during the tainted blood era, and helped get compensation for families who were impacted. Some of the bravest and most effective blood advocates came from Nova Scotia.

This House has an opportunity to continue that tradition by passing legislation to ban the paid collection of blood plasma in Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

#### **40 N' CHANGE: MUSICAL GRP. - RECOGNIZE**

HON. MARGARET MILLER: If music is the language of the soul, we can truly say that the residents of East Hants are hearing the language of 11 talented souls. I'd like to recognize 40 n' Change of Hants East. Ten years ago, three women thought it would be lovely to get together and sing on a regular basis. Since then, this musical group, now numbering 11, is committed to weekly singing practice, honing their talents to create a sought-after, entertaining musical ensemble.

Mr. Speaker, at local venues and beyond, they volunteer their medley of folk, country, jazz, and pop, accompanied by their impressive instrumental talents on guitar, drums, percussions, ukes, and piano. Venues such as nursing homes like The Magnolia, Parkland, Cedarstone, Northwood Manor, community halls, charity and church events, and many Christmas gatherings all benefit from the musical talents and soul-filled spirit of this group.

I'd like to ask all members of this House to join me in offering their sincere appreciation and recognition to 40 n'Change.

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

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

[1:45 p.m.]

MS. ADAMS: I would like to draw the House's attention to the west gallery. The first person I would like to introduce - and I'll ask them to stand - is Lisa Rochon, my constituency assistant, who is here to represent everyone who has called her without a family doctor. I would also like to introduce Simon Bennetts and his mother Linda Forward, who are here to represent Rebecca Haley, a pharmacist who doesn't have a family doctor. I ask everyone to welcome them to the Legislature. (Applause)

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

**FORWARD, LINDA: VOLUNTEER AWARDS - RECOGNIZE**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Today, I would like to recognize Linda Forward for being named a Provincial Volunteer Award recipient for our area of Eastern Passage, as well as being the Halifax Regional Municipality's Volunteer Award recipient, which she will be getting tonight.

Linda enjoys volunteering and believes in giving back to her community. Linda has had the great pleasure of volunteering for Dress for Success Halifax, the PC Party of Nova Scotia, the Conservative Party of Canada, the Sonlife Community Church and Hillside Wesleyan Church, and the Christian Fellowship Group. Linda has dedicated over 15 years to the Dartmouth Learning Centre, where she supports administrative staff, works one-on-one with clients, and creates growth opportunities for the Learning Centre.

I would like to thank Linda for all that she offers our community. It was an honour to attend the Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony on April 8<sup>th</sup> to watch Linda accept her award. God willing, I will be there to watch her get her award tonight.

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

**GILLIS, CHANTEL/BURTON, KYLE: O'BRIEN AWARDS - CONGRATS.**

MS. LENORE ZANN: On February 3, 2018, Standardbred Canada announced the winners for the 2017 O'Brien Awards at a black tie gala held in Mississauga, Ontario. The O'Brien Awards honour Canada's best in harness racing over the past season, and are named in honour of the late Joe O'Brien, an outstanding horseman and member of the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame.

It's my pleasure to announce that Truro's own Chantel Gillis won the Outstanding Groom Award 2017, a great achievement for a young woman only 22 years old. It's also my pleasure to announce that another outstanding Truro Native, Kyle Burton, received the

O'Brien Award for Official Track Photographer for his photo of Dusty Lane Appearance. Congratulations.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants West.

### **TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS - BEST OF LUCK**

MR. CHUCK PORTER: I rise today to thank and congratulate the honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes on a fine statement that he has put forward earlier in the day, knowing that there aren't many - when I say many, I mean lifelong - Leaf fans. (Interruption) We're very pleased with the season. It's rare that we have seen the Leafs get over 100 points.

More importantly, as the Leafs and the Bruins make their way through the first round of the play-offs, I want to thank and offer - I won't say condolences. I do want to offer the Montreal Canadiens and their fans all the best as they learn to putt a little bit better this Spring, Mr. Speaker. They're going to have a good long season on the golf course.

All the best to the Leafs. Go Leafs Go!

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

### **PA PLAYERS: "MARY POPPINS" - BEST WISHES**

MR. TIM HALMAN: Go Habs Go!

Mr. Speaker, coming from a film family, the arts have always been very close to my heart. It is because of this that I rise today to wish the Prince Andrew Players in Dartmouth East all the best in their upcoming production of *Mary Poppins*.

Having spent most of my teaching career at Prince Andrew, I can proudly attest to the quality of productions put on every year by the PA Players. From *Footloose* to the *Crucible*, to *Grease*, this Spring production is always a highlight for our community.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to taking my daughters and friends to a show this week and seeing the high calibre of talent of the high school students of Dartmouth East. I expect I will have the songs stuck in my head for a few days after the show.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

### **NEOF: SUPPORTING YOUTH ACTIVITIES: THANKS**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize the efforts of a remarkable group of volunteers who are working to benefit children and youth.

The North End Opportunities Fund was created in 2015 to fill a gap that was left when the Rainbow Haven Opportunity Fund ceased to operate. The board members are social workers, educators, youth workers, and long-standing community volunteers. They believe every child deserves the chance to engage in activities they love.

To date, the North End Opportunities Fund has been able to support 98 children who have participated in athletic, artistic, and leadership activities of their choosing. Every dollar they receive in donations goes directly to support kids to have new opportunities. Many camps want to collaborate with the fund by offering discounted registration.

I ask all members to join me in expressing our appreciation for the North End Opportunities Fund.

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

**STOYLES, JACKIE: VOLUNTEER AWARD - CONGRATS.**

HON. LLOYD HINES: I rise today to congratulate Provincial Volunteer Award recipient Jackie Stoyles from the beautiful town of Mulgrave.

Jackie's efforts have contributed to many organizations in the community, including the fire department and the ladies' auxiliary, the medical first responders group, the Legion, and various school sports teams. She has fundraised and organized events and even responded to many medical calls herself as a member of the Mulgrave Volunteer Fire Department.

Jackie Stoyles is to be commended for her volunteerism and her strong contribution to the vitality of the Mulgrave community.

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

**MURPHY, RYAN: OFFICIATING CAREER - CONGRATS.**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: I rise today to acknowledge American Hockey League referee Ryan Murphy of Mira Road. He officiated his final pro game this past Friday in Laval, Quebec, where the Laval Rockets hosted the Springfield Thunderbirds. The 32-year-old is hanging up his skates to focus on his law career.

Ryan Murphy's officiating career started modestly at the county recreation centre in Coxheath, refereeing minor hockey at the age of 10. By 18, the Mira Road resident was working as a linesman at Centre 200 in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. By 20, he was a full-time referee. At 21, he moved up to the East Coast Hockey League. By 22, he worked his way to the American Hockey League.

I am pleased to congratulate Ryan Murphy on his amazing journey doing something that he loved while he pursued his law degree.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

### **INTL. DAY OF PINK: STUDENT-LED ADVOCACY - RESPECT**

HON. LENA DIAB: Today marks the International Day of Pink, a day when we don the colour pink to stand up against bullying, discrimination, homophobia, and transphobia.

The International Day of Pink was started here in Nova Scotia when two straight high school students witnessed one of their classmates being bullied for wearing a pink shirt. They stepped up and intervened but wanted to find a more lasting way to call attention to the problem of homophobic and transphobic bullying. In a unique show of solidarity, the students rallied their peers to collectively show up wearing pink just a few days later to send a clear message - we are your allies and you belong.

Today, in schools and workplaces across the country, people are sending that same message to their friends, classmates, and colleagues. No matter what your sexual orientation or gender identity, you deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

Mr. Speaker, as MLAs, let's join together today and spread that message across our province.

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

### **ROSZEL, HOWARD: VOLUNTEER OF THE YR. - RECOGNIZE**

MS. KIM MASLAND: I rise today to recognize the Town of Lockeport's provincial volunteer of the year, Howard Roszel. Howard has a strong commitment to volunteerism.

At the Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 80, he is a past sergeant-at-arms, past second vice-president, current vice-president, chairman of the building and Chase the Ace committees, and also a kitchen crew and janitorial crew member. Howard also serves as president and chairman for the board of the Sou'west Nova Transit Association, and volunteers as a driver.

As an active member of the St. Andrew's United Church, he is the building manager and a greeter. Howard is also the public information officer for Shelburne County East EMO, the Lockeport public representative to the Shelburne County East police advisory committee, and a regular volunteer for the Lockeport July 1<sup>st</sup> community picnic.

Howard has certainly merited this honour, and I applaud and thank him for all that he does.

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

**BATCHILDER, DREW/SMITH, VICTORIA: HS BLOOD DRIVE - CONGRATS.**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: I would like to recognize Drew Batchilder and Victoria Smith of Prospect. As Halifax West High School students, Drew and Victoria organized a successful blood drive within the school as part of their IB program requirements.

In November 2017, Drew and Victoria led an information session on the importance of blood donation as well as a blood-typing event at Halifax West with more than 40 students in attendance. The following week, a total of 17 students were transported to the Canadian Blood Services clinic in Halifax to donate.

I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Drew and Victoria on their successful blood drive and thank them for encouraging young people to educate themselves on the importance of blood donation.

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

**ST. GEORGE'S CHANNEL: WEATHER STN. INITIATIVE - COMMEND**

MS. ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring recognition to work completed in the St. George's Channel area of Cape Breton-Richmond. Known for their superb monthly breakfasts at the St. George's Channel Community Hall overlooking the beautiful Bras d'Or Lakes, the members of the community have also raised enough money to recently install a weather station.

Mr. Speaker, anyone who lives in Nova Scotia, and especially in Cape Breton, know the saying, "if you wait five minutes the weather will change," or "if you drive five minutes down the road, you'll find the next season."

Mr. Speaker, the weather station at St. George's Channel provides up-to-the-minute weather data through a network of weather stations throughout Cape Breton.

With the extreme variability of Cape Breton geography and the increasing severity and irregularity of weather events, these new stations are collecting long-term data, which all residents and decision makers will be able to use to accurately determine weather conditions, such as wind speed and rainfall in the area, as well as weather trends.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the residents of St. George's Channel for their initiative and their contribution to capturing and connecting weather data from Cape Breton-Richmond to the rest of the world.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**SCHNARE, MARJORIE: 101<sup>st</sup> BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES**

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, the world was a different place 101 years ago. The world was in conflict. Harry Houdini was dazzling the world. Over the last 100 years, TV was invented, man landed on the moon, automobiles became the norm when it came to public transportation. From cellphones to the Internet - imagine experiencing all of that.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Marjorie Schnare has. On April 5<sup>th</sup>, she turned 101 years old. A native of Sambro, Marjorie at 101 is full of energy and smiles. Congratulations, Marjorie, on turning 101. There really must be something to the fresh air in Sambro.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**SMITH, GORDON: MAPLE PROD. - RECOGNIZE**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to recognize Mr. Gordon Smith of Fenwick. He's been involved in our maple syrup business for over 50 years.

Maple products are an important part of the economy and culture in Cumberland County.

Gordon was with the industry as a child on his family's farm, as well as Donkin's Sugar Woods, since 1996. Gordon makes sure that Cumberland has quality maple products in our community for both locals and tourists to enjoy, and the maple season in Cumberland is an exciting time that our community, local and far, look forward to.

I hope that everyone here in the House has an opportunity to enjoy some of our local Cumberland County maple syrup products.

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

**HATT, ELLEN/RICE, KELSEY: ACADIA AXEWOMEN - CONGRATS.**

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, two former Lockview High basketball players were instrumental in vaulting the Acadia Axewomen to clinch the AUS Championship title.

Ellen Hatt of Fall River and Kelsey Rice of Beaver Bank played together in Lockview and are excited to head to Regina for the Nationals.

This year's team finished third in the National U-Sport Women's Basketball season rankings. Congratulations to Paloma Anderson, the only Acadia player to ever be named University Sports Most Valuable Player, and to their coach Len Harvey who was the recipient of the Carolyn Savoy Memorial Award for AUS Coach of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of the House to congratulate Ellen and Kelsey for their hard work and success.

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

**LARDER, BEATRICE: 90<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES**

MR. HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Beatrice Eleanor Larder, a lifelong resident of New Ross, who will celebrate her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday with friends and family tomorrow, April 12<sup>th</sup>.

Beatrice has made an exceptional contribution to her community over many years, beginning her working life as a teacher in a one-room schoolhouse. Her sense of civic duty took on the path that included being the driving force and inspiration behind what is today the Home Care Program. She also served as the councillor for New Ross, with the Municipality of Chester. Her support of the community, however, is most visible at the Ross Farm, where the Larder Barn is part of the museum.

Her greatest accomplishment however, was with her husband, raising five strong, determined daughters. Their belief that strong families build strong communities has served our province well, as the next generation of her family are active in community service in New Ross and beyond.

I ask the members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Beatrice for her many important contributions, and to wish her many years of future good health and birthdays.

MR. SPEAKER: Just before we move on to Question Period, I want to take a second to remind all members that member's statements should not be used to debate any legislation or resolution currently before the House.

There is a lot of legislation before the House, and I'm not intimately familiar with all of it, sometimes they slip through - one did earlier - but I just want to draw your attention to the rules, which, hopefully, everybody has at their fingertips, on their desks.



[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. - FOIPOP WEB PORTAL: BREACH - TIMELINE**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, we are all trying to absorb some really shocking news. Today, we learned that the FOIPOP web portal was breached and the personal information of thousands and thousands of Nova Scotians is now exposed. To whom? We have no idea, but we do know that birth dates, social insurance numbers, addresses, and government services' client information are all caught in this breach, and possibly more information. But what we also learned is that government has known about this for more than a month.

Transparency - will the Premier provide a detailed timeline of this breach, including when the Minister of Internal Services was informed and when the Premier was actually informed?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): I'd be happy to, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of this month, we were informed by one of our own employees that there had been a breach. We did follow protocol; we called the law enforcement agency and we're very proud of the work they have done. We'll get to the bottom of it.

MS. MACFARLANE: Well, actually, you know one of the first things in Public Relations 101 is get in front of the story, and it's shocking to learn that this breach has been going on for so long. This government knew that private information was being disclosed and they said nothing. They were asked about it yesterday, in the House, and they said nothing. They took the opportunity to pass.

This government claims repeatedly that they are the most open and transparent. The Minister of Internal Services had the opportunity yesterday to declare the truth of this matter. So, will the Premier explain what the government knows today that they didn't know yesterday?

THE PREMIER: The fact of the matter is the IP address that we provided to the local law enforcement agency, they went through the proper channels to obtain the proper legal documents to make sure that they could go out and apprehend the individual, Mr. Speaker. We're very proud that we were not going to undermine the work of the law enforcement agency no matter how much it might have been to the political advantage of

our Party. We were going to make sure we abided by the law and to allow those hard-working law enforcement agencies in this province to do their job.

MS. MACFARLANE: Transparency - that's the only word I can think of.

We are only starting to scratch the surface on what is a colossal breach not just of the FOIPOP portal but also of the public trust. We are still trying to find out how many departments are affected, how many people are affected, and the extent of any other privileged personal or corporate information. We understand that the Halifax Regional Police will be holding a press conference today with additional information on this investigation, and Nova Scotians are certainly unsure if this government would have released this information if it had not been pressured here yesterday by my colleague.

So, does the Premier still have confidence in the Department of Internal Services?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I absolutely have confidence in the Department of Internal Services. I have a tremendous amount of confidence in my colleague, and let me assure the honourable member, while we enjoy the debate in this House we will do nothing to compromise the law enforcement agencies in this province, to ensure that the law is followed in this province and we followed down the process the entire way.

When the law enforcement agency made it - that they had actually followed the proper process to make sure they had gone through the legal documents to ensure they can obtain the right information to go out to investigate. We're going to allow that to happen and we're going to continue to work with hard-working Nova Scotians and the law enforcement agencies in this province to ensure that the laws are followed.

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

### **PREM: LONG-TERM CARE CRISIS - ADDRESS**

MR. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, Marjorie and Edwin Crossland, of Berwick, are a couple who have been married 70 years - he's 91, she's 90. Not too long ago he had to go in the hospital and, because she has dementia, she made the move to a nursing home, and when he came out from the hospital he expected to be reunited with her there in the nursing home, but found he was unable to be admitted there because he was deemed to be in too good health.

Every time I've asked the Premier about the crisis in long-term care, he boasts about how the nursing home wait-lists have been shortened. Wait-lists have been shortened all right, by making the criteria for a nursing home admission so restrictive that people like Mr. Crossland can't get in.

I want to ask the Premier, what has that actually accomplished?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as the honourable member would know, people go through the assessment of being admitted into long-term care. He raises a very important point, though: a couple has been married for 70 years, one of them requiring that service. We need to do everything we can to ensure that that couple remains united. This was too long in the delay for that couple to be reunited. We are very happy today that they are reunited.

We'll continue to work with couples and families across the province to ensure that those who require the level of medical care are receiving it, but at the same time, that we can keep the family unit together.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, the shortage of nursing homes leads to separations of residents from loved ones across the province. I am aware of one couple who were separated when she had to leave their New Waterford home for placement in a home in Tatamagouche, 400 kilometres away, because there were no suitable beds closer to her home.

When we bring forward questions about long-term care, the Premier often responds by talking about the expansion of home care. But there is no amount of home care in God's green earth that could have solved the problem of the woman who was moved to Tatamagouche from industrial Cape Breton. The only solution for her is more nursing home beds close to home.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier admit that couples are being separated today who would not have to be separated if we had an adequate supply of nursing home beds in our province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. The reality is, as I said, go through the process of people who apply to go into long-term care. They are assessed and their medical needs determined. They are accessed into the long-term care facility.

He is rightfully bringing a very important issue to the floor of this House, though. As couples age, one's health may be different than the other. We need to do everything we can to have a compassionate system so that we make sure, regardless of the health conditions, that when people are together for that length of time, we do everything we can to ensure that they remain united, whether it is in the actual same facility or adjoining facilities that provide different levels of care and services. We need to do everything we can to ensure that couples remain together.

MR. BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, the Premier is right that Mr. and Mrs. Crossland have now been reunited near Berwick, but it is worth pointing out that this did not happen because of the activation of a policy change. It happened because their granddaughter

Tammy Crossland launched a formal appeal against her grandfather not being admitted to be with her grandmother.

In an interview, she said that she hopes the Health Authority will take a real close look at broadening the criteria for people to be admitted into nursing home care. If there were more nursing home beds, this would be something that wouldn't be hard to do.

Mr. Speaker, why can't the Premier see that failing to open new nursing home beds is causing suffering that could be entirely avoided?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Again, I repeat the answer I provided to him earlier, in the first two questions. He is bringing a very important issue to the floor. We need to do everything we can when we admit someone to a long-term care facility, especially family members being reunited, that we do so on a compassionate basis, whether it's if they don't qualify in terms of medical needs to be in a particular facility, that we look at this in a compassionate way in a compassionate community as we are as a province, that we do everything we can to make sure that these couples are united.

I commend their granddaughter for her tremendous work ensuring that this issue was brought to the minister and to the government. We worked with organizations to ensure that this couple was reconnected as early and as quickly as possible.

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

#### **INT. SERV. - FOIPOP PORTAL BREACH: INFO - TIMELINE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I asked the Minister of Internal Services to provide some information on the recent and continuing outage with the FOIPOP portal. Specifically, I asked her to confirm if the personal information and payment information of FOIPOP website users had been compromised.

The minister did not answer my question. Instead, she promoted a breach protocol. Given what we learned earlier today, her answer was a little less than forthcoming.

When asked directly yesterday if there was a breach of personal information, why did the minister refuse to answer? Did she not know, or was she going to keep it secret?

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: I'd like to thank the member for the question. I'm sure that the member is not, in fact, insinuating that I lied in any way, shape, or form. Along with my team, I follow the strictest of protocols when we have an incident like this, which is engaging and containing the situation.

We were working with our partners within the Halifax Regional Police Department, as well as with the Privacy Officer. Today, when we had further confirmation from the Halifax Police Department that they had substantial progress within their case, we were able to come forward and make details known, and are now focusing on the second part of our protocols, which is informing those directly impacted by this terrible incident.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, the FOIPOP website was down for a week, and is still down. As we said before, this is the primary contact point for access to information for people, the media, and Opposition Parties. The minister is walking into the people's House, where there is media in the lobby, Opposition Party members in the Chamber. The minister should ought to have known that these questions would be asked, and that the answers like, "We're working on it," and "Send us an email," would not suffice.

The minister had the opportunity yesterday to show leadership and try to restore some confidence in the FOIPOP system on being accountable. Instead, she deflected a direct question that could have a huge negative effect on thousands of people who trusted the government to keep their private information private.

My question to the minister, will the minister apologize today for not being forthcoming yesterday about an issue that may hurt so many Nova Scotians?

MS. ARAB: I'd like to point out that I showed leadership in working with our partners at the Halifax Regional Police Department, and not impeding a criminal case - a criminal investigation - which actually led today with someone being brought into custody, which I can table.

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

### **INT. SERV. - FOIPOP PORTAL BREACH: SECURITY CHECKS - DETAILS**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, we learned today that the government became aware of this breach due to a government employee doing research on the page. That individual received information that they didn't request.

So, I'd like to ask the Minister of Internal Services, why weren't there security checks done to ensure a breach didn't happen in the first place?

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, what I can say to the member is that there was testing done at the start of the process when we signed up with this technology, and throughout, but I would not want to say anything more that might impede an investigation.

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, we're not asking for any information that would hurt that case. It's just obvious that those checks and balances were not in place if a public

employee found out by mistake, that should be concerning to the government. We also know that it's a third-party company, Unisys, that holds that data and provides for the information, and the exchange of information. What else is concerning, I think to all Nova Scotians, is that those individuals - it could be hundreds, it could be thousands - who have had their personal information seen; birth dates, social insurance numbers, haven't been contacted by the government yet. I don't think that would impinge on an investigation.

Why weren't Nova Scotians who are affected by this breach - why were they not contacted so far, Mr. Speaker?

MS. ARAB: So, Mr. Speaker, those contacts have been started, and we're working with other departments to see the best and appropriate ways to contact each one who has been impacted by this.

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

#### **INT. SERV. - FOIPOP PORTAL BREACH: NOVA SCOTIANS - NUMBERS**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, earlier today - we've been asking a number of questions around this already, that there is an unfathomable breach in the government's FOIPOP website. By the government's own admission, 7,000 documents were inappropriately accessed and that's terrible. What's unforgivable is that the personal information, including social insurance numbers, was inappropriately available on the Internet for more than a month, and really, the government didn't know anything about it.

With a social insurance number, someone could improperly get credit cards and a host of other damaging things. Again, this was found out through a typo by a staff member, when they were doing a research project on the website.

Will the minister tell the House exactly how many Nova Scotians have had their sensitive, personal information compromised because of the government's inability to identify a breach, and an unwillingness to make it public?

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: I have to agree, Mr. Speaker, with the gravity of the situation. This is a very serious incident that has taken place, and there are a number of Nova Scotians today who are finding out that personal information has been exposed. Our priority, within our protocols, has been first to contain and then to investigate, and then to notify. It is my understanding that a breach of this nature has never occurred, and we need to do better to make sure that something like this doesn't happen again.

[2:15 p.m.]

MR. D'ENTREMONT: The press release issued by the minister today said that the next step would be to identify or notify people whose personal information had been compromised as a result of this unbelievable breach.

There was one caveat, though - that this notification would be done "after careful consideration to not compromise the police investigation." Given the serious nature of the breach, that statement is a little too vague, and doesn't provide Nova Scotians with any confidence that they will be treated in a forthright manner.

Will the minister commit today that everyone - everyone - who had their information compromised will be notified, and that the full extent of the breach of their confidential information will be shared with them?

MS. ARAB: Mr. Speaker, every person who has been impacted by this breach will be notified.

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

#### **JUSTICE: CANNABIS BY-PROD. - AVAILABILITY**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is for the Minister of Justice. The conversation around cannabis has been basically around the plant itself and/or its direct by-products, such as fresh or dried cannabis. We have talked a little bit about edibles, and what might happen down the road with edibles.

I would like to speak a little bit about cannabis concentrates - I guess what would be commonly known as hash oil. I don't think a lot of people in this conversation realize that these products are actually involved in this discussion and legislation.

Can the minister explain whether these products will be available for sale at the NSLC, in what quantities, and for how much?

HON. MARK FUREY: The oil element that my colleague refers to is part of the definition of cannabis. The Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation has identified a price point of about \$8.70. That may change, Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, depending on how organized crime responds to the most comprehensive legislation that this country has seen.

MS. MACFARLANE: There are small appliances known as rosin presses that you can purchase for a couple of hundred dollars. These presses can actually be used to take the fresh cannabis and press it to convert it into hash oil. Then it's used in a variety of products, and obviously sold on the black market. These presses, when combined with homegrown cannabis, could allow for hash production to begin in a homegrown business.

It worries me, especially for the rural areas that don't have access to the NSLCs that sell the products.

Is the minister's intent to allow freer creation and consumption of hash, or are there steps in place in this legislation that will limit this activity?

MR. FUREY: The retail model that the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation has established, Mr. Speaker, includes online home delivery through Canada Post. The products that are available are clearly laid out in the definition within the Act, as are the retail media that the legislation includes.

The process that my colleague is speaking about is a matter that exists presently within the organized crime environment, and their ability to drive value-added products and create greater profits. This is why we have embarked on this journey and this legislation, the most comprehensive in the country, to mitigate organized crime and provide for public safety.

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

#### **H&W - HEALTH AUTH.: NURSE PRACTITIONER RECRUIT. - PRIORITY**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. As the minister knows, I represent the only constituency in the province that doesn't have a single family doctor.

The minister approved funding for a clinical nurse practitioner for my constituency back in October 2017. I have already outlined the months-long inaction that the Nova Scotia Health Authority has demonstrated in bringing this to fruition. Weeks go by without a response to a single question. Meanwhile, the people in my constituency, including those who are here in the gallery today, are desperate.

Will the minister tell the House today what his government can do to increase the efficiencies of the Nova Scotia recruitment processes to make sure that it is a priority for this province?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: As the member would know, we do engage in conversations particularly about her community and the ongoing efforts to recruit.

Part of the situation I think the member is referring to relates not specifically to the recruitment practices and processes within the Nova Scotia Health Authority. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, my understanding of that particular region is that it's identifying a location and establishing a practice in that regard. So it's more about infrastructure the actual recruitment in this case.



As far as recruiting broadly for primary care services, Mr. Speaker, of course, that's a priority for the government and our partners at the Nova Scotia Health Authority.

MS. ADAMS: I thank you for that answer. But as the minister knows, I already had a location back in October, and I gave the Nova Scotia Health Authority an additional three more, but I couldn't get them to come out.

The clinical nurse practitioner who had agreed to come to my community in October has been waiting for over six months, and now she informs me that she is so frustrated that she is looking to go elsewhere. You cannot imagine how angry I am about that. As the minister knows, he has spoken to the Nova Scotia Health Authority, and that at least got things moving along.

This is the latest in a string of broken promises to my constituents, who had an election promise from their former Liberal MLA that a collaborative health centre was approved for our constituency.

Will the minister agree to meet with me and the Central Zone recruiters and come out to our constituency after the Legislature is done to lay out his plans for the health care of my constituents?

MR. DELOREY: As the member knows well, I don't have to imagine her frustration. She knows that we have discussed frequently what the challenges in her community are. That's why, Mr. Speaker, I responded while working with her to have conversations, to bring more attention to the concerns being raised on behalf of her constituents. That's why we continued to work.

As the member also knows, although locations may have been identified as potential areas, some of them were viewed and deemed not appropriate or as having some challenges. Again, the effort and the work of the Nova Scotia Health Authority has been in identifying a suitable location that would work for the services that would be offered to ensure primary care being provided within the community. That work is ongoing, Mr. Speaker, and will continue because we maintain our commitment to improve primary care access for all Nova Scotians.

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

### **H&W - PLASMA COLLECTION: FOR-PROFITS - BAN**

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Yesterday, when the minister was asked about his views on paid-for plasma, he said he wasn't concerned about private collection sites opening in Nova Scotia and didn't see the need for legislation banning the practice right now. However, we know that

Canadian Plasma Resources has been targeting Nova Scotia and that they have already received the regulatory approval they need from Health Canada to open here.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister, why does the minister refuse to protect our crucial blood supply from for-profit interference?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Indeed, I believe my comment was that in Nova Scotia, we have no paid-for plasma or blood services or companies in place. What we do have, Mr. Speaker, is the fabulous work of the Canadian Blood Services, which provides volunteer-based donations by Nova Scotians to provide blood and plasma components or products for Nova Scotia use. We continue to support the great work of Canadian Blood Services.

I said what was important for Nova Scotia and for me is to have the information that is coming from a national report on this very topic. It will be prudent for me to have that information before we make decisions as to how we may proceed in this particular area.

MS. MARTIN: Actually, it's in you to give, so we shouldn't be making money off of blood.

Mr. Speaker, the expert panel report that the minister is waiting for is coming from Health Canada. Recent investigations have cast serious doubt on Health Canada's ability to regulate this industry. Internal documents cited in a 2017 report show the regulator working hand-in-glove with a private company to push a donation model that the Krever inquiry warned against, and I'll table that.

Mr. Speaker, with this information, why won't the minister act now and join Ontario, Alberta, and Quebec in banning paid-for plasma in Nova Scotia?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise the member that I've taken steps to become informed about the concerns being raised in this regard. I believe it's important to receive the information, knowing that there's a national report coming down on this very area, that was struck, an expert panel had been struck nationally to do this. We know that information is expected to come forward in the coming months, this Spring.

As I said, having that information would be important and prudent for the province to consider. There is no paid plasma or blood collection in this province. We are receiving the blood collection through Canada Blood Services, which is of course what we expect in the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**H&W - CUMB. REG. HEALTH CARE CTR.: UNSAFE COND. - ACTION**

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, we are concerned for our nurses. They have been working in unsafe conditions for over 18 months in the medical unit at the Cumberland Regional Health Care Centre. This creates unsafe conditions for our patients.

Eighteen months ago, a manager in the medical unit reported these unsafe conditions - no action was taken; nothing changed. Ten months ago, I met with the facility manager on behalf of the nurses - no action was taken; nothing changed. Five months ago, I met with the zone medical and nursing leaders on behalf of the nurses - no action was taken; nothing has changed.

Last week I gave the Minister of Health and Wellness a letter from the nurses, and my question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, when can we expect the medical unit to be staffed safely for both nurses and patients?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the question. Indeed, the safety of both staff and patients within our health care system is indeed an important topic and a priority for all of the partners - ourselves, the Nova Scotia Health Authority, the IWK.

Mr. Speaker, the work that gets done for the staffing needs within a particular facility is managed by the Nova Scotia Health Authority and with their local staff and management teams, based upon the needs within those specific communities.

The member did mention that she had provided some information to me last week or earlier this week. Mr. Speaker, I have passed that information along and I've requested an update on that particular situation.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Registered nurses and licensed practical nurses can't cope with the current patient-to-nurse ratio. I continue to hear from them, many of whom have had to go off work on sick leave from the overwhelming stress, and I continue to hear from their spouses, when I'm out at social events, how upset they are at seeing their loved ones under the stress.

To further worsen the problem there is a hiring freeze on CCAs and now the continuing care assistants are quitting due to their increased workload and stress.

Last week I brought a letter to the Minister of Health and Wellness from the nurses - and I'll table that - where 32 of the staff have signed a letter stating that the medical unit is not staffed safely, leaving patient care compromised. I applaud their bravery in bringing this situation forward.

The question is, when can we expect the Minister of Health and Wellness to lift the hiring freeze and put in safe ratios of patient-to-nurse ratios?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as I've mentioned, the identification of the staffing requirements within our facilities, the Nova Scotia Health Authority facilities across the province, is something that can vary, based upon the needs of the individuals within a particular unit or zone. As the member mentioned, she provided some information to me recently. I've taken that information back to look into and get additional information to respond to the concerns that have been brought forward.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

### **H&W - RURAL N.S.: NURSING SHORTAGE - CAUSE**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: A question for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Mr. Speaker, when the Health Authority and, by extension, the government, is unable to provide things like lab services and emergency surgery in rural areas, the shortage of registered nurses is often the reason given. Yet, being an RN should be considered very good employment in rural Nova Scotia.

What has the minister found to be the cause of this nursing shortage and what has he done to help?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for bringing this question to the floor. Indeed, the member is correct, the nursing profession is a very admirable profession and the people who step forward to pursue this career path are admirable people, as are many other health care professionals serving the people of Nova Scotia.

Some of the initiatives, Mr. Speaker, include being more open and engaged with our nursing professions, recognizing from nurses the desire to practice a fuller scope in communities, and opening new paths and doors for nurses to have opportunities to participate in providing primary care. That's why we're seeing our commitment towards collaborative care practices providing those opportunities to family practice nurses, nurse practitioners, and others. We respect the work of these nurses and we're glad to be able to partner with them to improve primary care access to Nova Scotians.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, from what I hear, the shortage is causing the shortage. Nurses are coming to the workplace, which is understaffed, and are expected to perform 120 per cent of their maximum workload for the day. They are burning out. Then they leave, and the Health Authority sometimes blames rural life, suggesting nurses just don't want to live in rural areas, but how can we expect to attract them with that attitude?

[2:30 p.m.]

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments from the member opposite, but I assure him that rural life - as a member of a rural constituency, I suggest is not a barrier to people pursuing.

One thing that we've noticed, that I believe past governments throughout time have not identified, was that the challenges with recruitment and retention of health care professionals is not limited to a rural issue. We're identifying these needs in our urban parts of the province, and it's not just in Nova Scotia but in other jurisdictions.

When the member brings up the question of nurses in particular, I've cited before that just a few weeks ago, or a month ago now, in Moncton, New Brunswick - which is an urban population - their emergency room was shut down because they didn't have enough nurses in an urban centre. This is not a rural-urban question. This is a challenge within a particular profession that extends right across the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

#### **H&W - NURSING SHORTAGE: WORKING CONDITIONS - EXCUSE**

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Well, Mr. Speaker, if it's not a rural problem, why is the problem so prevalent in rural areas? Cape Breton Island is rated the third-best island in the world by readers of *Travel + Leisure* magazine. I can think of a lot of things that are fun to do in Inverness. The Farmer's Daughter Country Market had thousands of replies from people around the country to three job ads made through a social media campaign.

People want to live here. Why does the Health Authority let a shortage happen when we have so many reasons for this not to be an excuse?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, As I had indicated, with respect to recruiting and retention in the health care fields, right across the country, this is a challenge. Work that's been ongoing within the province to help make strides to improve the situation here - work that was undertaken with the partnership with the Nurses' Union, with our partners in the Health Authorities and our universities to establish new nursing programs to ensure the consistency across the three universities that provide the programming - having those programs available, and also in providing new paths and having graduates able to come in at multiple entry points, and thus, different graduating points. These are all initiatives to improve the new crop of nurses coming forward to fill these employment gaps.

MR. MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, how about improving working conditions? I think that's what's at the heart of this matter. The government is responsible for work conditions in health care facilities, and it should not be using nursing shortages as an excuse

to stop delivering services. With the elimination of health authorities, has this government become too Halifax-centric in its thinking, developing an attitude that the people in the rest of the province can come to the city if they need these services?

We have an ophthalmologist from Antigonish speaking out because the Health Authority wants to take away nursing support for his clinic in Cheticamp. We have people unable to get chemo treatments in Inverness because lab services are not open the day before their treatment. We have nursing homes across the province short-staffed.

If this government believes rural Nova Scotia should have these services - I'm not talking about graduating new nurses, I'm talking about improving work conditions - will the government take responsibility to ensure nurses have a safe and manageable workload when they come to work?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, indeed, the work that's ongoing throughout the province in all parts - again, as I've indicated, this is not a question of rural or urban. The challenges the member references, we recognize as challenges and opportunities that we have to pursue for improvements within our health care system.

We've committed all along to continue to make improvements. That's what we're going to continue to do with our partners in the Nova Scotia Health Authority, the IWK, nurses through the Nurses' Union associations, with doctors and Doctors Nova Scotia and doctors' associations, and all other health care professionals. That's our commitment, and we're going to continue to work toward that.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**EECD - CLASSROOM SUPPORT STAFF/SPECIALISTS:  
INCREASE - ENSURE**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. The call from parents and teachers for increased supports in the classroom has been loud and clear for years. The Commission on Inclusive Education has recommended the hiring of additional education specialists and support staff for the coming school year, starting in September. This recommendation cannot have come as a surprise to government.

Will the minister explain what his government has done to ensure we will have trained specialists and support staff in classrooms this September?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Of course, that recommendation did not come as a surprise. That's why we had budgeted \$15 million in our budget to execute those recommendations that we knew were coming forward from the Commission on Inclusive Education.

Those dollars will be spent to hire professionals, behavioural supports, autism supports, and specialists that we know the system needs, that our teachers need, and that our students need. For training as well - two thirds of our teachers have told us that we have not been providing them with what they need in terms of training to deal with the diverse needs of our classrooms. We will be announcing very soon what those supports will look like in the coming school year.

MS. CHENDER: We are looking for specifics, so I look forward to hearing those.

The commission is very clear that, to meet the intended goals, specialist positions must be filled. The commission also gives clear direction on key actions for implementing its recommendations. Phase I of those recommendations includes establishing an institute for inclusive education, developing Cape Breton- and Halifax-based intensive treatment programs, and starting research into evidence-based practices for MTSS. As far as anyone can tell, this government is not pursuing any of those key Phase I actions.

Since the government is not following the commission's plan for implementation, will the minister table his timeline and plan for implementing the commission's recommendations?

MR. CHURCHILL: In fact, we have been very clear. We are accepting the recommendations of the report and pursuing all their objectives. If there is anybody who is not supporting these recommendations, it would be the Parties that are voting against the budget that we have in place to actually fund these important initiatives, Mr. Speaker.

If the members opposite actually want to support a change in our education system, then they should start voting for these budgets. We are going to see changes and impacts to our students that are going to impact their outcomes and well-being in our education system.

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

### **H&W: PHYSICIAN SHORTAGE - PRESSURES**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: The doctor shortage in Nova Scotia takes a toll on families. There is no doubt of that. The toll it takes on physicians was brought into sharp focus with the telling of Dr. Ann Thurgood's story. I will table that, but it says, "Exhausted psychiatrist must quit, but fears leaving patients in lurch."

"Facing serious personal health issues, she began telling her patients six months ago that she'd have to close her practice." Despite her best efforts, she has been unable to place 40 of her patients. Many do not have family doctors, and others are not eligible to go to community health clinics because those clinics don't take on long-term patients. Dr. Thurgood finally wrote a letter to the editor in a last-ditch effort to help those people.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, will the minister admit that this government's record on recruiting and retaining doctors is placing undue pressure on doctors by forcing them to take extraordinary measures to look after their patients when they are too old or too ill to practise?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I am pleased to advise the member opposite and all members of the Legislature that, in fact, we continue to take recruitment and retention very seriously. That is why, in addition to the retention and recruitment programs we have in place for incentives, we have taken additional steps. We recently announced almost \$40 million in funding and initiatives to support and incentivize physicians, particularly around family practices. We have committed to the Practice Ready Assessment. We recently have that program moving forward as well as a new stream for international medical graduates.

We recognize that the need and the response and the solution to the recruitment challenges is multi-faceted, and that's why we are taking multiple approaches to improve.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: There are a lot of talking points there, but really no solutions. Dr. Thurgood says she is not alone. She says she gets nothing but discouragement from her colleagues because some of them are in the same boat. They have been trying to retire for years as psychiatrists, but they can't because they can't find anyone to take on their patients.

Mr. Speaker, it feels like the mental health system is a pressure cooker. I am truly worried about what will happen to Nova Scotians should they need mental health services if something is definitely not done quickly. The time for spin is over. There is a crisis, and it's time to start dealing with it.

When will the minister offer something more than talking points to Dr. Thurgood and the hundreds of Nova Scotians who need mental health services now?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate that the member opposite thinks that the commitments of almost \$40 million around primary care physicians is nothing more than a talking point. This is real investment to get real results and to improve primary care access for Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, the additional investments we have in this budget, which is building upon investments of past years, to hire more clinicians in communities, through a collaborative care practice, in our schools within our (Interruptions)

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

MR. DELOREY: . . . within our SchoolsPlus program, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of initiatives under way to improve primary care access and mental health care access.



We recognize the challenges and we're stepping up to the plate, investing and taking action to improve the situation.

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

### **H&W: HEALTH CARE DELIVERY - QUALITY**

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, my question as well is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, Lois MacNeil was thrown from her horse and had to be rushed to the emergency room at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital. She was diagnosed with five fractures to her pelvis, as well as a fracture to her L5 vertebra in her spine.

As one could imagine, these injuries caused Ms. MacNeil excruciating pain and discomfort. Her trauma was only magnified by the fact that she had to spend the night in a trauma room, lying on a stretcher that had a flimsy mattress that both amplified and intensified her pain.

Mr. Speaker, these stories are far too frequent and a trend of this government's approach to health care. My question to the minister, is this what he means by delivering quality health care to Nova Scotians?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, indeed the work we continue to do with our partners to improve health care services for all Nova Scotians is continuing. Of course, that's not a situation we want to see any Nova Scotians faced with, and that's why we continue to work with our partners to identify where challenges exist, and to take steps to make improvements. We continue that commitment.

MR. BAIN: Mr. Speaker, if the story only ended here it would be bad enough, but her trials and tribulations with the health care system only grew worse. The following day, Ms. MacNeil was transferred to the Northside General Hospital where she thought she would finally get the opportunity to have her own bed and some relief. However, she was placed on an even smaller stretcher in the emergency room holding area, this time with a paper-thin mattress for support.

Having lost her ability to move as she lay a total of five days - five days, Mr. Speaker - on the stretcher in unbearable pain, instead of providing Ms. MacNeil a proper bed, medical professionals could only treat her pain by increasing her pain medications.

My question to the minister is, is this the kind of indignity that people should become accustomed to when being admitted to hospitals in Nova Scotia?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as the member would know, the delivery of care and services by the many health care professionals throughout Nova Scotia, as part of the NSHA and family practices throughout the province, are top-notch. We rely on these health

care professionals to assess and respond to the patients who come before them, and we respect the work and their clinical decisions to ensure that they provide the care the patients need. Thank you.

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

**H&W - N. SYDNEY: COM. DEMONSTRATION - MIN. ATTEND**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I've been sitting here listening to my colleagues, and I hope the Minister of Health and Wellness is actually listening too. We hear about a wage gap among psychiatrists, and it reminds me of a question asked about a week ago about the hospital disparity wages in Cape Breton.

Our House Leader asked about a retiring psychiatrist, echoing earlier comments that drew attention to a year-long wait for mental health in the CBRM.

Mr. Speaker, on April 28<sup>th</sup>, at 12:00 noon, there will be a march on Commercial Street in North Sydney to demonstrate the concern the community has with the future of health care services in our area, as well as the emergency room.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is, will the minister agree to come to North Sydney on April 28<sup>th</sup>, meet with the community face to face, hear the concerns about the state of health care in Cape Breton, listen to what they have to say, and let him let us know the update on what's going to happen to our services?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I'm pleased to remind the member that I've been to Cape Breton on numerous occasions, not just in industrial Cape Breton but I have been down . . .

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

MR. DELOREY: I've been in the Strait area as well, visiting health care professionals and health care facilities to hear first-hand of the challenges and the opportunities for improving.

Mr. Speaker, the member would know full well that I've been in Cape Breton to hear directly from the general public as well. (Interruptions) There was a forum held there (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

[2:45 p.m.]

MR. DELOREY: I was in the area, Mr. Speaker, to hear directly from the members of the public as well as from, again, health care professionals. I'd be happy to have that information to receive, and take that into consideration as we continue to plan for the improvement of health care services in Nova Scotia.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I've listened to my colleagues for Cumberland North and Inverness talk about the struggles that nurses have faced in trying conditions, and have listened to my colleagues for Victoria-The Lakes and Cape Breton-Richmond yesterday, and Queens-Shelburne a few weeks ago, all talk about hallway-medicine.

My colleague the member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage and her constituents have no family doctor in her entire riding. Yesterday the member for Dartmouth North talked about the Roseway Hospital and the New Waterford Consolidated Hospital - and it calls to mind the long stretches in May that the emergency rooms in the Northside General and Glace Bay will be closed.

I don't know what more the minister needs to hear, Mr. Speaker, but if he's interested, the people in Cape Breton will be gathering to tell him. So, my question is a simple question, and I only want a simple answer. Is the minister prepared to let these questions go unanswered or will he come and attend the rally in Cape Breton, on Commercial Street in North Sydney, to tell the people what the future of health care is in Cape Breton?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for highlighting how well he listens to members of his own caucus. (Interruptions) I will look forward to the day that the member listens to the responses that...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. ORRELL: Yes or no?

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

MR. DELOREY: When the member listens to the responses, Mr. Speaker, if he listened to my responses for example to the questions around Shelburne - in fact, hearing from people in that area they have more family physicians in that community than they have had in decades.

So, we're seeing improvements in communities, Mr. Speaker, so I'm pleased to have the opportunity to let the member know that.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**FISH. & AQUACULTURE - FED. PANEL: LACK OF FISHERS - RESPONSE**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

Fishers in Nova Scotia, and I would venture any other Nova Scotian who knows about it, find it a bit absurd that we have marine protected areas where fishing is not allowed, but oil drilling is. Yesterday, we learned that the new federal panel on marine protected areas has three prominent Liberals on it, but no one to represent fishers - and the panel will not even visit Nova Scotia.

So, my question for the minister, does he think it is acceptable that Nova Scotian fishers have no voice when it comes to marine protected areas?

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Indeed, it's an issue we've been working very closely with the fishing industry to make sure their concerns are made known to the federal government, and as far as the appointments go to that board, that's a totally federal board.

MS. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board is another decision-making body where fishers are not being represented. The Minister of Energy professes deep faith in the board, but representatives of the fisheries say that that faith is misplaced.

John Davis is the director of the Clean Ocean Action Committee, a coalition of fish plant operators and harvesters representing over 9,000 jobs in southwestern Nova Scotia. In his opinion, the petroleum board is compromised by the petroleum industry and cannot function as a credible regulator.

Given the importance of the Nova Scotia fishing industry, would the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture support placing a representative of Nova Scotia fishers on the CNSOPB?

MR. COLWELL: I will refer that to the Minister of Business. (Applause)

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I'd like to thank the members opposite for that warm welcome to Question Period, Mr. Speaker.

Look, again, I've said many times to the member in Estimates here, and in Question Period, we have the utmost confidence in the CNSOPB. I know the member shakes her head at that, but we have to have regulatory bodies that will do that work and do the diligence.

Of course we support and understand the absolute critical nature of the fisheries, Mr. Speaker. We don't want any fishing areas in any part of this province, or any jurisdiction in the country, impacted by anything. Of course they're going to have a role. They're going to have a voice at any table that we have.

The CNSOPB listens to all sides. We make sure that we make an independent, objective decision, and that's what they do. They're not representing big business, Mr. Speaker. They're representing all Nova Scotians and we're proud of the work that they do.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The time allotted for Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers has expired.

The honourable member for Sackville-Beaver Bank, on an introduction.

MR. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I do beg leave to make an introduction. I draw the attention of the members to the west gallery and my constituency assistant Regan Oliver, who came in today and brought his two sons Noah and Jonah with him to tour around the House. Every time I introduce anybody to Regan, I always point out that Regan and I were in the same Grade Primary class together, and I've known him since that long. So thank you guys for coming today, and thank you members. (Applause)

### **OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Regan is aging a lot better than our member. (Laughter)

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

### **PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 100.

### **Bill No. 100 - Education Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to speak on Bill No. 100 today, a bill that would establish a mandatory civics course in senior high school, specifically, at

the Grade 11 or Grade 12 level. A course similar to civics was promised in 2015 - 21<sup>st</sup> century citizenship - but delays and alterations have made it so that this class will be at the Grade 9 level, starting in the 2018-19 academic school year.

This course covers a wide range of topics we certainly want our students exposed to, from governance to civics to media literacy, but there are concerns about these topics being introduced at the Grade 9 level. I am pleased the government is finally following through on this course, but I have some concerns. I have some concerns with the methodology and pedagogical approach.

My 13 years in the classroom taught me some fundamental lessons. One of those fundamental lessons was that if a curriculum is to be maximized, the material has to be age appropriate. Historically, we have altered the grade levels that certain topics are taught. One example, of course, being the Mi'kmaq studies course that we offer through our public school program.

This course, for many years, was taught at the Grade 10 level, and has only recently been moved to the Grade 11 level, where it was determined that grade would be more appropriate for some of the topics that you go into in depth - specifically, that of the impact of residential schools on our indigenous communities, and of course, an analysis of indigenous spirituality contrasted with the Judeo-Christian tradition. These are heavy topics. These are topics that require a certain level of maturity that we note is often characterized in the Grade 11 or Grade 12 years.

Now, having taught social studies for much of my career, I believe that Grade 11 or Grade 12 is the best time to teach civics and politics. Materials involving understanding and civic engagement, these are much more significant to 16- to 18-year-olds as they prepare to take part in the political process. Not only are these the years when they approach the eligibility to vote, but it is also a time when they are on the cusp of graduating and entering the adult world.

One only needs to have a conversation with a 17- or an 18-year-old, and they will often tell you that the material that they are learning in school is often disconnected from what they know to be the next stage in their lives, whether it's courses that focus on life skills, or courses that we need to emphasize when it comes to civics. In my opinion, this is the perfect time to equip our youth with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate our political system.

One of the proudest moments in my teaching career was when my class and myself were bestowed Canada's Citizen of the Year in 2014. This was granted to me by Samara Canada because of the great work my students were doing in Dartmouth East at the time. I attribute their success to civic engagement due to the fact that the political science course I was teaching at the time was at the Grade 12 level. Often when you would ask those students, why are you getting so much out of this course, they would often respond that the

timing is perfect - we are delving in-depth to these topics at a point in our life when we want to make meaning out of it, when we know in a few months time we'll be 18 years old, we'll have the possibility of voting. Meaning is so critical in the education process, and certainly we know that if we want to maximize learning there has to be meaning associated with that learning.

Unfortunately, since the 1960s, in many western liberal democracies, we have experienced a steady decline in voter turnouts. Political scientists and sociologists have attributed a number of factors to that. Our last provincial election here in Nova Scotia had a 50 per cent voter turnout. Certainly, I think many of us in this Chamber who had parents or grandparents that fought in the Second World War, this would be something that they would take great exception to.

As adults, it is on us to pass on to our youth the great traditions of western liberal democracies, and we have to ask ourselves, with a voter turnout of 53 per cent in the Province of Nova Scotia, have we fulfilled our duties as adults to transmit and pass on the great wisdom we have inherited of close to 1,000 years in the Westminster model.

Across the province, our youth turnout is even lower. According to Elections Nova Scotia, only 8 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds voted last May. The greatest threat to democracy is apathy. As everyone in this Chamber knows, through our education system we communicate certain values, and those values must be consistent throughout their education, but at a certain point we have to really emphasize some of those values. Parents, grandparents, teachers, politicians, community leaders - we all have a role, a responsibility, in engaging our youth in the political process.

This course that is being proposed through this private members' bill, through Bill No. 100, I believe should emphasize some of the very basics of political and civic literacy. What is politics? What is government? What are the differences between civics and politics? What is political culture? What is the relationship between power and authority? These are very challenging, abstract concepts. While it is important to discuss those at the Grade 9 level, I believe a course like Civics 11 or 12 could really allow the opportunity for a young person in our province - someone who is on the cusp of turning 18 - to really delve into those topics.

If we are serious about improving voter turnout in this province, then we have an opportunity to place a course that could assist in that process, to place a course in our system that maximizes political learning and political literacy. A course like this needs to analyze objectively the meaning of conservatism, the meaning of classical liberalism, the meaning of reformed liberalism that emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century - the meaning of socialism, the meaning of communism - ideologies that have had a huge impact on human history and human development in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

A course like this needs to focus on government systems. Often times our youth will tell us they simply do not understand the structure and the role of the federal government, the provincial government and the municipal government. It is on us as adults to transmit that knowledge in a tangible, meaningful way.

Our students should be coming out of senior high school with a strong grasp of the Westminster model. I recall as a teacher when I would tell my students, you have inherited close to 1,000 years of British Parliamentary tradition with the rule of law and civil liberties that go along with that. Often times, they had no idea what that meant. To get to Grade 11 or 12 and not have an idea of the significance of that, we are doing them a disservice.

Students should be able to leave high school knowing the difference between a Republican system of government and a constitutional monarchy. Our students should have a time in their life to study the indigenous systems of governance that exist or have existed in Canada.

Then of course, Madam Speaker, we need to emphasize our electoral system - how the first-past-the-post system works. They need to study the different Party platforms. In a course like this, we can delve into international systems - the study of the United Nations and the study of the role of non-governmental organizations.

Of course I have always been a proponent that we should make in a course like this a model Parliament or a model Legislature mandatory. The greatest way to learn often is by having that experiential opportunity, and certainly being a rookie to this Chamber, many new MLAs will recognize that the greatest way to learn the process is to participate in it.

Madam Speaker, I know all MLAs in Nova Scotia wish to see improvements to our democracy and voter turnout. One of the greatest ways to improve voter engagement is to communicate and instill in our youth a sense of responsibility to take ownership of their community. Politics is something you get involved in. Politics is about the well-being of the community. Politics is the affairs of the community, and we need to communicate that crystal clear to our students at the appropriate time. Many of the students I have taught often expressed to me that they felt politics was something that happened on television, or the Internet, rather than something you participate and engage with.

A mandatory civics course in Grade 11 or 12 would teach our students the dynamic nature of democracy and the structure of our federal system, along with Indigenous forms of governance. A focus on these topics, Madam Speaker, will only help strengthen and enhance our students' ability to understand the world they are about to embark on.

Our youth in Nova Scotia are looking for more opportunities to learn more about their society in school. For far too long, we have emphasized mathematics and science - that is important, and that should never be removed in any way, shape or form. But it has often come at the cost of social studies, and it has come at the cost, often, of our history



courses. We need to emphasize courses that focus not only on academics, but also practical life skills.

Madam Speaker, political literacy and civic engagement are necessary ingredients for the health of our democracy. I hope this private member's bill is passed so that all Nova Scotian students graduating from high school will have an understanding of how their society and government operates. I look forward to listening to the comments from my colleagues in this House, pertaining to Bill No. 100.

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

MR. BEN JESSOME: Madam Speaker, I'll include a brief disclaimer before I get started here. I'm a little under the weather, so I apologize in advance if I have to take a drink of water. The other thing I will say is that I approach this debate very humbly. I may have spent more time in the Chamber than the member opposite, but the member has certainly spent more time in the classroom than I have. So I would add that disclaimer to my debate and my comments here today.

I think we're all in agreement that there's significant value in ensuring that we enable opportunities for young people throughout our province to be engaged in the political process. I would add that it's very fitting that we're having this debate on Pink Day, a day where young people took it upon themselves to initiate the recognition that bullying is not okay. It's a clear indication that even at a very young age, our youth out there are very willing to take a stand and to engage in public representation. In this case, representing a group of people who are continually bullied, and it's kind of fitting that we're having this conversation today. So, from my perspective, government has endeavoured to make it possible for all Nova Scotians to be exposed to a civics course.

[3:00 p.m.]

The honourable member did mention the existence of the civics course at the Grade 9 level. That was our commitment as a government to enable the initiation of this pilot program at the Grade 9 level. The honourable member is suggesting that this be a mandatory course at the Grade 12 level, but this is a course that we selected at the Grade 9 level due to the fact that in the present structure of the system, politics is only an elective course. We wanted to ensure that this happens, and the choice could be made to take other classes at the high school level.

It is my perspective, based on the experiences that I have had in my community and beyond, that young people are actually interested in and willing to engage in the discussion around civics at an age that's much younger than Grade 12. I do appreciate the value that the member speaks of in regard to having some type of mandated political information course close to a time whereby they're going to be casting their first votes. I appreciate that value, but I do want to reiterate that I think that there is a presence within our current

structure that enables this conversation to take place at a younger age. I have been in classrooms as early as Grade 5, Madam Speaker, that have taken part in mock elections where, alongside of the election campaigns that I have participated in, they have hosted elections in their classrooms.

There are a number of teachers out there I would like to recognize because I have been in a number of classrooms and was particularly asked to talk about what we do as MLAs. I have been in classrooms at every level of school - elementary, middle school, and senior high - and not limited to my community. I have been in schools in my community, I have been at Dartmouth High to speak to a group of young students at that level. Rod Hasey, Amanda Windsor, Pamela Alexander, Tabitha Bainbridge, and Greg Doyle are all teachers who have brought me in to have a discussion about what we do as MLAs and, to the best of my ability, I have tried to explain what goes on in and beyond our offices.

I quite readily say that there's really no job description for what we do as MLAs. We have to do our best to make it our own and do it in such a way that our community feels that we are representing their best interests. What I try to communicate to the youth that I speak to is that you really have to take the time to show up and to listen to the people around you. That's a primary thing that I try to relay to youth. Quite frankly, Madam Speaker, I see it every day in our community with respect to youth showing up. I think that the best thing that we can do as MLAs is to continue to encourage youth to show up.

There's a lot of learning about civic engagement that takes place through real scenarios. One example that comes to mind was there was a hockey team, a group of young people from the TASA Minor Hockey Association, who took it upon themselves to sponsor a local family at Christmastime. It's examples like that in our communities, collectively, that demonstrate to me that there is a willingness and an effort to be engaged as a good citizen in supporting our communities that exist at an age that is younger than high school.

To make a couple of comments, Madam Speaker, in regard to the Citizenship 9 Program that we've referenced a couple of times, this is a program that's being hosted in 32 classrooms across the province. There are 21 teachers actively participating, facilitating this program. It's being held in English and in French - in our French immersion schools - in every region, I would add, across the province. It is being hosted at Forest Heights Community School, North Queens Community School, Riverview Rural High School, Glace Bay High School, Central Kings Rural High School, Bridgetown Regional School, Bible Hill Junior High, North Nova Education Centre, Truro Junior High, Richmond Education Centre and Academy, Dalbrae Academy, St. Mary's Bay Academy, Eastern Passage Education Centre, Graham Creighton Junior High, École acadienne de Truro, École du Carrefour and the Abu Dhabi Grammar School.

I apologize, Madam Speaker, I cannot pronounce the Mi'kmaq school that is listed here. What I can do in a little bit is make a copy of this document, and table it for the House's reference.

We are hopeful that Grade 9 students being exposed to this concrete agenda with respect to civic engagement is something that we can build on, with respect to the number of schools that it is in presently. The important thing I think we need to acknowledge, beyond the importance of simply civic engagement and initiating this course, is that anything we endeavour to do with respect to changing curriculum and adding requirements to our school system needs to be done in unison with teachers.

It needs to be well supported. We've endeavoured to work with the teachers who are actively participating in this program. Last year - I believe it was late November, early December - there were in-service days where the teachers who were facilitating this program got together to talk about what was important for them to be supported with, to enable this program.

That type of practice is something that we, as a government, are going to continue to do with respect to curriculum changes on a go-forward basis. We made a commitment, Madam Speaker, to reinvigorate our curriculum, Primary to 12, and we're going to do that with the support and with the leadership of our educators.

I'll just take a quick moment to dive back into my notes here, to make sure I am not missing anything. I did want to acknowledge the honourable member who brought this bill forward, the member for Dartmouth East. He mentioned that we had an 8 per cent voter turnout for the age category of 18-24. I would share his sentiment that this is something that is very concerning. We in Hammonds Plains-Lucasville actually experienced an increase in voter turnout this election, which I know is contrary to the entirety of the province.

But with respect to his specific comments on that 8 per cent figure, I think that it's critical that we create some consistency in how often we engage the next generation with respect to civic engagement. Quite frankly, Madam Speaker, in my view, it doesn't only take place at the Grade 12 level. It doesn't only take place at the Grade 9 level. There are clear examples across the board that I've experienced in my community and beyond, where there is that appetite, that desire for knowledge, that exposure through technology, exposure through leaders in our teaching community who are examples of the opportunity to learn about civics, that spans from even Primary beyond Grade 12.

I do appreciate the member's sentiment behind this program. I respect his background as an educator and the real first-hand experience that he has. But for the purposes of today's debate, I submit that we're going to continue to reinforce the program that exists at the Grade 9 level. I would strongly invite all members to continue reaching out to our communities collectively, and continue reaching out to the public, to do what we can on an individual basis to ensure that young Nova Scotians are exposed to civics and to the political process. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: First of all, Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for Dartmouth East for bringing this legislation forward. I honour the experience he brings as an educator. I'm in broad agreement. As I think I voiced last week on Opposition Day, my own view is that I'm not 100 per cent sure it makes sense for us to legislate pedagogy, but if it does, I think civics is something we should legislate. I think it makes absolute sense that we ensure that students moving through the public education system are equipped with all the information, knowledge, and critical thinking that's required to become an active and engaged member of society, and that includes exercising the right to vote and understanding how to cast that vote.

For myself, I would say that there were two formative things that happened in my high school and junior high school life that set me on the path to being able to do that myself. One was when Alexa McDonough visited my Grade 9 class and spoke in the library to a group of only young women, as I recall. I remember being so inspired by Alexa and by hearing her first-hand story - and of course, Alexa's story at that time was very different than the story of myself or any of my colleagues in this Legislature. I just found it tremendously inspiring.

Teenagers are extremely self-involved, so it was definitely - for me, I remember having this experience of "Oh, wait, what? Politics?" I didn't even know that existed, literally. It was outside the frame of my very small sphere of reference. It really did open my eyes.

The second was a Grade 12 political science course I took. It was taught by a retired member of the SAS, a crusty old South African who walked with a cane and yelled at students in Swahili. It was the most amazing course I ever took, bar none. It was amazing because it was clear, it was rigorous, and it introduced students, as my colleague spoke about, to the theoretical and the moral underpinnings of the history of political thought, at least in the Western world. It made you want to understand and engage.

[3:15 p.m.]

As part of that course, I was selected as part of a Rotary trip called Adventure in Citizenship, where I went to Ottawa. I met the current Speaker of the House in Ottawa, who I believe was then in his first term, as well as a number of other MPs.

All of that is just to say that I do believe that young people - especially now, in an age that is so much more distracted than it was even 25 years ago, when I was in that situation - I think young people need to be coaxed a little bit into understanding that this is part of the roles and responsibilities of being a citizen. I am very, very grateful that I was. I think it's wonderful to think about how to do that for other young people in this province.

That being said, I would say that a course dedicated to this is necessary but not at all sufficient. I think there is much more than a course that needs to be done.

In terms of the timing of a course, if it's Grade 9 or Grade 12, I don't feel like I can speak to that with utmost certainty, other than to say, as I reflect on my own experience, that I do give a lot of credence to what the member for Dartmouth East says, which is that you're at a particular precipice when you're in that last year of high school.

I think many of us would think back to that period of our lives now and sort of chuckle at how our younger selves felt about what a momentous moment that was, but of course it is a momentous moment. You're looking at the first day of the rest of your life as soon as you get out of high school, and for many people, they have not necessarily any idea of what that will be.

I think that we need to be consciously - I don't want to say "arming people," but equipping people with the skills that they need to move out into the world. I think we talk a lot about keeping young people here in Nova Scotia. I think engaging people with the political process is another way to do that. People can understand what's happening. People can engage with what's happening. So I certainly support the idea that it should be in Grade 12. Maybe it should be in Grade 12 and Grade 9. I'm not clear on that.

I do think, though, that there's more that could also be done. One of the things I think about, which I think the member for Hammonds Plains-Lucasville referenced, is an organization called Student Vote. It's run through the CIVIX organization in Toronto, which my sister actually worked for for years. Many of you will be familiar with Student Vote because it will have taken place in your riding. It's a mock election that happens for young people across Canada. It's run in tandem with provincial, federal, and sometimes municipal elections.

I know for myself, when I went door to door during the election, on at least two occasions the parent sort of tried to usher me out and up popped a kid behind them, who said, "Wait, wait, wait, wait, I have questions, I have questions. My Student Vote is coming up next week." It was awesome. It was just so refreshing and exciting, frankly, to be able to have a real conversation with these kids about what they cared about and what they were interested in.

When I went to my kids' Spring fair at their elementary school, which I think happened to be about two weeks before the election, I got quizzed walking down the hall by different kids asking me questions. I thought that that was wonderful.

I think it's very important. It's important that we support initiatives like Student Vote, that we encourage that. I think it's important for all of us to encourage youth to engage with the political process in any number of ways. I mean, all of the Parties have youth wings, and that's great. We have the Legislative Page Program, which is great, here in the Legislature, which is great, but I'm sure that there is in fact even more we could do. So, I think yes, let's look to the education, the formal education system, and I'm glad that my colleague has brought this to the floor of the House, but beyond that let's have

conversations at home around the dinner table, and let's encourage our friends and colleagues, and families, to be doing the same thing.

You know, I worry that we sometimes feel like children don't understand what we are talking about - and I know I'm guilty of this as a parent of young kids - so we don't bother to engage them in those conversations, and it's a mistake because kids understand much more than we give them credit for.

So, it's my strong belief that kids should certainly be engaged in the way that the world works around them and, in particular, in the way that the power structures around them work. So, part of that is what happens in this Chamber and elected politics, but as we all know it goes much further than that. How can young people effect changes that they want to see? If they're interested in an issue, how does that issue work? How could they effect change in that issue? All of those conversations, I think, are important to be having with young people and to the extent that we can make those part of curriculum, that we can make them part of initiatives of political Parties, or of this House, I'm fully supportive of that.

That's all I think about the political system and the political process, and you know, I'd say, to be honest, Madam Speaker, one of the reasons that I feel really strongly about this is because I think that we need young people engaged to keep us honest. I think that my experience of having conversations with those young people, during the election when I went to the doors, was that they weren't jaded, they didn't have a pre-formed sense of how the world works, or what was possible, or what wasn't possible. They asked the hard questions and sometimes, frankly, they asked the really weird questions - but that's great. I mean, I think answering weird questions, I don't know if any of you have checked your email lately, but I get a lot of weird questions.

So, that's a part of the job and I think it's one that we need to pay attention to. In terms of keeping us honest, Madam Speaker, I think we also need to think about, as we encourage young people to become involved in politics, to pay attention to what happens in this Chamber.

What lessons would they learn if they looked now? Madam Speaker, what does it teach students about our values as a province that we legislate away a level of democratically elected government? What do young people learn when thousands, and thousands, and thousands of people sign a petition that's tabled in the provincial Legislature, again this is a process thing, what do you want to do if you want to effect change? Send out a petition. Well, what happens when tens of thousands of people sign a petition and it's tabled, and it's completely ignored? What does it say about how we value diversity when the government takes the occasion of International Women's Day to eliminate the only level of elected government with gender parity?

Madam Speaker, I submit that we have to give people a reason to be engaged. Young people have to feel that there's a value in participating. I think most recently we saw when the government cancelled meetings with student groups for expressing dissenting views that that's not something that's going to send a positive signal to young people who want to engage with government.

So, in closing I would just say again that I support the member's legislation. I think it's important, but I think (Interruption) it's partly because he's from Dartmouth, it's partly because he's an educator, but it's mostly because I agree with him.

Beyond that, I just want to take this occasion to say that, on the one hand, yes, we need to encourage young people to be engaged, to use their voice, mostly to use their eyes and ears and to listen and understand what's happening, but at the same time as we do that we better pay attention to what it is that they're learning when they use those eyes and ears and when they pay attention, and from the feedback I've gotten, Madam Speaker, particularly in the education debates of the last year, it's a pretty grim picture.

With that, I'll take my seat.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HON. PAT DUNN: I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill No. 100. I enjoyed listening to the comments on both sides of the House and, in hearing some of them, I would like to make a couple of comments to something I heard starting off - something that the member for Hammonds Plains-Lucasville had mentioned about the value of civics in our school, and I couldn't agree with him more, but we sort of have different opinions with regard to what grade level.

If I look back over the years, the number of years that my wife and I taught in junior high school, junior-senior high school, we total 62 years. I feel we have a bit of a feel for how students react, what they comprehend, and so on, and also from talking to my colleagues.

I personally would like to see units taught in Grades 7, 8, 9, and 10, and I'd like to see a real strong compulsory, mandatory course at the high school level, where they are a little more mature and have a different understanding of the political arena around our world.

Again, I'd like to support the member for Dartmouth East with what I think is a common sense piece of legislation that he introduced. He is certainly not that far removed from the classroom where he realizes that students are not exposed enough with regard to civic learning. In fact, I believe all members in this Legislature realize that many citizens do not have a grasp of the different levels of government and their respective functions.

Civic equality pertains to giving every student the knowledge to participate in an informed manner. Again, we know that students are exposed to civic learning in pockets, I'm going to say, throughout the various grade levels.

In reflecting back, I can remember one time when my wife was teaching Grade 7 English, she did a civics unit during her English course, and after completing the unit, she would take her classes, one at a time, on a Monday night down to the New Glasgow Town Hall Council meeting just for them to be exposed and see what actually went on in chambers.

Following that, the classes would have an election. They would elect a mayor, deputy mayor, councillors, and so on, and through the co-operation of the Town of New Glasgow, they were allowed to spend an entire day in the Chamber with the mayor, deputy mayor, and the elected council - spend the day talking about issues and so on, getting another opportunity to visit the mayor and the councillors of the day.

That was always interesting and she often would comment on parent/teacher nights about how many students enjoyed that because there was more talk around the kitchen table than about politics than I believe there is now.

Students who receive effective civic learning are more likely to vote and discuss politics at home; more likely to volunteer and work on community issues; and more confident in their ability to speak publicly and communicate with their elected representatives. Making this compulsory for all students to take a civic learning course to overcome any lack of basics in civic knowledge and skills will ensure that all students leave high school prepared to be informed and to be engaged.

We want youth to be more engaged than simply voting every four years. We all know that society wishes to see all citizens informed and thoughtful, participating in their communities, and definitely involved in the political process. We cannot assume that politics is automatically passed along to the next generation. Therefore, it must be passed down through our school curriculum.

[3:30 p.m.]

Ultimately, schools are the guardians of democracy. Adequate civics learning will increase the democratic accountability of elected officials. Engaged citizens will be able to ask important and relevant questions of their representatives. Citizens will be more knowledgeable and interested, and this will improve public discourse.

A compulsory civics course in high school will fulfill our ideal of civic equality by giving every student, regardless of background, the tools to be a full participant. A large body of research shows the tangible benefits of civic learning. Civics learning promotes civic knowledge. Students are more likely to understand public issues. They'll understand



political engagement. They're more likely to participate in civic activities. Madam Speaker, there's also a train of thought that a high-quality civics course is more likely to produce a better school climate and perhaps produce lower dropout rates.

It has been increasingly important for all schools to incorporate discussion of current local, national, and international issues and events, particularly those that young people view as very important in their lives. Madam Speaker, a good mandatory civics program could provide students with the opportunity to apply what they learn through performing community service. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development should ensure that civics learning is included for all students alongside English, math, and science as a core subject.

Every member of this Legislature can tell stories of the lack of political knowledge within our population. I am sure we have been on many doorsteps, and residents are not sure if we are seeking a federal, provincial, or municipal seat - or in some cases, if there is an election on.

It's time to make sure, Madam Speaker, that our youth are engaged. The time is now. We can make this happen. We can establish a change in our schools' curriculum to make this happen. It only makes sense that we want our youth to be knowledgeable and engaged.

I feel we are in an era where parents are not the first and best civics teachers. In many cases, that would be correct; however, I don't think it's the norm any longer. It has been my experience that political conversations around the kitchen table have diminished. We do not have enough parents encouraging their children to develop an interest in keeping themselves informed on current events, encouraging their sons and daughters to take an interest in volunteering in their community, which will ultimately help their children develop civics skills and habits. Madam Speaker, the loss of quality civics education in our educational system has left too many students without the most basic knowledge of our past and present state of government.

Once again, as I mentioned earlier, there are pockets of this happening in our schools, but not really to any great extent. As I mentioned in my earlier comments, I would like to see units placed in all our grade levels starting with Grade 7 - but when we get to the high school level, a very comprehensive course would certainly be very beneficial. All students should have an understanding and awareness of public and community issues, the capacity to think critically, and a willingness to enter into dialogue with others about different points of view, and to understand diverse perspectives. Students should have the skills and knowledge to accomplish public purposes such as organizing people to address social issues, solving problems in groups, speaking in public, petitioning and trying to influence public policy, and voting.

Madam Speaker, providing for this type of civics learning is a broad social responsibility involving parents, community leaders, and other public officials. My colleague the member for Dartmouth East and I believe our schools should act as conduits for civics knowledge. Research shows that Canadians who are not properly educated about their role as citizens are less likely to be civically engaged. They are less likely to vote, less likely to engage in political discourse, and less likely to participate in community development than their counterparts who receive a civics education.

Madam Speaker, the better educated our citizens are, the better equipped they will be to serve the system of government that we have today. Improving civics learning demands a collective effort by educating stakeholders at every level, and that includes members of this Legislature. We have the control to make this happen. It is time to stop giving this important issue lip service.

Civics learning is absolutely essential to preserving our system of government. In a representative democracy, government is only as good as the citizens who elect its leader, demand action on pressing issues, hold public officials accountable, and take action to help solve problems in their communities. To avoid exposing our students to civics learning is to neglect a core pillar of Canadian democracy.

Very few students, and numerous adults for that matter, do not have a fundamental understanding of the structure of government and the processes by which government passes laws and makes policies. They simply do not understand the role of government. However, if you teach it, examine it, students will certainly learn. Without civics learning, students are essentially disenfranchised and disempowered. Civics learning opportunities are essential for promoting civic equality.

Rather than viewing civics learning as an isolated part of the curriculum, educators and members of this Legislature should consider the more inclusive picture because there is considerable overlap between the skills acquired as part of civics learning and the skills required in employment. In conclusion, if we expect our students to participate in our democracy, then educating for democracy includes ensuring that students understand and value the importance of each individual making positive contributions to the well-being of his or her community.

The outcome is for a very practical purpose, Madam Speaker. It is the right and sensible thing to do. This legislation has a very practical application. Imagine the relative merits of this legislation - again, it is a very reasonable and rational idea. Once again, I want to thank my colleague the member for Dartmouth East for introducing this common sense piece of legislation. It certainly makes a lot of sense.

At the high school level, one of the reasons why we avoided placing this in Grade 10 is that a student must have 18 credits to graduate. They can take 22 or 23 credits during their high school years. You can only use seven Grade 10 courses towards the 18 that are

required, so we felt that if we placed it in Grade 11 or Grade 12, a student could take it in any one of those three years. Since there's a tremendous transformation of education across this province, in every aspect I can think of, it might be a great time for us to look at the curriculum and the compulsory courses in our system and have some discussion and debate of that.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for Dartmouth East for bringing Bill No. 100 forward, and I certainly am in support of it.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I thank everybody for their interventions on Bill No. 100.

Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 74.

**Bill No. 74 - Municipal Grants Act.**

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Madam Speaker, I'm very pleased to stand in my place and begin debate on Bill No. 74, an Act to Amend Chapter 302 of the Revised Statutes of 1989, the Municipal Grants Act. This bill is very simple. It's about providing financial assistance to our municipalities in the province with regard to the legalization of cannabis. (Interruption) Yes, we are legalizing it.

This has come to me - it was generated by speaking to a number of municipalities and councillors and mayors and law enforcement across the province who are deeply concerned about what their job looks like after cannabis becomes legalized.

We all know that municipal zoning bylaws currently do not have definitions for cannabis dispensaries, venues, or locations for the consumption of cannabis for recreational use. Obviously there were no previous bylaws in place because it wasn't permitted. I guess I could say that we're entering a whole new realm.

I spoke the other day about the fact that it's really an opportunity for us to get this right. It is happening. It's not up to us. It's coming down federally, whether we like it or not. But even if we do agree with it, that it should happen, we should also agree that we put everything properly in place.

In my opinion, without having everything properly in place, we are going to open up Pandora's Box to a huge mess of problems. We may be debating this piece of legislation in this session, but I can guarantee you, Madam Speaker, that in the next number of years, this will not go away. We don't have the proper pieces to implement to get it right.

One of those items, of course, is being able to set aside money to assist our municipalities with the concerns - mostly around policing. Unlike other land uses, there are obviously some very unique aspects that must be taken into consideration with the legalization of cannabis.

A lot of people speak about the unique aroma. I have a number of individuals - there is actually an individual, a private business owner who is opening up a location in a small village in Pictou West, and people are accepting of and welcoming it. But it is close to homes, and they're worried about the aroma. We know that it's one thing to be bypassing someone and perhaps smell cannabis, but it's a whole other world when you're living next to a building that is actually housing and producing the product. The aroma is constantly there, and it's much stronger, too, in that state of growing.

We know that cannabis does have the potential for negative impacts on workers, on neighbours, on residents, and on businesses. These impacts, however, can be mitigated through proper regulations. Unfortunately, we have a bill going forward that doesn't have all the proper regulations, but this bill that I've introduced will look after one of those items of great concern that has been voiced by our municipalities.

Restrictions on the permitted locations for consumption can ensure that public health and safety is a priority and is taken into consideration. What the Liberal Government has failed to do is involve or consult municipalities. There has been no consultation with the municipalities. There has been expression stated that they've gone and they've spoken to over 200-and-some individuals across this province, but really, that is not consulting taxpayers and consulting individual municipalities on their own, because we know they have different interests and they vary. Municipalities play a huge, a colossal part, in supporting the implementation of federal and provincial legislation. We've really missed our opportunity to engage them.

[3:45 p.m.]

Municipalities do need to be prepared, through their municipal bylaws, for health and safety inspectors and police to take on the steps to properly enforce, with regard to zoning and density bylaws, building standards, personal cultivation, smoking restrictions - and more importantly, what we know we're going to have is a lot of public complaints. Public complaints are already coming in.

So, we have nothing in place for that. More importantly, as many of my colleagues speak about, is the safety of our youth. Unless you can enforce properly you will always, always have a black market. Always. I mentioned today during Question Period that I am very concerned about the opening opportunity for hash oils. I think we're going to see a lot more of that, actually.

We also know that with municipalities, the smell - as I spoke of earlier - but fire is a big concern for municipalities. We know that a lot of fires are started because of cigarette smoking, cannabis smoking already. So, it's a great concern to them. We should be looking at this bill that I presented as an opportunity to build a relationship and a bond with our municipalities, and get out ahead, and be prepared. The federal Liberals want to legalize it, but have no interest at this point in helping provinces to set bylaws, education (Interruption) I'm glad you agree.

So, they want to normalize it, but they don't want to assist at all in helping us provincially, or more importantly, each of us on an individual level - our municipalities. I did mention in Estimates, to the Minister of Justice that the Trudeau Government has actually set aside \$260-some million, I believe, to help in policing costs. So, I ask, what are we getting out of that? I don't know. We haven't discussed that yet. We don't know (Interruptions)

Well, did you ask them? Did you ask the federal government what portion Nova Scotia is getting out of that \$200-some million to help with policing? No, but I'm sure there will be future discussions. Well, the discussions should have happened months ago.

HRM stated at Law Amendments Committee the other day that there has been no discussion with them and they want to know what funding will be made available to them to offset the cost of legalized cannabis. Obviously, their increased cost will, for some municipalities, increase taxes, or perhaps, if they're not already - because we know so much has been downloaded on to municipalities - it will make them go into the red. It's just a given, it's a no-brainer. So, I really think that we should be seriously sitting down with our municipalities, with the UNSM as well, and discussing, what do we think we need to set aside to financially help municipalities in this transition?

We know - or I know, because I was reading it the other day - that the Union of Municipalities in British Columbia have actually passed two cannabis resolutions at their annual municipalities convention that they hold annually, and what they said is that they want adequate time, something that this caucus has been speaking about right from the start. It's not so much that we're against it; it's about why so fast, why does everything have to be so fast with it? Let's get everything aligned and correct

In their resolution, they request adequate time to align and integrate regional and local regulations and practices with the new federal and provincial laws before it's legalized. Again, they're way ahead of us. They're working, they're actually working with their municipalities, unlike this Liberal Government, and it's shameful that they're not going out and speaking to UNSM and trying to come up with a number, a figure.

We know Ontario came out months ago with \$40 million - \$40 million for their municipalities to split that and help the municipalities find a secure way in addressing the transition and implementation of legalizing cannabis. They know they're going to have

extra policing costs. So what Ontario did is they went out and they put aside \$40 million, and guess what? They actually give them money up front to the municipalities. Unlike what we've heard from the Premier stating, well we're going to negotiate and talk to them as we move forward with this; it will be an ongoing dialogue.

That's wonderful. Have a dialogue but, you know what, the municipalities right now have no idea how this is all going to roll out. They're fearful and what I'm hearing is that they're almost scared to make sure that they're doing the best watching and carefully making sure that they're on top of this, because they are scared about what the cost is going to be.

So, it would be best practice if we went out ahead of this and said, look, we're going to go and give you X amount of dollars, and in this bill that I proposed, it would suggest that they have to prove that there was an increase in policing costs. We're just not going to hand the money over; they have to prove or put an application in to prove that there has been an increase. But this government has set aside no money for them, none at all, and, again, I go back to Ontario because they've set aside \$40 million and what they've done is they decided to divide that up with regard to how many households in each municipality.

Now, whether or not we would take that route, but these other provinces have plans. They all have plans and that brings security; that brings comfort to the municipalities, but what we're doing here with this government is we're not ensuring anything. We're not working with them at all to make sure that we're going to assist because we've put no type of financial attachment to it.

Again, the Premier says, well, we'll go along with this and we'll keep the dialogue going and see what kind of needs they need, but I really believe that we should have something set in legislation that brings comfort to the municipalities so that they know that there is financial help there. They know, they've already identified that it's going to be a cost to them. I ask, is there, under the Department of Justice, I wonder if the minister actually has an individual or a position put in place for who is to actually monitor these municipalities, these costs that will eventually come once it's legalized - who is actually going to monitor the real costs of the legalization of cannabis in this province?

On that note, Madam Speaker, I hope that there will be some consideration given to this bill. I think that we can go to - there are four or five different provinces that I have read information on where they have set aside X amount of dollars to help municipalities. I would hope that this government and, in particular, I would hope that the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Health and Wellness, the Premier, the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board will sit down and figure out a number that we can kindly give to our municipalities.

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

MR. HUGH MACKAY: Madam Speaker, it's often said that one of the attributes of being a successful bagpiper, a player of the great highland bagpipes, is that one has to be full of hot air, and so I will try to do my level-best to keep up on the playing field with my colleague the member for Pictou West, with great respect. (Interruption)

MADAM SPEAKER: Order. The member for Chester-St. Margaret's has the floor.

MR. MACKAY: Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to this private member's bill, introduced by the honourable member for Pictou West. As this House of Assembly knows, public safety in all aspects is of the highest priority of this government. Therefore, we on this side of the House, and staff at the Department of Justice, have given serious consideration to the member's proposal, and I assure her, as she asked in her closing statements, that this is of highest priority to this government.

I must say, listening to the Official Opposition reminds me of driving through the streets of Halifax: it's always speed up or slow down, and frankly, listening to the Opposition line, it's often like speeding up to a red light.

Madam Speaker, on April 13, 2017, after extensive consultation with law enforcement, with health and safety experts, and the hard work of the task force on cannabis legalization and regulation, the Government of Canada introduced legislation to legalize, strictly regulate, and restrict access to cannabis.

Following Royal Assent, and subject to parliamentary approval, the proposed legislation would allow adults to legally possess and use cannabis. This would mean the possession of small amounts of cannabis would no longer be a criminal offense, and would prevent profits from getting into the pockets of criminal organizations.

Madam Speaker, there are many unknowns in the legalization of cannabis. We are anticipating costs for policing, public safety, health promotion and education, regulation, and inspection. There are also outstanding federal funding decisions related to training and equipment for law enforcement, as well as public awareness and education, which have cost implications for the provinces.

Madam Speaker, with the many unknowns it is difficult to put a firm number on the expenses at this point. The member opposite just mentioned the recent Law Amendments Committee, and the appearance by HRM Counsel. Well, I was there as well and heard the Senior Counsel from Halifax Regional Municipality, Mr. John Traves, tell the committee that in HRM they only have estimates, they do not know the expenses.

Madam Speaker, this government is taking a reasoned and reasonable approach to all aspects of implementing the legalization of cannabis. This includes the careful examination of the costs of policing by our police services. At this time, we are taking the lead as are our sister provinces, from the federal government.

The Government of Canada is committed to funding to support cannabis legalization. The federal government has made at least five funding announcements over the past year, beginning with its 2017 budget, presented on March 22<sup>nd</sup> of that year. In that federal budget of March 22<sup>nd</sup>, on page 160, in the section titled Public Education Programming and Surveillance for Legalized Cannabis, the Government of Canada stated:

“The Government of Canada remains committed to keeping marijuana out of the hands of children, and the profits out of the pockets of organized crime. As part of the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy, Health Canada will support marijuana public education programming and surveillance activities in advance of the Government's plan to legalize cannabis by directing existing funding of \$9.6 million over five years, with \$1.0 million per year ongoing.”

[4:00 p.m.]

Madam Speaker, that announcement in March 2017 was followed by a subsequent announcement in September of the same year, when the Government of Canada announced funding for law enforcement in support of cannabis legalization and regulation. In a news release from Public Safety Canada, it was stated:

“The current approach to cannabis does not work. It has allowed criminals and organized crime to profit, while failing to keep cannabis out of the hands of Canadian youth. In many cases, it is easier for our kids to buy cannabis than cigarettes. That is why this spring the Government of Canada introduced legislation to legalize and strictly regulate cannabis.”

Today the Government of Canada announced up to \$274 million to support law enforcement and border efforts to detect and deter drug-impaired driving and enforce the proposed cannabis legalization and regulation. Subject to Parliamentary approval and Royal Assent, these investments will support the Government's commitment to provide regulated and restricted access to cannabis.

To support the proposed Bill C-46, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (offences relating to conveyances) and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, the Government has committed up to \$161 million for training frontline officers in how to recognize the signs and symptoms of drug-impaired driving, building law enforcement capacity across the country, providing access to drug screening devices, developing policy, bolstering research, and



raising public awareness about the dangers of drug-impaired driving.

Of the \$161 million, provinces and territories will be able to access up to \$81 million over the next five years for new law enforcement training, and to build capacity to enforce new and stronger laws related to drug-impaired driving. Public Safety Canada is already engaged with provinces and territories to identify current law enforcement capacity which will inform how federal funding will be distributed.”

There is a plan. (Interruptions) Mr. Speaker, the not-so-secret plan was supported by quotes from several ministers of the Government of Canada. The honourable Ralph Goodale, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, stated:

“We are working closely with our partners to ensure law enforcement is well trained, to build capacity across the country and at our border, and to raise awareness about the dangers of drug-impaired driving. I am confident that together we will make our roads and communities safer.”

The honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada stated:

“Our Government has proposed comprehensive legislation to legalize, strictly regulate and restrict access to cannabis and to create new stronger laws to punish those who drive while impaired, as well as deter others from getting behind the wheel. This means a significant change in public policy that requires significant resources and support. We are working together with our partners and various levels of government to prepare for the implementation of a new regulatory framework.”

It is worth noting that the federal government is toughening laws to enforce a zero-tolerance approach for those driving under the influence of cannabis and will authorize new tools for police to better detect drivers who have drugs in their body:

“In June 2017, Public Safety Canada, the RCMP, and the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators completed a successful pilot project with seven police jurisdictions across Canada to test the use of oral fluid drug screening devices as an additional tool for detecting the recent presence of drugs.”

One of the seven pilot projects took place here in Halifax, providing invaluable support, information, expertise, and experience for Halifax police. The federal government is committed to working with its partner jurisdictions and will provide up to \$81 million over the next five years for new law enforcement training and to build capacity to enforce new and stronger laws related to drug-impaired driving.

Public Safety Canada, as I said, is already engaged with the provinces - including Nova Scotia - to identify capacity issues, but we do not know as yet how much of the \$81 million Nova Scotia will receive.

Madam Speaker, more recently federal budget 2018 addressed additional funding for the components related to implementation of cannabis legislation. On February 27<sup>th</sup> of this year, on Pages 177 to 178 of the federal budget, an additional \$62.5 million over five years for public education initiatives and \$10 million over five years to the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse and Addiction, as well as \$10 million over five years to the Mental Health Commission of Canada were announced.

The budget read that:

“The Government has committed to legalize, strictly regulate, and restrict access to cannabis in order to keep it out of the hands of young Canadians and to keep profits away from criminals and organized crime. To that end, in 2017 the Government introduced Bill C-45, the Cannabis Act, to establish a strict system for the cultivation, production, distribution, sale, and possession of cannabis in Canada and made strategic investments to implement and enforce the new federal legislative framework.

Impaired driving is the leading criminal cause of death and injury in Canada. To strengthen our impaired driving laws to keep Canada’s roads safe, the government has also introduced legislation to better protect the public from both drug- and alcohol-impaired drivers.

To keep cannabis out of the hands of youth and profits out of the hands of criminals, the Government is proposing an excise duty framework for cannabis products.

Under the framework, excise duties will be imposed on federally licensed producers at the higher of a flat rate applied on the quantity of cannabis contained in a final product, or a percentage of the sale price of the product sold by a federal licensee . . .

In December 2017, the federal government reached an agreement with most provincial and territorial governments to keep duties on

cannabis low, the higher of \$1 per gram or 10 per cent of a product price, through a federally administrated coordinated framework. This tax room will be shared on a 75/25 basis, with 75 per cent of duties going to provincial and territorial governments and the remaining 25 per cent to the federal government. The federal portion of cannabis excise duty revenue will be capped at \$100 million annually for the first two years after legalization. Any federal revenue in excess of \$100 million will be provided to provinces and territories.”

Madam Speaker, there’s overwhelming evidence that the Government of Canada and the Government of this Province of Nova Scotia are taking a cautious, informed, and evidence-based approach to the implementation of cannabis legalization - and that includes public safety. As we work towards the legalization of cannabis, the health and safety of Nova Scotians, particularly our children and our youth, is our top priority. This government is committed to ensuring the well-being of all Nova Scotians.

Cannabis legalization is a significant policy shift. The decisions we have announced and the legislation we have introduced are formed through significant consultation with experts, stakeholders, and thousands of Nova Scotians. This is a start to get ready for the deadline set by the Government of Canada. Right now, we’re being very careful and we are taking the time to get it right.

Madam Speaker, at this time I would like to recognize and applaud the work of staff within the Department of Justice who are working hard, working efficiently, and working effectively to prepare Nova Scotians for the legalization of cannabis and to do so with public safety as our number-one priority.

Madam Speaker, this government does not support Bill No. 74

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for allowing me to speak on Bill No. 74.

I have to say that I think one of the main reasons we have a bill like Bill No. 74 in front of us is that it’s been quite challenging over the last year or so to try to get information from the provincial government here in Nova Scotia on exactly how this is all going to roll out. How is the legalization of cannabis going to roll out in our province?

I’m not here to put all the blame on the members across the way, on the Liberal Government of Nova Scotia. Really, the blame here in why we see a piece of legislation like Bill No. 74, where it’s just trying to request of the government that municipalities should receive some funding to increase and support policing, once cannabis is legalized

in our province, but I put the majority - if not all - of the blame on the shoulders of our Prime Minister. Once the photo ops and the selfies were taken, he pretty much washed his hands of it, and required the provinces and territories of this country to come up with a plan on how we get to that July 1<sup>st</sup> date.

If there was a really good plan and a dive-in to how we actually do this in our country, the Prime Minister may have avoided a stall that we see here currently in the federal government, and that's with the bill that's supposed to regulate it all being tied up in the unelected Senate, where there are unelected Liberals and Tories fighting over trying to make their mark on this legislation.

The July 1<sup>st</sup> date is not a reality. I think right out of the gate, after the Prime Minister was elected, there were those in Canada saying, listen, that timeline is probably not achievable - and they were right. They were right.

On the eve of July 1<sup>st</sup> when it's supposed to be legal, when the changes are supposed to happen - here we are in April dealing with federal legislation that isn't even passed yet. So, I do put a lot of this blame on the federal government for not having a proper plan, not having a plan to engage with provinces and territories and municipalities - those who are going to be left trying to deal with the ramifications of legalizing cannabis.

I don't want to speak for anybody in the House - but I think the debate around cannabis and the legalization of it is over. It's been a long, long time where there have been discussions, and that we need to move in the direction of legalization, that the plan should have been worked on before the selfies and the photo ops happened, and that's the frustrating part. That's what it is. What we're doing as an Opposition Party is trying to get information from the government.

The government just recently announced their budget, and through my role as Finance spokesperson for our Party, I sat down with the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board here in Nova Scotia, because of her role in overseeing the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation, to try to get details about how much this is going to cost. We made the decision. The province has made the decision. The government made the decision on the distribution of cannabis through the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation and online, and that we know. I know personally through the store in Sackville that they started renovations. They're going to be looking at how this is going to roll out, that those answers - they didn't answer the questions that we had around the costing of it, and I would think with the rollout of the initiative of using the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation and the renovations that will need to be taken, or are taking place there, that there should be some cost.

I think that's part of why we see a piece of legislation like Bill No. 74: we haven't been given those details. Nova Scotians don't know exactly how this will cost. It's great for the member opposite to stand up and recite all the news releases that the federal government has had on this, but the substance isn't there. There's some \$200 million going

to policing, yet we don't know how much that will transfer into Nova Scotia, or for that matter, how much that will transfer into our municipalities around the province for those who take care of policing in Nova Scotia.

[4:15 p.m.]

That's the frustrating part, that those answers to questions that are legitimate questions - we're not saying or asking for anything that really shouldn't be discussed. We're asking about cost. We're asking about implications on the police forces around Nova Scotia. There will be costs. You can go to the legalization of cannabis and there are a number of areas of concern that I think we all have. We all have a personal opinion on it. We have a political opinion on it.

I think what's most important here is that - listen, the decision is out of our hands on this level of government. I don't believe that the Province of Nova Scotia can say no, that we're not buying into the federal government's initiative of legalizing cannabis. The decision has been made.

For us, we're trying to get the answers to some of the questions - what will the cost be? What will the impact be on our community? Are those services going to have the support of the provincial government? They are the ones that will receive the cheque from the federal government when that happens.

I think that's what's really at the essence of Bill No. 74. It indicates that it wants to ensure that they provide financial assistance to municipalities for any increased policing costs attributed to the legalization of cannabis - and there will be an increased cost.

An area of concern that I have, on a number of areas within the legalization, is the impairment component of driving while high. It's one area that scares the heck out of me. What will the impact of impaired driving be? Will we see an increase? I hate to say - I probably can't say - will we see an increase? We will see an increase.

Having young adults in my own home - I have a 19-year-old and a 16-year-old, and I've worked extremely hard bringing them up to make sure that they know about the ramifications of being impaired while driving. Most of that discussion was around alcohol, because of course alcohol has been the main topic over the last 20 or 30 years on how we reduce intoxication and people who are driving while intoxicated.

On my professional level, just seeing the carnage that you see when you have impaired drivers - I'm afraid to see what will happen in the years ahead. I hope that there's a strong campaign to make sure that young people know that you can't drive high, that you just can't do it.

It's unbelievable, the discussions you have and what you see on social media and what you hear about people's thoughts on it. Some people think they drive better when they're high. I've seen that, I've heard that, I've read that, and that's just not the case, Madam Speaker. It's just not the case.

That's why I think Bill No. 74 is important. The current Liberal Government, the provincial government, should be open and transparent to say, listen, yes, acknowledge that there is going to be an increase in policing costs in our province around this, and that we are there to support those municipalities with such-and-such an amount of money.

I think the work that needed to be done by the federal government is now on the shoulders of the provincial government. We should've been seeing awareness campaigns over the last year or two since Justin Trudeau was elected. We should have been seeing a public awareness campaign around the impact of driving high, the impact of using cannabis, just like we had with alcohol a number of years ago, but we didn't see that.

As I said in my opening remarks, the Prime Minister was the one who made the announcement, but he is leaving those details up to the jurisdiction of the provinces and territories. That's unfortunate. I think it puts the current Liberal Government here in Nova Scotia in a bad position, because they're trying to adapt to whatever the federal government is going to do. Who knows if in the next two or three weeks the Senate will make some changes to the bill that's going to oversee this nationally, and we will have to come back to this Legislature and probably change our Act dealing with the legalization of cannabis? I think the timeline was ambitious, and we should have seen clearly what the federal government wants from the provinces and territories when it comes to the legalization of cannabis, yet we're not going to see that, Madam Speaker.

We know that we need to make sure that our roadways are safe, and the education component - that our young people know that just because it's legal doesn't mean that they should go out once they turn 19 and smoke pot. That was another area of concern that I have had - having younger kids, young adults, in my family - around how we chose the age.

Of course, in Nova Scotia, it's going to be legal to smoke recreational cannabis at 19. The government indicated, since we're co-locating that liquor, then it made sense to do that. I don't buy that one Madam Speaker, because it's going to be separate anyway. When you go into a liquor store, it's not going to be out with a bottle of whiskey, rum, beer, wine, or whatever. It's going to be in a separate area, so I don't see how it would be such a strain to say, let's take the advice of some of our health experts and make it 21. Personally, that's something that I would have liked to see.

With the lack, I think, of direction from the federal government, we're going to see little differences all across the country, and that's unfortunate. If this was a federal commitment by the Prime Minister that this is how the country is going to be, then they

should have provided more detail on exactly what they wanted from jurisdictions across Canada. There's more than just getting those photo ops and selfies, Madam Speaker. This is a serious change, I think, and the details were just not there. We'll know in five, 10, or 15 years how this will end up.

I hope that the government recognizes that investment in our policing, that a lot of the details around the legalization of cannabis will fall to their purview in making sure that people follow the law, that they're not breaking the law. There will be an increased cost.

We do support this type of bill just because we weren't getting the answers when we went through the Budget Estimates over the last month or so here in Nova Scotia. I guess what we have been told now is to wait and see. There will be some funding to municipalities or to police forces to offset the cost of policing due to the change in the law here in Canada. We would have liked to see more details in the budget that was just introduced here in Nova Scotia.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: It is a pleasure to stand and say a few words on Bill No. 74. I do want to respond to some of the comments that the member for Chester-St. Margaret's made. I want to say for the record that I think the attempt at humour was very ill-advised. The member for Pictou West, the Leader of our Party, I know her to be a person who speaks with conviction and rarely wastes her words. She is very committed to anything she brings forward. I hope that, at the end of the day, we'll hear an apology from the member for Chester-St. Margaret's on that front.

I notice that a number of the comments that he made reflected what the federal government is doing and money commitments that the federal government made. This bill is about what this government is doing and what is happening here on the ground in Nova Scotia.

I think there are some very serious concerns of police departments in Nova Scotia. The police department that I was talking to in just the last two days has a number of concerns about costs they will have to endure. One of them is that they will have to have roadside testers. These roadside testers to test for marijuana impairment are approximately \$5,000 a pop. The Town of Kentville doesn't know whether it's going to have one or two, but that's \$5,000 or \$10,000.

The users of these devices will have to have training. There will be training costs associated with these devices. Someone will have to go and get training. They will have to pay that person. That person will come back and presumably have to train the other members of the department - so while those members of the department are being trained, someone else will have to take their place on duty. They don't get trained off-duty. So, the costs of training will be substantial for the departments around the province.

Not only that but police departments will have to have drug recognition experts trained, DREs they call them. Apparently, this is a two-week course in Great Britain, followed by one week in Florida. You might wonder, why would they have to have that? Well, I suppose if we have a legal drug, marijuana, a police officer will have to be able to tell if the person is impaired by marijuana or something else. I suppose this is why the drug recognition is required.

These are very real training costs that our police departments will have to undertake. I have a draft press release from the Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police Association in my hand, put out by the president, Peter McIsaac.

It's not all negative about the Liberal Government's marijuana legislation. I think I should be fair and state the positive. They are very pleased that marijuana smoking is prohibited in vehicles, and that is a good move on the part of the government. They are pleased that there are efforts to keep it out of playgrounds, outdoor public spaces, public recreation venues, public trails, provincial parks, and provincial beaches.

It says: however, as law enforcement, we have very serious concerns that outside the above restrictions - which I just gave you - cannabis consumption will be permitted in public places, for example, walking along a sidewalk. Not only does this expose others, including children and youth, to unwanted second-hand smoke, it also complicates enforcement.

Our municipal police forces are feeling the pressure of knowing that they're going to have to deal with public complaints about smoking marijuana and that they're going to have to enforce the laws. This is going to put an added burden on them.

In fact, one police officer I spoke to said they would have preferred if the smoking of marijuana, since it is a drug, had been treated more like the consumption of alcohol. The consumption of alcohol is not done in public venues. In certain venues it is, but it isn't. There's restrictions on where you can drink alcohol. You can't simply walk down Gottingen Street with a beer in your hand. You might be able to walk down Gottingen Street or Hollis Street with a cigarette in your hand, and maybe now you will be able to walk down the street with a joint in your hand. The police would have preferred if the laws had been more parallel to the consumption of alcohol in terms of where marijuana could be used.

Nevertheless, it opens up a whole new can of worms of policing. It's a very great cost to the police department. None of these things have been answered.

I notice that the budget we have, which I guess we have virtually completed - we have passed the budget - included \$20 million worth of revenue for cannabis sales but did not include any expenses. What I recall from two, three, and four months ago in this Legislature was that the government said a number of times that they believe the



municipalities in the province would bear the brunt of the costs and should have the most of the revenue and that, while legalizing it, Ottawa wouldn't really bear the cost. It would be borne in the province and by the municipalities.

Our municipalities will bear significant costs in this legalization process and will bear significant new demands on our police forces, new demands to know what exactly they are dealing with, new demands for enforcement of not being high while driving. We know how much carnage we have had on our roads from drinking and driving and how hard we have worked as a province to reduce that and how we are making headway, as a society I believe, on that front. Now we are going to have a new challenge and who knows what the effect of these two drugs together will be - alcohol and marijuana together may well have what is called a "synergistic effect." It may well be far worse than just either one alone - and what will be the challenges of that? Our police forces are going to have to bear these costs.

[4:30 p.m.]

We've been very disappointed that the government in Ottawa has forced this upon us as a province. I've stated this before, I do not believe we would be dealing with this right now had the federal government not put this upon us. I realize this causes many dilemmas for this government and we've been very disappointed. We've stated that - we've been disappointed at the co-location part of this, that it's co-located with alcohol sales; that was not recommended. We've been disappointed with the age, that it is 19 years of age that it is legal to smoke marijuana, when all of the evidence suggests different.

I can tell you that one of the effects of that is we know, and we've heard from my colleague the member for Inverness statistics that one in 25 young people will suffer psychosis. That will, unfortunately, also put a heavy burden on our police officers. I hope you understand that when we're talking about drugs, alcohol, marijuana and we're talking about psychosis that it's our police officers who are, in reality, front-line mental health workers. They are the ones who are the first person dealing with someone suffering with a psychosis, someone who is high and acting out, someone who is under the influence and acting out.

All of these things, especially with this young part of this population, are going to have very serious policing ramifications and the question is - how are we going to address that as a province? The purpose of this bill is to allow cost recovery on the part of municipalities for added costs. I've already enumerated several added costs that we know will be there. This is not speculative - we know that municipal police forces will be purchasing these roadside testing devices; we know they are working on that and in some cases already under way; and DRE, the Drug Recognition Expert training to become that, so these costs are very real and we know that the revenue is real. We've heard this government say this is the revenue, yet there's this big unknown about will there be money

coming back to the municipalities for the challenges. That is the purpose of this bill, to address that.

It would have been very good to have heard that yes, this government recognizes this is a need and this government is going to do it, but what we heard was this is what the federal government said, this is what the federal government is doing.

Where is that money going? How is it going to be distributed? Those are questions that are unknown to us. Certainly, at the municipal level there are going to be some daunting challenges from this. I can tell you that even with the cigarette smoke, we have in some cases municipal and we have a patchwork of bylaws on cigarette smoking, so we're going to have the same thing with marijuana smoking.

I remember about two years ago - maybe three or four years ago - hearing that the only place you were allowed to smoke in the Town of Bridgewater was on that bridge with the steel grate because that was a federal piece of bridge and nowhere else in the town were you permitted to smoke. So, is that going to be the only place in the Town of Bridgewater that you are permitted to smoke?

I can tell you that in the Town of Kentville you are not permitted to smoke outside, except - and the town has struggled with this, where are the designated places you can smoke? So other towns and villages, we're going to end up with a patchwork quilt of legislation of municipal rules, I should say, on where smoking is permitted, and it's going to just layer right over to marijuana smoke. Who is going to be dealing with that? That's going to be our police forces. So not only are there going to be added costs in patrolling our streets, there's going to be added costs in enforcing those bylaws.

I know there's a great hope, I believe, on the part of the federal government and on the part of the government, and I guess it would be my hope, too, but I'm very doubtful, there's a hope that the illegal market will just go away. That hope, I think if you look at cigarettes, I can say that I can pretty well tell you that that hope is fairly unfounded. I've said in this House before, and this is anecdotal, my friend in Ontario, who was the former president of the Tobacco Growers' Marketing Board and a tobacco grower for many years, told me that 40 per cent of cigarettes sold in Ontario today are in the illegal market. I don't believe that we're as high as that, but we're in there. There are a lot of illegal cigarettes, and it's all got to do with dollars and cents. So, we are now going to add that there's going to be a legal side to marijuana production, and the illegal side will not go away very easily if there's money to be made, unfortunately.

So, we've added in another complication to our police forces, that they're going to be trying to sort out which is legally-produced marijuana and which is not legally-produced marijuana, and I don't know how we're going to sort that out. It's not easy to sort out.

I can tell you - and this is in the public record - the tobacco companies, a number of years ago, were making tobacco cigarettes that were Canadian, sending them down into the U.S., that avoided all of the tax, to have them smuggled back over the border and into the illegal market in Canada. That literally happened. They were charged. It is a matter of public record. Even big business can get into the illegal side of the thing, unfortunately. I don't expect that to happen in this case, but I'm just telling you there's a lot going on here.

There will be daunting policing challenges to meet the goal of eliminating the black market. So, how is that going to be dealt with? It won't be easily accomplished, I don't believe. Apparently, there are 5,000 black market retail locations in Nova Scotia right now - that's the rumour, I don't know if that's true or not, but that could be true - 5,000 different places you could buy marijuana in this province. I see the Minister of Justice looking at me. Is that a correct number, Minister of Justice? It could be 5,000. There could be 5,000 people selling marijuana. So, we're going to have, I believe, nine locations and Internet sales. We're going to have a daunting challenge of displacing those.

The onus of displacing those will, of course, be on the police forces. You could well say they've had that obligation already, but there will be new rules and new laws related to that, and there will be a new - I'm sure the economic incentive will be there to try to capture the tax money - and it will be another challenge that our municipal police forces will have to face in this matter.

I believe that this bill would not have been necessary had the government simply put this in the budget or given an indication. We're into the black hole of the unknown, and it could very well have been that they could have told us what their expectation was on the cost of marijuana, of cannabis legalization, for our municipalities. I realize we have a very thin surplus, I believe, of \$20-some million, and part of this is based on \$20 million of revenue from cannabis with no expectation of any costs, and this bill highlights that the costs to our municipality will be very real, and that's why I'm very pleased to speak on this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, on a quick point of order, before I call the next bill. You know, when a member stands and accuses someone of being full of hot air, I think the Speaker should see whether that's parliamentary or not. I think the member for Chester-St. Margaret's insinuated that the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party was. So, if you could look into that for me, I would appreciate it.

Also, there was at least one occasion where the government Whip was standing directly in between the Speaker and the member, which happened to be the member for Chester-St. Margaret's, during that process. So, I was wondering if you could look into that as well, to make sure that the view of the Speaker is unencumbered when a member is

speaking in this House of Assembly. If you could look at those, that would be great. Thank you, sir.

MR. SPEAKER: I appreciate that. I will certainly take the point of order under advisement on your first point, and I appreciate the reminder for all members to keep the view plane of the Speaker in the forefront of their minds.

The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: All in time, sir. Would you please call Bill No. 115.

**Bill No. 115 - Motor Vehicle Act.**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to say a few words on a bill that I recently introduced, Bill No. 115, the Motor Vehicle Act, on Dutch Reach. I'm convinced that after I explain what this bill is all about I'm sure the Government House Leader and the Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister will have a discussion and may want to make sure that this legislation passes during this session.

The reason for it is safety, road safety with cyclists. Recently the government passed or enacted legislation dealing with road safety; that's the legislation dealing with police cars on our highways that have pulled over a motorist. That legislation of course is very valuable and, certainly, you can see the worth of it today on our highways as we see police cars that have the warning lights on and they are stopped to the right of our roads. This particular bill is dealing with cyclists. It originated from having the opportunity to talk to a lot of university students and some adults with regard to some of the problems they have, particularly in the cities. I asked them to name three problems they run into: the first was opening of doors from cars; the second was cars cutting in front of them; and, of course, the third one was potholes.

This legislation is dealing with someone opening their car door. This particular Dutch Reach has nothing to do with the arm's length of the member for Kings North; it's something that has been used in the Netherlands for the past 50 years. It's a piece of legislation that will not cost the taxpayers any money. It's important that this piece of legislation doesn't cost any money. It is simply a brief insert placed into the Nova Scotia driver's manual. It is not a piece of legislation that police will have to monitor because there are no penalties involved.

It's a teaching moment for our drivers' education instructors. It's intended to be a valuable safety habit for students learning to drive, new 16-year-olds who are in the classroom taking the theory and then out on the road for 10-plus hours with their driving

instructor. Again, it's another tool for instructors to pass on to the next generation of drivers. It certainly wouldn't hurt for our generation to pick up the habit also, but the intent of the bill is for new 16-year-olds. The expectation is that they will accept this habit and make life much safer for cyclists.

Drivers' education instructors can discuss this safety measure in the classroom and reinforce it when they have new drivers out on the road. I had the pleasure of being a drivers' education instructor for 12 years, and I'd love to take the opportunity to tell you a lot of the stories, but time doesn't permit. The member behind me said that's why there's so many accidents in the province, but I'm not so sure I agree with him, Mr. Speaker.

During the time I was a drivers' education instructor I certainly told the new drivers, new students, to make sure you have a good look before you open your door, regardless of whether you are a passenger or a driver. I was not aware of the Dutch Reach at that particular time. Basically, the Dutch Reach is using your opposite hand to open your car door, and that forces you to look towards the back of your car to see if there's anything coming. This includes passengers as well - you will use your left hand to open up your door and, as you're swivelling, you're seeing your outside mirror and you're also seeing what's coming.

There are a lot of important things we can teach new drivers. One thing I used to teach new drivers - they'd probably be sick of me saying it - I would say, expect the unexpected. I would repeat that every single class I had. What I meant by expect the unexpected was, if you're driving and you're coming through a stop sign or a set of lights, don't expect everyone is going to obey that particular stop sign or the set of lights - that's just not the reality. If there's someone standing at a crosswalk, some drivers think they are going to wait there until you go through, or a young child standing on a curb looking at their friend across the road. Always be on the alert. Always expect the unexpected. The chances are that little child is going to dart across that road.

[4:45 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, having this piece of information in the classroom with new 16-year-olds is very timely. They usually do not have bad driving habits at this stage of their life, and this measure will make them aware of the potential danger that exists when a driver or passenger opens a car door.

The bikers I spoke to told me too many stories of injuries from hitting doors that were opened and going airborne over the top of the doors. They were aware of reading, even on the driver's side, of bikers being thrown into the oncoming traffic and being killed.

It just makes a lot of sense to have this simple piece of legislation, which would be just an insert into the driver's manual for driver instructors to bring to the attention of new

drivers, not to mention things like the implications of car insurance when these types of things happen and so on.

Helping to reduce accidents and making cycling lanes less stressful and dangerous just makes a lot of sense to me. In fact, this simple habit can save lives and certainly save injuries. Bikers often get sandwiched in a bike lane.

Drivers and passengers each use the far hand to open the door. This will give them the opportunity to see if there is anything coming prior to opening that door because, as I mentioned earlier, you are forced to swivel. You are looking out, you are seeing in the rear-view, and you are also seeing easily what is coming from the back.

It is a problem. It certainly is a larger problem in our bigger cities like Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver. But we have a lot of cyclists here in Halifax, people who cannot afford transportation, so they are using a bike to get to school, get to work, or wherever.

I know in large cities, as many as one in five bicycle accidents involve car doors. Some bikers, as I mentioned earlier, swerve to avoid doors and end up getting into more trouble by running into moving vehicles or parked vehicles. In Toronto, it is not unusual to have approximately 12 per cent of all reported car/bike collisions caused by motorists opening a door in the path of a cyclist.

A brief summary of this particular legislation - it's somewhat similar to the legislation passed by the government dealing with the RCMP, other police officers, paramedics and so on, on our highways. It is a safety issue. This is a very simple piece of legislation that if enacted, may prevent an injury, may save the life of a cyclist.

There's no cost to it. It's just an insert into a driver's manual, and driving instructors can pass it on to new drivers who are learning the proper way to drive in our communities, in our province, and outside our province.

Having said those few words, I'll take my place.

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

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: I would like to thank the member for Pictou Centre for bringing Bill No. 115, the Motor Vehicle Act, on the Dutch Reach.

I want to acknowledge that when I heard it - I'm a cyclist, and I have been a cyclist for many years. Cycling is one of my most enjoyable activities since a child, and I will tell you all about it. But first I want to talk about the actual bill and road safety and how important it is for this government and for TIR and that road safety in all aspects is a priority for us.

The province continues to enhance the safety of cyclists on our roads. We invest in the Blue Route, which provides a safer route for cyclists. These are the routes where there are a lot of cyclists who are using these - active transportation, not just cyclists. They look at all these routes and see what they can improve.

We're also widening paved shoulders in areas where there is a high volume of cyclists. One of our upcoming projects is the Old Sambro Road where we're paving almost 15 kilometres on both sides of the roads, that's 30 kilometres. That will make Old Sambro Road safer for cycling and drivers. I have used that road and it's wonderful. I've cycled from Clayton Park West to Pavia on Herring Cove and returned through (Interruption) I've done a lot of cycling around Nova Scotia and know a lot of the routes, but I will continue with all the government things they are doing. We will continue to work with our partners, including the municipalities and other stakeholders, to help improve road safety for all users, including cyclists.

TIR also funds programs such as the Ecology Action Centre's Making Tracks Program that teaches youth bicycle safety. Actually, yesterday I looked up the [bicyclenovascotia.ca](http://bicyclenovascotia.ca) to see what teachings they have. There are 14 rules and I didn't see anything that referred to the words "Dutch Reach" because it was new to me. They talk about helmets, they talk about how to have proper lighting if you are going in the dark, right on the right-hand side of the road, and make sure you are a metre away from the edge. Cyclists must take a full lane if going through a roundabout - that was new to me; that was the only thing that I didn't know from the 16 items.

They also mention stay one metre away from parked cars to avoid door zone. That is really what you are talking about. As a cyclist and a driver at the same time - and I think we all should cycle so we can be conscious of both sides - I will never go close until I make sure I make eye contact. Or make sure of this - I am admitting to something that cycling in Halifax we have a lot of nice bike lanes, but sometimes it stops. If I feel that the driver cannot see me then I take the sidewalk. I know sidewalks are supposed to be for 16 and under, but most of the time that I cycle it is Saturday or Sunday and leisure time and there is hardly anybody on the sidewalks, so I feel it's safer for me and for the drivers if I can take the sidewalk once in a while.

In the last 10 years, we have tried so many different roads within the city and we're adding more and more of cycling, and that really makes me proud and happy because cycling has truly become a tourist attraction. My husband and I both love cycling and we spend a lot of our leisure time cycling. We wake up on Saturday or Sunday and take our bikes from Clayton Park to the Seaport Market, have brunch and then come back - that's 40 minutes downhill and an hour and a half uphill on the way back. So, it is not an easy ride back but we take side roads, we take every precaution - what the drivers are thinking and where it can be difficult.

I feel from the numbers I researched that we don't have that many accidents in Nova Scotia, thankfully. In nine years apparently we have had 405 injuries, which is approximately 45 a year, and I don't know the severity of those. In the last 20 years, I've had one injury myself but it was not on a main street, it was actually in the power lines on a trail where I fell because of the trail - it had rained heavily and the crusher dust had lanes and I didn't see it and I flew from my bike.

I also found out that in the last nine years, from 2007 to 2015, in HRM there have been only three fatal incidents. Even one is horrible, but it's not a huge number, which I'm thankful for. There were eight in the whole of Nova Scotia in nine years. That was a pleasant surprise, but still, we can always do better and make sure to improve.

I also wanted to talk about what the government is also considering. We will consider requests to amend the Driver's Handbook to include a reference to the Dutch Reach. It may be easier to put it in a Driver's Handbook than to bring it as legislation here.

Nevertheless, we appreciate the member for Pictou Centre raising this issue to the House. I was speaking to TIR, and they are considering - they said that when the new revision for the Motor Vehicle Act is tabled as a traffic safety bill, these and other changes will be seriously considered at that time. Maybe it's a better time to do it with other things when they table the new traffic safety bill.

I also wanted to encourage our MLAs here, to take this opportunity to tell you how important for us to think and to be very conscious of all the cycling paths and where we can promote it. It really is starting to be an international tourist attraction.

I have gone cycling in Croatia through a small company called Pedal and Sea, which is in Chester-St. Margaret's. They are doing tours in Puglia, Italy, and in Spain.

We know cycling here. We can take more advantage of the opportunities to bring international cyclists into Nova Scotia and increase our tourism. It is a beautiful way of seeing our beautiful countryside.

I know that Clare has the Gran Fondo, which I am hoping to attempt this year. Also, Pedal and Sea do bike tours in P.E.I and the Cabot Trail. These are also on my list to do. (Interruption) The Cabot Trail, yes, hopefully. I know a lot of my friends who have done those and it's spectacular.

You get a different feeling from cycling, guys. Try it, and encourage people. To me, cycling has always been my stress relief and mental health relief. It's just a wonderful way of encouraging it and making it as everybody - not just for children, but for us as adults and going together, cycling for two or three hours, having a bite, and cycling back. It just makes a beautiful day out of it, and we have so many trails.



My husband and I have tried every national park in Nova Scotia. I think we started with Kejji, and then we did - I can't say that one - Kouchibouguac? I'm not sure how to pronounce that one. We have also done the Fundy.

So, I'm promoting cycling. I'm promoting safe cycling. Please join me and become cyclists.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to speak on this bill, and I appreciate the words from my colleagues. I will just say a couple of things from what I heard.

I agree with the member for Clayton Park West. I am excited about the infrastructure that the province is putting in place in terms of the Blue Route and widening the roads in certain areas along Sambro and that kind of thing, so that we can cycle more. I grew up on Prospect Road. I'm happy to see that that road is getting more cyclable.

But it also shocks me to hear the member talk about having to go on the sidewalk because she doesn't feel safe on the roads. What I believe the member who introduced the bill is talking about here is some fundamental safety issues. The fact is that if cyclists can't feel safe on the roads, they're not going to be on the roads. They're going to be on the sidewalks, or they're going to leave their bike in the shed and drive. We don't want that. We want people to be active, we want people to be healthy, and we want people to be outside enjoying our cycling infrastructure for what it is right now.

[5:00 p.m.]

I'm a cyclist as well. For many years cycling was my full-time way of getting around. I am also the victim of a right hook, and I have a dent in my left thigh that will be there forever because of a car that turned right into me and threw me off my bike. Luckily, every time I have been in an accident, I have gotten back in the saddle, as it were, and kept cycling. However, it is daunting to think about how dangerous an accident could be. Obviously, we know there are many deaths and serious injuries from vehicle-cyclist accidents. The more people feel safe to ride, the more they will. That's a fact.

To this bill, I think ensuring that drivers are educated about proper safety and bicycle safety is a very good step, obviously. To put new rules or new ideas into the driver's manual is a great idea. Like the member said, it doesn't cost anything.

But I really do think we need to go way, way, way further when we're talking about bicycle safety. The fact is that it's too serious an issue not to pay attention to. If we do pay attention to it, and the result is that we have more cyclists, then the benefits from that are

going to be so widespread. We're going to have less traffic congestion and better health benefits which I will talk about further.

The other thought I have about the legislation is that putting the idea of the Dutch Reach into the manual means that, as the member pointed out, all the young and new drivers are going to learn about this and go, I never thought about that - it makes way more sense to open that way, which causes me to look over my shoulder and see if there's a cyclist. However, there's a huge population of people who are already driving, and this legislation doesn't address that issue to them at all. I think that we do have the power to make some very simple changes to the Motor Vehicle Act that would ensure some more safety for cyclists.

I would actually go further than talking about the Dutch Reach in the manual and actually require that a driver check their window or their blind spot to see if there's a cyclist in the way before they open their door. Let's require that. It would save lives.

Let's require that drivers check their right side before they make a right turn. Cyclists creep up. Since I was hit on my bike, I always - I am going to say this, and then I won't do it, and then something terrible will happen - most of the time, I check my right side to make sure a cyclist has not crept up before I make a right turn. It's common sense, but let's require it. There was one more thing I was going to say about that, but I'm going to keep going.

Like I said, these are simple changes. I have talked to the minister about these things before, and I know that the minister has heard me, and I'm hopeful that these changes will come soon. Cycling groups have been asking for these kinds of simple changes forever. We know that these changes will make our streets safer for cyclists and for motorists.

There's also plenty of infrastructure changes that we need to make. I will again reiterate the fact that I'm happy about what has happened so far with cycling infrastructure in the province, but again, we need to go way, way further to make a meaningful cycling culture here.

Oh yes, that's the other thing I was going to say. We can improve traffic signals for cyclists. Again, that's a very easy fix and an easy change which would make a world of difference to the safety of cyclists.

What do we care if people are on their bikes? What do we care if cyclists are out in the roads? Well, I think we should care a lot. I really think we should because there's many, many benefits to having a healthy cycling culture.

Number one is health benefits. When you commute to work, biking can reduce the risk of premature mortality by approximately one third, and that's from the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment. Cycling for an additional 30 minutes on

most days of the week combined with a reduce in calorie intake can achieve weight loss comparable to that achieved by doing three aerobics classes a week.

When there are more cyclists in an area, there are fewer cyclist-motorist accidents, because motorists get used to cyclists. It's like, we're here, we're proud, we're cycling, and everyone learns to share the road, so we have less injury and less health care costs due to injury because we get used to each other.

Despite the ill-effects of air pollution and injury, the benefits of cycling are still seven times greater than the risks, which is interesting. We also have social benefits - people who cycle feel safer in their communities. In Copenhagen, researchers have found that every mile cycled provides the equivalent of 41 cents in social value and, meanwhile, every mile driven exacts 24 cents in costs on a society.

There are tourism benefits. We know that we have beautiful cycling roads and cycling opportunities here. My colleague mentioned the Gran Fondo in Clare, which is a rally, but we could also simply - or not so simply because I am sure it's very difficult, but one day I will try to do it - cycle the Cabot Trail, instead of using a car. Imagine how amazing that experience would be.

In the late debate, we are going to hear about how amazing our tourism industry is, and ecotourism and cycling tourism should be a big, big part of that. I do support this bill. I support this small change, but I feel like it is a small step in the right direction and we need lots more changes - small changes, but lots of them, to make cycling actually safe and actually doable.

By changing the laws and our infrastructure to make cycling safer we can promote active and accessible transportation and recreation, and these changes will help people get back in the saddle and, hopefully, out on the road, out of their cars. Thank you.

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

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: It's a privilege to stand up here today to talk about something that could possibly save lives. We all know that it is hard to legislate common sense, but it does make sense to give people more tools to help them be safer, and I appreciate the member for Pictou Centre bringing this forward, who has an awful lot of experience in trying to help our youth be safer. We are not talking about costing any money. We are talking about giving our students and new drivers better habits, and that is exactly what we need because we have students who are already texting and driving, eating, watching videos, and being distracted.

The term Dutch Reach sounds funny, but I have a sad story to tell you. In the very beginning of my career as a physiotherapist in Ontario in 1984, I met a woman who had just moved from Toronto to London, Ontario. She was moving with her husband and two

children, and on the drive down to London, her husband pulled over to the side of the road because there was another motorist in trouble. As her husband opened the door to step out, another driver hit him and killed him instantly in front of their two children, and I have never forgotten that. So I don't believe we are just going to help cyclists; I think we also have an opportunity to protect anybody else who is also getting out of their vehicle.

If you've ever treated somebody who has been hit by a car, you will know that they have horrific injuries that can often lead to permanent disability and death. It results in an increase in insurance premiums that we all pay for, as well as clogging up our health care system and increasing health care costs.

Why wouldn't we pass this bill? I did listen intently to the member for Clayton Park West talk about improving safety around the province. I didn't hear whether the Liberal Party supported the bill, so I'll be very clear that of course I'm also supporting this bill and I hope that they will, too.

The truth is, when we have new drivers they are nervous and they are often very careful, but they get distracted, both with rain and noise and the traffic around them, so we need to do everything that we can to make sure that they are given as many tools as they can.

I want to use an analogy - Dutch Reach, as I said, sounds kind of funny, but have you ever heard of a FINE-C, or the S'FINEC? Anybody who has ever ridden a motorcycle who learned that language knows that it stands for side stand up, fuel, ignition, neutral, engine cut-off, and choke. That is the safety checklist you go through before you get on your motorcycle. It's also called the up and over, for those who didn't want to bother with the letters. I learned that many years ago, and it probably saved my life. I remember my instructor telling us on the first day of motorcycle safety training, do head checks or die. I remember that, and I remember the moment he said it. I can tell you with all honesty that I have never missed a head check, but there is an awful lot of people who do. (Interruption)

I am just noticing that some members are having a hard time imagining me riding my Harley-Davidson motorcycle, but I do have pictures to prove that. Anyway, we'll move on.

The Dutch Reach is called Teach the Reach. It's something that is very simple to do. I will tell you that, as you get older, the range of motion in your neck muscles goes down. We should have almost 90 degrees of range of motion to the left and to the right but, as we get older and it starts to hurt, people get sloppy. They get lazy, and they don't look to the left. They have a hard time just doing their head check before they pull over into the other lane. I know an awful lot of people who have escaped near death from somebody failing to do a head check before they turned.

All we are asking for people to do is to create a habit where they are required to actually look into their blind spot, not just use a mirror on the front to estimate whether there is space. They also suggest tying a ribbon on the latch of your door handle or putting it on your steering wheel to remind you to take a look. It's called Teach the Reach: you reach across with your far hand for the door handle; you swivel, you look out the mirror and back and then you open the door slowly. It's not just looking, just don't whip your door open. People are in a rush these days, especially the young people. Look to face the traffic that's coming towards you. It is far safer to get out of your car this way.

It's not just a random thing. There are people in the Dutch community called the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, who have endorsed this procedure. It doesn't cost us anything. All it requires is for us to give our children one more tool to be safe.

We are about to introduce cannabis legislation that will allow people to possibly drive while smoking marijuana. If anybody doesn't believe that happens I can tell you that, during an event when I was a Lions Club member and I was doing the road tolls to gather money for our carnival and our fireworks, there were quite a number of people who, when they rolled down their window, I could smell marijuana. Now the sad irony is they were very generous tippers for us, but it did disturb me that there were people driving high and weren't embarrassed to let us know.

There is no logical reason to not pass this bill. There is no extra cost other than putting a little insert inside the driver handbook and, surely to God, we are going to be doing that anyway. I am looking at the Minister of Justice and anybody else who is responsible for all the education, health care education, whoever. We've got to change the handbook anyway, so it's not going to cost us a little more than printing. If we save one life - if I could give the life back to the friend of mine whose husband was killed right in front of her eyes, I would do so. I am going to challenge the government that if they are not going to pass this to give us a reason because the public is watching, as always. They are going to wonder about something that barely costs us any money, could save lives, save us heartache and pain, and save us any more increases in our insurance and any more clogging up in our health care system.

I am going to remind everybody that it is called Teach the Reach, or the Dutch Reach. It is simply putting in place a habit that every one of us should be doing. I'm going to challenge you and I'm going to ask you tomorrow, how many of you are going to do this tomorrow or tonight, on the way home when you get out of your car? We'll see just how easy it is. All you have to do is do it 21 times, to learn a new habit. So, by the time we sit again in the Fall, hopefully we'll all be doing this by habit, because the life you save just might be your own. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[5:15 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and, unless anybody else wants to speak to that, or how important Dutch Reach is - well, there we go. I'll let the member speak.

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

MR. HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, earlier this afternoon, the Official Opposition House Leader and the member for Kings North suggested that I had made inappropriate remarks regarding the member for Pictou West. I'd just like to take a moment to address that. The member for Pictou West, myself, and another member of this House are players of the great highland bagpipes, and it's often joked amongst bagpipers how we are full of hot air, and I was including myself, and I think a check of Hansard would reflect that.

However, if my words were improperly placed, I apologize to the House, and I apologize particularly to the member for Pictou West, and I hope her colleagues will pass on that apology because I do hold her in the highest regard. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for that statement and apology. Sometimes we try to be funny in this House, and sometimes it doesn't work out.

So, that concludes Opposition Business for today and that concludes our business, so, I'll pass it back over to the Government House Leader to call business for tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, that concludes government business for today. We will meet again tomorrow, Thursday, April 12, 2018, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

Following the daily routine and Question Period, we will move to the Committee of Whole House on Bills for Bill No. 79, Bill No. 82, Bill No. 84, Bill No. 87, Bill No. 104, Bill No. 106, Bill No. 108, Bill No. 52, and Bill No. 66, and we will also hold Law Amendments Committee at 10:00 a.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House rise to meet again tomorrow, Thursday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

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

We've now reached the moment of interruption and we will be debating the topic as submitted by the honourable member for Lunenburg:

“Therefore be it resolved that Nova Scotia’s historic year in tourism and fourth consecutive year of growth will lead to more business opportunities, jobs for Nova Scotians, and more vibrant communities.”

### **ADJOURNMENT**

### **MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

### **GOV'T. (N.S.) – TOURISM: CONTINUED GROWTH – POSITIVE EFFECTS**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand today and address tourism in Nova Scotia, because I think it is providing great opportunities for jobs in Nova Scotia and making our communities more vibrant. I'm going to make a bold statement. I'm going to say that I represent and live in the most beautiful constituency in Nova Scotia, and I'm sure every other MLA here in the House will say, and could say, that about their constituencies, because we do have a beautiful province, Mr. Speaker, and we should all be working hard to promote tourism in our constituencies and all of Nova Scotia.

Last year, 2.4 million non-residents were overnight visitors here in our province - that's an increase of 9 per cent over 2016, and tourism revenues reached \$2.7 billion, \$100 million more than the previous year. These results mark four consecutive years of tourism growth here in Nova Scotia. Much of that can be attributed to the ideal conditions with favourable gas prices and exchange rate. Just four years ago Ray Ivany presented his report on the rural economy and challenged us in Nova Scotia to increase our tourism revenue - and we are well on our way to reaching the mark that he has set for 2024.

Tourism Nova Scotia was created here, an agency by this government, Mr. Speaker, and it created four strategies: (1) to attract first-time visitors to the province; (2) invest in markets of highest return; (3) focus on world-class experiences that will motivate travel to the province; and (4) build tourism confidence.

All of Nova Scotia's marketing and sector development initiatives, investments, and programs align with these four pillars, Mr. Speaker. To help reduce duplication and make limited resources go further the strategy clarifies stakeholder's roles and encourages innovation, collaboration, and private sector initiatives. For example, it is the role of tourism operators to market and sell their products, drive repeat visitation through exceptional customer service, and invest in their businesses to stay current and remain competitive.

Mr. Speaker, I could spend all my time speaking on the initiatives that I see in my own constituency. We have vibrant communities. We see flower pots and flags out on brightly painted buildings, we see fabulous restaurants and eateries, cafes, beautiful waterfronts in my constituency, and people take pride in creating spaces to increase tourism.

For example, it's amazing - the Fisheries Museum in Lunenburg took down the fencing around the wharf. It was sort of thought as, you know, to deter people from free visitations to the wharf area, and maybe even some safety issues for children, Mr. Speaker, but when those barriers went down it increased the amount of traffic, even for local people to take a walk down to the waterfront in the evening after dinner, and it really increased the number of people coming to the museum, because they would be on the wharf and say, gee, I think I'll go in that building.

So, there are always new initiatives that are going on in communities that I have in my constituency - and they're not all based in the waterfront. We have forestry and agricultural destinations that many people enjoy going to. We have wineries, we have tree farms that have programs open for visitors, and we have many agricultural sites as well as our seashores and the beautiful sceneries that one always pictures in commercials, but we also have beautiful scenery in the forestry areas of our constituency.

It is the role of municipal units and community-based tourism organizations to develop attractive destinations and draw visitors, and repeat visitors, and we see so much of this. And it's no accident that I live in the most beautiful part of the province, Mr. Speaker - Lunenburg, last year, received the Cultural Destination of the Year: Americas Award, and in most places an individual resort was nominated, but Lunenburg was packaged, the whole Town of Lunenburg, and the Lunenburg experience was packaged as a resort, and they won for all of the Americas. That is very good news for us and the South Shore.

The province is doing a lot of work with our departments. The Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, they support our museums, they provide grant money to help other museums around the province, and they are finalizing a plan right now to grow and develop major events here in Nova Scotia. Also, they partner with and invest in many events, like the Special Olympics that will take place this summer in Antigonish - I hear the member for Antigonish. The Scotties Tournament of Hearts will be taking place



in Sydney next year. The Pan Am Canoe Sprint Championships will be on Lake Banook. Liverpool, I understand, will host the World Junior Curling next year. These are all wonderful events that are going to bring international attention to Nova Scotia. It will bring tourism dollars into smaller communities all over Nova Scotia.

The Department of Natural Resources looks after our parks and keeps them clean. We've heard about the number of people who have already booked their campsites here in Nova Scotia, and they are still taking online reservations for any of you here who would like to go camping. The Waterfront Development Corporation has been very active to make our two waterfronts - the one here in Halifax and in Lunenburg - very attractive.

Lunenburg is a working waterfront where we have industry. People can enjoy seeing a dory built or a schooner built or going in and seeing sails being made. There's all sorts of opportunities, Mr. Speaker, with the waterfront development and the ports of Sydney. I think that Pictou now is getting a cruise ship business as well. We have smaller cruise ships that come into Lunenburg, but Sydney and Halifax have quite a cruise ship business. That will only increase, and we're seeing that increase each year.

The tourism of Nova Scotia feeds on the experience of one year and increases with the next. They partner with the private sector to bring in world-renowned experiences, like dining at the bottom of the ocean. When in March they opened to take reservations for dining on the ocean floor - the cost is \$350 per person - they were sold out for the season in one minute. Already there are 700 people on the waiting list for next year. These kinds of experiences get people to Nova Scotia.

We are hosting here at the Nova Centre later this year Rendez-vous Canada, which is a trade show to sell provinces and destinations and countries to others in the world. I had the privilege of going to Rendez-vous Canada in 2014 in Vancouver and representing the Minister of Tourism at that time. I have to say, Mr. Speaker, many people remarked to me how they loved Nova Scotia, and how they'd love to bring Rendez-vous Canada back to Nova Scotia because it was one of the best times they had with the industry and the hospitality here in Nova Scotia, but they had no facility. Now that we have the Nova Centre, they can provide conferences large enough here in Nova Scotia. That is all good news.

People were skeptical about investing in the Nova Centre, but it will bring more people. We see many conferences that are booked for here. Mr. Speaker, I think we will see more opportunities for our local communities and business people here in Nova Scotia. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

MS. LISA ROBERTS: I appreciate the opportunity to speak briefly to the subject for late debate. I, too, have enjoyed spending time in the constituency of Lunenburg and

have spent time on the waterfront, and it is indeed a beautiful place, one of many in the province.

[5:30 p.m.]

But I would argue with the logic behind the resolution for late debate. To remind us, it's "Therefore be it resolved that Nova Scotia's historic year in tourism and fourth consecutive year of growth will lead to more business opportunities, jobs for Nova Scotians, and more vibrant communities."

I would argue that more vibrant communities lead to more tourism, and that in Nova Scotia in particular, there's a challenge for our communities in relying overly much on tourism, simply because tourism has not, to date, been adequately developed to provide year-round good jobs, which is what actually contributes to and builds real vibrant communities.

It's not the only factor. But many, many years ago - maybe not so many years ago - in 2005, just before I got a real job at the CBC after years of working casual, which meant I worked most summers and fill-in shifts and post-hurricanes and when people were sick and stuff - just before I got an actual real job at the CBC, I absolutely had the coolest gig ever. In fact, my business card at that time was even cooler than my MLA business card with braille.

I updated the chapter on Nova Scotia for *Lonely Planet*, so I got to travel this province. I was in Meat Cove. I was in Yarmouth. I was many, many spots in between. It was a great little freelance writing contract - not particularly well paid, though, because I had to cover all my expenses and then deduct those off the fee, so I tried to see Nova Scotia on the cheap. But the bigger problem was that I was actually seeing Nova Scotia in April in order to hit the deadline, which was somewhere towards the end of May, and so I travelled Nova Scotia when most of the tourist attractions were not open.

In fact, in some parts of Nova Scotia, it was challenging to find a place to stay. In some parts of Nova Scotia, it was challenging to find something to eat. I had way more deep-fried fish burgers than I would ever advise anybody who's interested in a healthy diet to have. In fact, I don't think I've had a fish burger since, because I had so many.

This is an amazing province. This is an amazing province, but there's a real difference between an amazing province where citizens get to enjoy and build vibrant communities day in, day out, January through December, and a province that is relying on or developing and orienting itself towards a summer tourist season. Maybe it's not realistic to think that every community in Nova Scotia is going to be vibrant year-round.

I mean, I think there are certain parts of the province which have traditionally always been more so summer communities, but Lunenburg is one example of a community

that I think is relatively vibrant year-round. There are arts activities and there are economic activities that are happening all through the year. Likewise, my constituency of North End Halifax.

The way I got the job for *Lonely Planet* was I had to write a test chapter. Back in - well, whenever the last edition of *Lonely Planet* was done, before the one that I worked on - the North End of Halifax wasn't actually covered. All the attractions in Halifax were along Spring Garden Road or downtown.

I had bought the cheapest house in the city that didn't need to be torn down in 2003 and planted my stake in the North End. I knew that it was a fantastic community. It didn't have half of the restaurants or cafés or other attractions that it has now, but even then, it had a lot of life, it had a lot of artists, it had a lot of diversity, and it was a really interesting place to live. It had a hostel on Gottingen Street and a great little bed and breakfast on Gottingen, and so I pitched it. To get the job for the Canada book, I actually wrote a test chapter where I talked about the North End as if it were going to be in the *Lonely Planet*. That was sort of my test to eventually get that job.

So again, my point is that there's a real difference between communities that actually have life. I think it's difficult to fake vibrant communities where you're just trying to do it for tourists. Artists need to work and be inspired by the place that they live, and be part of their communities, and be able to make a living in order to stay and to help build those vibrant communities.

I think the same is true for most food providers. I mean, a lot of places take a couple months off in the dead of winter - it can get tempting to just stay at home. But not very many people who are looking for their life's work are going to stay in a place where they can only get six months' work out of it.

I think there's a challenge which Nova Scotia has to rise to, which is how we can strengthen the initiatives that make our communities vibrant 24/7 for citizens, and then great, let's welcome tourists too for as many months of the year as we can possibly attract them.

I think of Wentworth and Tatamagouche, and the Eastern Shore, all of which are places that I have visited and enjoyed spending time just in the past couple of years, and there is so much potential in this province for both more tourism, more economy, and more vibrancy for the people who live there.

I would challenge our export orientation. This government often talks about promoting exports - import substitution strategies which support local consumption and local production of goods targeting a local market, build resiliency too. When we look at the local food movement, that is very attractive for tourists, but it also builds connections within our province, within our communities.

One of the industries that was really contributing towards economic activity 12 months of the year, outside of the main centres, was the film industry, and I know that right now, the member for Yarmouth is probably noticing the huge impact of an actual full production, with actors and sets and a full crew, because there's a major film being shot in Yarmouth, and it's one of the few projects like that that we have seen since the Nova Scotia Film Tax Credit was cut. I think the film industry was actually a wonderful complement to the tourism industry because film crews and actors were able to take advantage of hotels and restaurants that were often operating below capacity during the off-season. Now, many films that are being shot in Nova Scotia are being done with very tight crews, often without sets or actors, but sometimes just for scenery which is really unfortunate.

So, I appreciate the topic and I certainly look forward to visiting more communities in Nova Scotia.

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

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: First, I'd like to thank both my colleagues on their talks and consideration about this topic today that I think is probably the most important issue that we could talk about.

I've got to tell you, Mr. Speaker, there's a few things in my life that get me excited: one is talking about my family, but the other one is talking about my province and certainly, the Island of Cape Breton. When we talk about tourism in Nova Scotia, what we are really talking about is the people of Nova Scotia and the culture of Nova Scotia. That's what brings people here. People are excited when they come and see so many different ways of life and so many things that we take for granted.

It's amazing that we all get excited about getting on a plane and going off to Florida or going to some warm climate. There is so much that we can see right here in Nova Scotia, so many different challenges that we can bring for our children.

I remember when my children were small, one of the things we used to do was take them to the French Shore, down around Meteghan and those areas. They would see a whole different type of culture than what they were used to, being brought up in Cape Breton Island.

Then if you wanted, you could go over into the Pubnicos and out to the French Village there. Or you could go down the Valley, and you check out the wineries and the different issues that are there - and the historic value of this city we live in, this very building that we are in and the history that it brings to the Province of Nova Scotia. People travel to see that, and we take it for granted so often.

I think about Cape Breton Island. Cape Breton Island has been named the most beautiful island in North America, number three in the world. I figured out why we are

number three in the world: one of the judges hasn't been here yet. Once he gets here and actually sees it, we'll be number one in the world. There is no question about that in my mind.

Mr. Speaker, you have listened to the folks from Harley-Davidson talk about coming to Nova Scotia and wanting to travel the Cabot Trail because it's one of the best trails in the world when you are on a bike. I can't picture me on a bike, but I can understand where they would enjoy that.

Think about all the things we have to offer. We have the Fortress of Louisbourg. It's the largest re-creation of a historic site in Canada, and we have it right here. It depicts a whole way of life, and it is also the starting point of how this country became so great because people landed here in Nova Scotia first and moved west.

We have the Mira River, the largest freshwater river in the province of Nova Scotia, which has been made famous by Allister MacGillivray and the Song for the Mira, which by the way, was written for an international Girl Guide camp that was at the Two Rivers Wildlife Park. That is what people think about when they come to Cape Breton.

Go to the Miners Museum, and you can actually go underground in the mine where a lot of the economy of this province was driven for years. You can go underground, and you can see what it was like to work underground and the conditions that they worked in. Then you can come back to the surface, and you can go through a village and see how people lived at that time. You can see how people ate, made their living, and how things were so much simpler but just so good.

You can go to many other venues around Cape Breton Island, and you can see so many things. We talked a little bit about how new industries have started.

This year there are actually going to be nine cruise ships visiting Louisbourg - nine. That's something new. There have been ones there before, but this is a new line, and they're coming into Louisbourg. They are going to be able to go to places like the Playhouse, which is a place for local entertainment where people are able to enjoy themselves and get a touch of our culture. There's the Beggar's Banquet, started by Tommy and Linda Kennedy, where you get a unique dining experience the same as if you were living in the Fortress of Louisbourg. They have food and entertainment and the whole culture of the area is laid out in front of you.

When you talk about tourism and you talk about great places to visit, there is no finer place than Nova Scotia. We have seen how the cruise industry, as was mentioned by my colleague from Lunenburg, has grown. Actually in Sydney, there is going to be a second berth because of more people coming and more people seeing the sites.

We have the Highland Village, where you can see how it was to live when you were here and had just come from Scotland. My grandparents came from Scotland in 1909 and landed on Cape Breton Island. I can just imagine what they saw compared to where they were living over in Scotland and when they came here and the differences. Those are the kinds of things that we can go and visit - the Highland Village - and experience them for our children and our grandchildren. It's an amazing offer. We can also go to many different places on Cape Breton Island. If you are a golfer, some of the most famous golf courses around are right there on Cape Breton Island.

[5:45 p.m.]

I remember when I was a kid there used to be a show on TV called Shell's Wonderful World of Golf, and they used to highlight the Highlands National Park and the golf course there. You know, Mr. Speaker, to this day people still come to play golf there. It's worth it to go to that course, rent a golf cart and just drive through the course, especially at dusk. The beauty of that whole course is unbelievable - the wildlife that comes out on the course there: coyotes, bears and deer. Over the years (Interruption). It's somebody looking for a tour, Mr. Speaker.

I have to tell you, the other thing about Cape Breton Island is that we have great entertainment. We've had international stars come there, but the local people will entertain you and you will feel like you've been there all your life. The craft breweries that are available - people come in, and they have a great, wonderful evening. Fiddle players like my colleague the member for Inverness' father Buddy MacMaster, a world-renowned fiddle player, his cousin Natalie MacMaster - those are the kinds of people who entertain the visitors who come to Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that we have a lot to be excited about, we have a lot to offer other people. But you know it's the people of Nova Scotia, it is the fabric of Nova Scotia, that makes this place so special. When we talk about how tourism has increased over the last four years and how we've seen increases, part of it is the initiatives that take place but all of it, in my mind, is the people. How they accept visitors; how they share the experience of living in the community; how they open their arms, invite you into their homes, and make you feel like you are part of the family - that's the great thing about being a Nova Scotian.

There are so many other things that we could visit and see. You can go on a whale watching cruise if you are down in Cheticamp and see what's going on out on the ocean. You can visit with some of the fishermen and get lobster right off the boat or crab right as it's coming in and being landed. It's really hard to get anything fresher or better. By the way, you'll never get anything better than Cape Breton lobster. There is no other place in the world that you would get better lobster. One of my colleagues across the way is saying that's not correct. I would challenge him to bring something in that tasted any better, and I will act as the tester for make sure.

Mr. Speaker, we know and we've heard many times how our sea has given much to the economy of this province, but it also gives to the character of the province. My congratulations to the member for Lunenburg for bringing up the subject of tourism in Nova Scotia because, indeed, it is an important part of our economy. More important than that in my view, though, it is the fabric of Nova Scotia. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much for those great words on the interesting topic. I would remind the member to return his phone message there when he gets a few minutes.

That concludes the time for late debate. I'm going on vacation. See you later.

[The House rose at 5:50 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 1282**

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Environment)

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

Whereas residents who live in or have a connection with the communities between Goodwood and West Dover, over the age of 55, are welcome to join the Prospect Road Seniors at the Whites Lake Legion Branch No. 153 on Monday and Wednesday afternoons; and

Whereas the mandate of the Prospect Road Seniors is to have fun, make new friends, and rekindle old friendships, and you can play cards or darts, have a chat with neighbours and friends, or enjoy a tea or coffee along with the odd sandwich and sweet; and

Whereas special occasions are celebrated along with birthdays and there are usually a couple of day-long bus outings a year to enjoy, and new members are always welcomed;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing Dorcas Shaw and Don Ray for their leadership in making the Prospect Road Seniors a happy addition to the Prospect Road communities.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1283**

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Environment)

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

Whereas the SS Atlantic Heritage Park Society is made up of a group of volunteers dedicated to preserving the memory of the 1873 sinking of the SS *Atlantic*, through research, safekeeping of artifacts and memorabilia, and education; and

Whereas the results of their efforts include the SS Atlantic Heritage Park and Interpretation Center, which is home to the museum and craft shop, the gravesite and monument, the ruins of the old church, and a park featuring a rustic walking trail and boardwalk, providing wonderful ocean views; and



Whereas each year the community is invited to come together on or near the anniversary of the sinking to hear stories of the tragedy and the heroism of local residents following the disaster;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking the following members of the board of directors of the SS Atlantic Society: Valda Kemp, John Corbett, Kathy Kaulbach, Lynette Richards, Bob Chaulk, Margaret Sagar, Rose Caissie, and Kelly Campbell, for keeping this important part of our history alive.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1284**

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Environment)

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

Whereas the Resource Opportunities Centre (ROC) is the non-profit organization that manages the operation of the Prospect Road Community Centre in Hatchet Lake; and

Whereas the ROC hosts monthly Friday Feasts and twice a month the kitchens are used for the Seniors Lunch and Learn sessions, as well as for the many special celebratory meals throughout the year; and

Whereas the ROC knows that food is a wonderful way to bring community together for nourishment and fellowship, and all meals are lovingly prepared and served by volunteers and are available on a pay-what-you-can basis so that no one in the community is left out;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking the ROC staff and volunteers for all that they do to make the Prospect communities a welcoming place for all.