



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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

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

Second Session

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
ARRIVAL OF LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR	1
SPEECH FROM THE THRONE	2
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:	
An Act Respecting Oaths of Office,	
Hon. M. Furey.....	11
SPEECH FROM THE THRONE:	
Moved - Ms. R. DiCostanzo	12
Seconded - Mr. H. MacKay	15
ADDRESS IN REPLY:	
Ms. K. MacFarlane	19
Adjourned debate	23
ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Fri., Sept. 7 th at 9:00 a.m.	24



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2018

Sixty-third General Assembly

Second Session

2:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Mr. Chuck Porter, Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft

[The Second Session of the 63rd General Assembly was opened with historic ceremony on a sunny, hot day.]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor.

[The Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Arthur J. LeBlanc, preceded by members of the Official Escort, his Private Secretary, his ADC and by Mr. David Fraser, Sergeant-at-Arms, bearing the Mace, entered the House of Assembly Chamber. The Lieutenant Governor then took his seat on the Throne.

The Sergeant-at-Arms then departed and re-entered the Chamber, followed by the Speaker, the Honourable Kevin Murphy; and the Assistant Clerks, Annette Boucher and Nicole Arsenaault.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: It is the wish of His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, that the ladies and gentlemen be seated.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

It is a privilege to speak here in the people's House. As we begin the Second Session of the Sixty-Third Assembly, let us not forget those who brought us here: Nova Scotians of all generations and backgrounds who help our province grow and succeed, some of whom are with us in this House today.

I am grateful for the opportunity to highlight their successes and speak to the strong foundation government has built and the measures it will undertake to continue that success.

We are here on the heels of hosting the country's Special Olympians in Antigonish - a national event that demonstrates the best of the human spirit, the celebration of sport and community. Congratulations to the organizers and the volunteers for putting on a world-class event. And to the 117 Nova Scotia athletes who competed, taking home a total of 134 medals, well done and thank you for inspiring us to work hard and be the best version of ourselves. (Applause)

This past year was one of impressive records and firsts in Nova Scotia. Our population reached an all-time high. We had a record year in tourism. We reached gender parity on the provincial and family court benches, and the first Mi'kmaw woman was appointed to the judiciary. In Whycomogagh, Premier McNeil sat alongside the family of Donald Marshall Junior to open Nova Scotia's first Aboriginal wellness court, a historic step in supporting indigenous justice in our province.

Our Acadian and francophone community is one of several communities that make up the Nova Scotian identity, enriching our province's diversity through its unique culture and heritage. On this occasion, I would like to congratulate the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse on 50 years of dedication to our province's Acadian and francophone community.

Avec sa culture et son patrimoine uniques, la communauté acadienne et francophone de la Nouvelle-Écosse est l'une des diverses communautés qui donnent à la Nouvelle-Écosse sa riche identité. Je profite de l'occasion pour féliciter la Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse qui se consacre depuis 50 ans au service de la communauté acadienne et francophone.

We have much to celebrate. Our cultural industries continue to thrive. Our wine and spirits are winning global awards.

Andy Hay, of Dartmouth, was runner-up in Masterchef Canada, a great example of how our young people are showing the rest of the country what Nova Scotia has to offer. We may be a small province, but we have a big presence on the international stage and that is thanks to our passionate, creative, and innovative people.

As we begin this session, let us take a moment to reflect on the lives of remarkable Nova Scotians we have lost: Grand Chief Kji Saqamaw Ben Sylliboy, who served as the voice for his people for 25 years and led his community for decades. Freeman Douglas Knockwood, a Mi'kmaw elder who helped countless people cope with addiction by using his own experience to educate and counsel them. Joan Grant Dillon, an active volunteer and Order of Nova Scotia recipient, who was a founder of the X-Project, which pairs students from St. F.X. with children in nearby communities to help with homework and other activities. Philip Riteman, who survived the Holocaust and made his way to Atlantic Canada to build a new life, sharing his story of survival, love, and hope with future generations. And Dr. Robert "Arnold" Burden, who served his community of Springhill for many years, famously responding to help miners who were trapped underground during the town's mining disasters in the 1950s.

We also remember individuals whose contributions were felt in this very Chamber: James (Buddy) McEachern, Russell MacNeil, David Muise, and Gerald Doucet. Finally, we remember Kenny Greenham, who was a veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces and served this Legislature faithfully as Sergeant at Arms for nearly a decade.

As we remember their contributions and honour their lives, we also look to our future generations to continue to lift up this province. Young Nova Scotians are stepping up. They are entrepreneurs. They are hard workers. They are taking a chance on our province, and they are succeeding. They are contributing to the economy and building pride in their communities.

Ils misent sur notre province et en sortent gagnants. Ils contribuent à l'économie et ils font la fierté de leurs collectivités. You only need to look around the corner to see it, wherever you live.

Young people like Quentrel Provo, the founder and CEO of the Stop the Violence Movement. Quentrel continues to speak and sing at schools, conferences, and other events all over the country, spreading the message of love against violence.

Entrepreneurs like cousins Nick Walsh and Erika Usher, who opened a branch of Nova Scotia-founded restaurant Burrrito Jax in Sydney River after graduating from Cape Breton University last year; Joey Hawkins, who started Skilled Masons and Restoration in Dartmouth; and the trio of Matt Winchester, Dougal Armour, and Mitchell Kane, who founded the startup FoodByte out of a sandbox at Acadia University. These and many more young people show courage and confidence in themselves and in the future of this province.

Government's focus is helping to give youth the tools to succeed and grow here at home. Co-op education, Mitacs internships, and new and improved workforce attachment programs are providing young people and under-represented groups with more opportunities. Right now, students are developing their innovative and entrepreneurial skill sets through 10 different sandbox programs on university and community college campuses around the province.

The Graduate to Opportunity program is helping employers fill new positions with young people within their first year of graduating from a post-secondary institution. More than 650 new graduates have been hired into full-time jobs in their chosen field of study. Since the diversity bonus was offered in 2017, the number of diverse hires under the program now tops 100.

Young people, new residents, and local and international graduates now have more opportunities to connect with leaders in their communities as the Connector Program expands across the province.

Nova Scotians like Maigoro Yunana, who moved from Nigeria in 2011, are now able to make meaningful connections that help them build successful careers here in our province. Today, Maigoro works at Green Power Labs in Dartmouth as a building energy modelling specialist.

Apprenticeship is on the rise in Nova Scotia. As a result of investments such as the Apprenticeship START program and eliminating tuition for technical training, more apprentices are being trained and more employers are hiring them.

As well, dependents of those who receive Employment Support and Income Assistance and youth in the care of the Minister of Community Services now have access to the Career Rising program. Following a successful pilot with 15 young people last year, this program aims to help end the cycle of intergenerational poverty and create career opportunities by giving youth access to training and skills development, paid work experience with local employers, and a grant to help offset the cost of post-secondary studies. Government will continue to identify creative economic solutions, ensuring our youth are part of building a stronger Nova Scotia.

Government also relies on the knowledge and experience of our older population. Earlier this year, we celebrated the one-year anniversary of the launch of Shift: Nova Scotia's Action Plan for an Aging Population. Shift pushes all of us to think differently about our changing demographics and to consider the opportunities and benefits that come with an older, more experienced population.

The progress made in the first year reflects our commitment to action - from new entrepreneurship and mentorship initiatives for older adults, to new funding for community transportation and housing. Innovation is critical to the long-term economic success of our

province. L'innovation est essentielle au succès économique à long terme de notre province.

Our startup community is thriving. There are nearly 500 startups and high-growth companies in the Atlantic provinces, most of which are based in Nova Scotia. The tech sector has become a significant employer in our region, with about 6,400 people working in this area and employment growing at an estimated seven per cent per year.

Starting this Fall, Mashup Lab's "Dream" program for budding entrepreneurs will be available across Cape Breton as well as mainland Nova Scotia, in cooperation with Nova Scotia Community College and the Cape Breton Partnership. It's a six-week program supporting rural entrepreneurs working at the idea stage.

Incubators are driving growth across all regions of this province. COVE, the Centre for Oceans Ventures and Entrepreneurship, on the Dartmouth waterfront, will soon be home to 40 ocean technology companies.

Halifax's tech superhub Volta Labs tripled in size over the summer, bringing more startups and innovation-driven enterprises under one roof. Volta has housed more than 50 startups since 2013, employing more than 300 people and raising more than \$60 million in equity financing. Volta's newest tenants include smart travel startup Trip Ninja. Trip Ninja helps travellers book multi-city routes. Co-founders Andres Collart and Brett Ziegler started the business while attending Dalhousie University. They have since completed their studies and are working on Trip Ninja full-time.

[2:30 p.m.]

Ignite Labs in Yarmouth is helping more technology companies get started, too. Six companies are already working out of Ignite Labs. Scott Dauphinee is one of the first residents of the new business incubator. Scott has developed a recyclable lobster trap that is made of plastic and will last up to 10 years, far outliving the wire traps that most fishermen currently use.

Momentum Cape Breton is bringing the island's startup community closer together through business coaching, networking, and mentorship opportunities. Sixteen new technology entrepreneurs participated in Momentum activities last year, and a new maker space for entrepreneurs, students, and other creative minds will open soon in the New Dawn Centre for Social Innovation in downtown Sydney.

There is now more support for businesses who want to grow their exports and those who want to start exporting, companies like Angus Poulain's Halifax-based DriveCare which he created following his family's experience in a serious traffic accident. It is the world's first device that eliminates cell phone use while driving. And now he deals with businesses from around the globe.

Government continues to promote the province to the rest of the world. Le gouvernement continue de faire connaître la province au reste du monde. We are all ambassadors for Nova Scotia and have a role to play in helping investors understand the many reasons why they should look at this province.

Exports to Asia continue to grow. Ten years ago, we exported \$315 million to Asia. This past year, exports have more than tripled to \$1.16 billion, with China as our largest export partner in the region. We are making progress in attracting a direct passenger flight between Halifax and China, which will bring more people to our province and help export our world-class products.

Nova Scotia's first culture sector mission to Asia opened the door for new partnerships, including exhibit opportunities featuring the work of treasured Nova Scotia artist Maud Lewis. We had our best year yet for tourism in 2017, and last year was the fourth consecutive year of growth. Tourism revenue reached \$2.7 billion, and a record 2.4 million visitors came to the province.

Towns like Tatamagouche are building on our history to invigorate our communities. Led by dedicated volunteer and road train buff Dave Gunn, the town is believed to be the first of its kind in Canada to have a road train. The 28-passenger vehicle looks like a 1950s steam engine with a passenger car and ferries local residents and tourists among the town's attractions.

Our traditional sectors are also embracing innovation. One time-honoured tradition will soon get an innovation twist in Nova Scotia. Researchers have identified a Christmas tree that holds its needles for three months longer than the average balsam fir. Growers will be able to sell the SMART tree for a higher price in established markets, get to market sooner, and supply new markets across greater shipping distances.

Our ocean provides us with a significant opportunity for innovation and economic growth, and government will continue to seek ways to drive our ocean advantage. For the third year in a row, Nova Scotia was Canada's top exporter of seafood last year, with export revenues reaching \$2 billion. Our world-class lobster, crab, scallops, and shrimp were served around the world, on tables in North America, Asia, and Europe. The value of the aquaculture industry itself more than doubled over the previous year.

We are proud to be part of Canada's Ocean Supercluster, which will use innovation to improve competitiveness in our ocean-based industries.

Government's focus will continue to be on creating the conditions for more businesses to start and grow here, to reduce the regulatory burden on business, and to improve government services that support economic growth, efforts that are all being recognized nationally.

Innovative and future-minded Nova Scotians are leading the way to help prevent and mitigate the effects of climate change. Thermo Dynamics of Dartmouth designs, manufactures, and installs solar thermal systems for homes and large buildings. Helping Nature Heal of Bridgewater uses natural materials to stabilize shorelines and manage coastal erosion. And Nexus Robotics, a Nova Scotia start-up company, is working on a farm in Barss Corner, testing its autonomous vehicle that uses artificial intelligence to perform agricultural tasks. These are local people and national leaders.

Every Nova Scotian deserves timely access to primary health care, and it's a government priority to ensure that happens. Health care needs are changing, and we must adapt. Our health care system needs to reflect how new doctors want to practise and what is sustainable in the long term. Government has worked with doctors to create incentives for them to take on new patients, encourage collaborative practice, and use technology to connect with patients, and incentives for new medical graduates to stay here.

Since April 1st, 2017, 160 family doctors and specialists have started working in Nova Scotia. As a result, nearly 18,000 Nova Scotians have been matched with a primary care provider. We know there is more to be done, and government is working hard to make sure all Nova Scotians have access to the care they need, when they need it.

Earlier this year, government launched a new immigration stream to attract more doctors and specialists. The new stream makes it easier and faster for doctors to immigrate to Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia Health Authority heard from more than 400 family doctors who expressed interest in working in collaborative teams.

There are now more than 50 collaborative practices in various stages of development across Nova Scotia, and the Health Authority is working with 100 groups to enhance existing teams and create more.

Marla MacDonald is the nurse practitioner at the Westville Medical Clinic. She cares for approximately 800 patients who were on the Need a Family Practice Registry in that area. Team members at clinics like hers support one another and are able to take on more patients, improving access to health care for Nova Scotians.

Government is funding a new incentive program and paying for additional seats at Dalhousie University that will result in more nurse practitioners graduating and working in Nova Scotia. Up to 10 registered nurses will continue to receive their salaries while they return to school to become nurse practitioners.

Government remains committed to improving timely access to mental health and addictions services. This year, more mental health specialists will be working in schools. CaperBase, an adolescent outreach program, will expand to the Northern and Western areas of the province, and four new youth health centres will open.

The Bloom Program is an example of a team of health providers supporting people with mental illness and addiction. Led by David Gardner and Andrea Murphy, the program sees community pharmacists offering patients education and resources about mental illness, addictions, and medications to support their recovery and connect them with local services when needed.

Government recognizes that the best quality care must be matched by the quality of the facilities. The QEII and Cape Breton redevelopment projects are once-in-a-generation opportunities to rethink and rebuild the way we deliver health care in Nova Scotia. Both projects will see significant investment to modernize services and structures. These changes are about delivering better, more accessible care to Nova Scotians in improved spaces with newer technologies, helping us recruit and retain more doctors, nurses, and other health specialists.

Nova Scotia's first two residential hospices will open next year and will provide a home-like setting for patients and their families in Halifax and the Annapolis Valley.

People often turn to government when they feel that they have no other option. They may have lost a job, be raising a child with complex needs, or fleeing an abusive relationship. They may be trying to overcome addictions, or dealing with mental health challenges, or living with physical disabilities that make staying at home next to impossible. Whatever the situation, people in need must be supported to help build the income security they need to lead fully independent lives.

Quelle que soit leur situation, il faut aider les gens dans le besoin à obtenir la sécurité du revenu nécessaire pour qu'ils vivent une vie pleinement autonome.

That's why government is working with the Halifax Regional Municipality to pilot a program that provides transit passes to people on income assistance. All those on income assistance in the city, along with their spouses and dependants, are eligible for the pass. Many people told us that getting the transit pass is life changing because it allows them to go the grocery store, visit with friends and family, and take part in their communities.

This year, Nova Scotians saw the biggest tax cut in our province's recent history as the basic personal exemption increased for half-a-million taxpayers. With this change, 60,000 people will no longer pay provincial income tax. On October 1st, government will introduce part one of the Standard Household Rate, a wage exemption allowing those receiving income assistance to keep more of the money they earn. This will stabilize their income while they transition away from assistance and into the workforce. The more they work, the more financially stable they will become.

Also, beginning next month, a new personal items allowance will provide more money each month to help those living in homeless shelters and transition houses to buy essential and personal items.

Government is committed to building a stronger province where all Nova Scotians have the dignity, self-esteem, and self-confidence they need to enjoy productive and fulfilling lives.

This week, we welcome students, teachers, and support staff all across the province back to school. As they come back to class, students across Nova Scotia will have more inclusive education supports: 190 new staff, including child and youth care practitioners, parent navigators, education assistants, psychologists, and speech-language pathologists, will join our education system to address student and complex classroom needs, with a focus on behaviour and autism supports.

Additional classroom specialists will help students like Colleen Murphy's son who needs more one-on-one support in the classroom. Ms. Murphy, who is from Halifax, says having more support and training for teachers will mean her son and others like him can receive the help they need to thrive.

[2:45 p.m.]

Nova Scotia's pre-Primary Program, introduced last year, will welcome more than 2,500 children this month. This free universal program helps support social and emotional development, identifies children with special needs sooner, and supports a successful transition to school. Pre-Primary is a great equalizer, and every four-year-old in Nova Scotia will have access to the program by 2020.

Government has also created more child care spaces and subsidies, and made it easier to provide regulated child care at home.

Government is creating 135 new seats in early childhood education programs over the next three years through the Nova Scotia Community College and will support people from under-represented groups to access early childhood education training.

Government is connecting and building stronger communities. Investments in transportation and infrastructure will better connect Nova Scotians to schools, jobs, recreation, health care, and other services, both within their own communities and with others.

An accessible province is good for everyone. Government wants a province where everyone can live in a positive environment that is inclusive, supportive, and fulfilling.

Une province accessible est une bonne chose pour tout le monde. Le gouvernement veut que la province soit un endroit où tout le monde peut vivre dans un environnement positif qui est favorable à l'intégration, solidaire et épanouissant.

My congratulations to Callum MacQuarrie who was the driving force behind the project that saw Inverness Beach become one of the most inclusive beaches in Atlantic Canada this summer. Visitors to the beach can now access new beach-friendly wheelchairs, mats that make it easier to move on the sand, and floating chairs that allow people to go in the water.

All across the province, people are recognizing the benefits of taking steps to make their businesses and communities more accessible.

This Fall, government will fulfill its commitment to bring forward a plan to make Nova Scotia an accessible province by 2030. Our 100-series highways are the backbone of our transportation network. They carry people, goods, and services across Nova Scotia every day and are crucial to growing our communities.

Our Premier and the Prime Minister stood beside Joe MacDonald, Chief of the Barney's River Volunteer Fire Department, this summer to announce the twinning of Highway No. 104 from Sutherlands River to Antigonish. This project will make the road safer for generations to come, and we want to thank Chief MacDonald for his continued dedication to road safety.

This session, government will introduce a new Traffic Safety Act to replace the outdated Motor Vehicle Act. The new Act will make our roads safer for all users: drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Government will introduce legislation that will support businesses to grow our economy and create jobs. We will reduce barriers for entrepreneurs who want to start new businesses. We will reduce inter-provincial trade barriers to help Nova Scotia products get to new markets within Canada. And we will formalize Develop Nova Scotia's role to drive inclusive economic growth and strategic economic infrastructure. One of Develop Nova Scotia's top priorities will be to work with communities, service providers, and other levels of government to build a strong, vibrant high-speed Internet system across Nova Scotia.

In this session, government will build on the tremendous momentum that has been created in Nova Scotia, by Nova Scotians - the people you have heard about in this House today, and many others.

There is a buzz about this province, on the national stage and beyond. From Scotiabank Economics: "The compilation of growth initiatives looks to Nova Scotia's existing strengths, including its skilled work force, multiple post-secondary institutions and growing reputation as an East Coast hub."

From BMO Capital Markets Economics: "Nova Scotia is distinguishing itself from most of its Central and Atlantic-Canada peers."

And from Michelin: “Any company that’s looking to expand in North America should seriously consider Nova Scotia.”

We are at a pivotal moment in our history.

There are numerous indicators that Nova Scotia is performing at a high level compared to other provinces and, while that can and should make us proud, we must not become complacent. We must capitalize and build on this success, at this moment in time, to propel Nova Scotia toward even greater prosperity.

This will require progressive government policy, and it will also require all of our communities and citizens to work together, to support one another, and to truly believe that this is our time. Government believes it is our time, our time to achieve a level of success that would make past generations proud, our time to ensure that future generations prosper.

Le gouvernement croit fermement que c’est notre tour; notre tour d’atteindre un niveau de succès qui rendraient fières les générations précédentes; notre tour de faire en sorte que les générations futures soient prospères.

Thank you to all my fellow Nova Scotians. Merci.

God bless Nova Scotia.

God bless Canada.

God save the Queen.

[The Speaker and the Clerks left the Chamber.

The Lieutenant Governor left the Chamber preceded by his escorts and the Sergeant-at-Arms].

Mr. Speaker took the Chair.]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: His Honour the Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Please be seated.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill entitled An Act Respecting Oaths of Office.

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

His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to make a speech to the members met in the General Assembly of which speech, for greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy of which the Clerk will now read.

THE CLERK: I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are in . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Premier. (Laughter)

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL: I would've let Neil go. (Laughter) I do want to acknowledge the new member from Cumberland South, and I didn't want him to think that all we do around here is have fun like we were doing here today.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome him for his first part in the House. I look forward to serving with him. (Applause) My understanding is that he follows in a family tradition, that his grandfather actually served in this House. So welcome, and I look forward to working with you on behalf of the issues of the number of people from Cumberland South.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the Speech be taken as read.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the Speech be taken as read.

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 member for Clayton Park West. (Applause)

MS. RAFAH DICONSTANZO: Mr. Speaker. It is an honour to rise today to move the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne as read by His Honour, the Honourable Arthur J. LeBlanc.

I would like to start by thanking the Premier and my fellow MLAs for welcoming me with open arms and for making me feel part of the team. Mr. Speaker, it did not take long for me to understand why this team was re-elected with a second majority.

It is a team of talented and principled individuals with a mix of the politically mature and experienced, the youthful and intelligent, and including seven exceptional women. They all have chosen to dedicate their lives to serving the wonderful people of our Province. Ils ont tous choisi de servir les gens de leur province.

As we've heard today in the Speech from the Throne, I wholeheartedly believe that the main goal of this government is to create prosperity for all Nova Scotians and to ensure a brighter future for our children.

I've also been impressed by the passion that my colleagues in Opposition have displayed on a range of issues. Their respectful dialogue is a demonstration of the democracy that we all are so fortunate to live in. It is this dignity and respect that we must continue to protect.

Mr. Speaker, I was told there would be a steep learning curve after being elected as a member of this House in May 2017. That is absolutely correct. C'est vraiment la vérité. I am fortunate to have gained so much knowledge and experience in my first year as an MLA. I have to say there have been times when I've felt stressed and exhausted, but I truly cherish those moments because I know that it is all in service of my constituents.

[3:00 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you why it is an honour to represent the people of Clayton Park West. Clayton Park West is one of the most densely populated areas in the province. It has over 100 apartment and condo buildings and there is also Bayers Lake, a large retail business park that attracts visitors from across Nova Scotia. These attributes in isolation might not explain why Clayton Park West has become such an attractive place to live and work. I would like to share a few secrets about why more and more people are choosing to call Clayton Park West home.

First, Clayton Park West is centrally located, with a drive to downtown being only 10 to 15 minutes by car. There is access to excellent facilities, such as the Canada Games Centre, the Keshen Goodman Public Library, two state-of-the-art indoor and outdoor sports fields and the Bella Rose Arts Centre, just to name a few.

Mr. Speaker, many might not know that Clayton Park West has one of the largest designated wilderness areas in an urban setting. The Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area is a hidden gem that was identified by the city as early as 1971 as an important area worthy of conservation. In 2009 the province supported the regional park idea by designating approximately 4,000 acres of adjacent Crown land as a wilderness protected area. For those who do not know it, pour ceux qui ne savent pas, the area is on the doorsteps of 11 local neighbourhoods, from Clayton Park West to Kearney Lake to Hammonds Plains, as well as to Timberlea. It has 22 lakes and over 1.6 million trees. Canoe and kayakers love the area as they can spend a day travelling a loop of eight lakes in a true wilderness experience. What other city can offer this in an urban core?

I am delighted that this treasure will be looked after by a newly-formed society led by my predecessor Diana Whalen and a team of dedicated community members. They have

dedicated countless years to ensuring that this area is open and accessible to the community. I look forward to seeing what it can become in their more than capable hands.

Mr. Speaker, Clayton Park West also has urban trails that are used by all ages. There is the five-kilometre active transportation linear trail, as well as Belcher's Marsh, Mainland Common, Geizer Hill, and Mary Clayton Memorial Park. All trails connect residents to either schools, work, or the library.

The Halifax North West Trails Association is a 15-year-old organization that helps maintain these trails. They lead interpretive walks to the wilderness area. I want to recognize them for their work to ensure that the residents of Clayton Park West have access to areas and activities that promote healthy, active living, *la vie active saine*.

Mr. Speaker, Clayton Park West is also home to Maskwa Aquatic Club, a paddling club that has become a shining beacon in our region. It won two national championships in 2016 and 2017 and recently came fourth in the Nationals in Quebec, while still leading in Atlantic Canada as the best performer.

Maskwa is also one of the largest competitive paddling clubs in Canada, with over 400 paddlers in its programs this past season. It is home to Olympic paddler Mark de Jonge who is the undefeated world record holder for the K1 200-metre race. These activities and accomplishments are a demonstration of what I just love about Clayton Park West, where community members work and volunteer their time to ensure that residents can lead active lifestyles while still enjoying the benefits of nature.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to share my vision for Clayton Park West. When I came to Halifax in 1984, the city did not have the beautiful downtown waterfront promenade that now stretches from Pier 21 to Purdy's Wharf, nor did the Bedford boardwalk exist. Over the last decade or so, we have seen the benefits of these spectacular boardwalks. Imagine what an accomplishment it would be if we linked the two.

This would become a landmark where people could safely walk, cycle, and run along the waterfront from downtown to Bedford and vice versa. This would not be only a major achievement for Clayton Park West, but also for our city and our province.

Mr. Speaker, last but certainly not least, I am proud to say that Clayton Park West is one of the most diverse ridings in the province. Currently, students of Park West School and Halifax West High School have the most languages spoken in the province. All our schools have done an incredible job of helping newcomers and their children feel welcome and at home. I'm just amazed and grateful to the teachers and the community at large who have embraced new immigrant families with open arms. Our riding has become a stunning example of how effective immigration policies benefit this province, both culturally and economically.

As we heard today in the Speech from the Throne, our population reached an all-time high this past year. This means more people of diverse backgrounds working, starting businesses, and creating jobs in the province.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, after one year on the job as an MLA, I have learned that governments will not be able to fix every little issue, but what a good government can do is to steer the ship in the right direction and provide pathways for people to reach their full potential. I am so proud to be a member of a government that has shown determination in balancing the budget, a government that has made the important, but not always popular, decisions that have put us on the right track.

Mr. Speaker, as an immigrant born in Iraq who has made Nova Scotia her beloved home, I truly cherish the trust that my constituents have bestowed upon me and I will continue to work hard to serve them. I am also committed to helping my team continue to bring about the positive change that is propelling Nova Scotia forward.

Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to thank His Honour for the Throne Speech and, with great pride and great confidence, I move that the Speech from the Throne as read by His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, do pass. Thank you. (Applause) (Standing Ovation)

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

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is a great honour for me to reply to the Speech from the Throne on behalf of the Official Opposition. I want to thank His Honour for the speech and the member for Clayton Park West for moving the speech. It is a true pleasure to formally welcome the member for Cumberland South to our caucus and to this beautiful, historic Legislature. (Applause)

We are very proud of his election victory and we are excited to watch him as he represents the people of Cumberland South.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We're going to bump over to the honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret's.

MR. HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today to support the motion brought forward by my distinguished colleague for Clayton Park West. Just over a year ago, following the second majority government for Premier McNeil, the member for Clayton Park West joined me as a fellow rookie on the government bench. It has been a great pleasure for me to see my colleague grow in her role and I congratulate her and look for amazing things from her in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, this past year has provided me the opportunity to observe and learn the protocols and processes of government. Most of all, it has been a pleasure to see the

inner workings of government and, in particular, to recognize the leadership of Premier McNeil in making decisions in the best interests of all Nova Scotians.

This is a leader who recognizes that the way to provide services Nova Scotians want and deserve is to develop a strong economic foundation through sustainable growth. It is to government's great credit that we have now passed three consecutive balanced budgets.

Mr. Speaker, the leader is only as good as the team behind him. I'm very fortunate to belong to a caucus team of dedicated, hard-working MLAs on the government bench. It is also true for the members opposite, on behalf of their constituents. We're not going to agree on every issue or every priority, but we find common ground in labouring to improve the lives of Nova Scotians.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I will also take a moment to congratulate the new member for Cumberland South and to warmly welcome him to this House.

While I am recognizing the members of this House, I'd also like to acknowledge the behind-the-scenes efforts of the many staff who support us. Theirs is a challenging job, working long and often irregular hours. These include the staff in the Premier's office, the ministerial assistants, the staff at our caucus offices and our constituency offices. I'm particularly grateful to the staff in my own constituency office for beautiful Chester-St. Margaret's. I wish to recognize Mrs. Penny Lawless and Mrs. Geraldine Pauley for their efforts. Most of all, Mr. Speaker, I wish to acknowledge the many residents of Chester-St. Margaret's who have worked with us to ensure that ours is an office that serves all constituents.

Mr. Speaker, this past weekend we observed the 20th anniversary of the Swissair 111 disaster. This anniversary was particularly meaningful to the residents of Chester-St. Margaret's. I was honoured to participate in the remembrance service held on September 2nd at the Swissair memorial site in Bayswater. The memory of the disaster, and in many cases the lasting trauma from the aftermath of the recovery operations, lives on with many, many residents, particularly those in Bayswater and Blandford on the Aspotogan Peninsula and across St. Margarets Bay and Peggy's Cove and Indian Harbour.

Mr. Speaker, since I've been in office, I've supported the ever-closer working relationships between Nova Scotia public servants, our business community, and our academic sector. Such collaboration is encouraging as government continues to build a strong entrepreneurial culture, particularly in the ocean sector, ITC, and tourism. As a representative for rural Nova Scotia, I'm pleased that government's focus on building strong, safe, connected communities throughout our province, and in Chester-St. Margaret's, we stand to benefit from the increasing capacity and reach of our highways, both the traditional asphalt highways and the electronic highways.

The twinning of Highway No. 103 from Tantallon to Hubbards will result in speedier and safer transportation of goods and services and people between our communities and with the world.

The formalization of Develop Nova Scotia's role to drive inclusive economic growth and strategic economic infrastructure is a significant step forward in supporting rural Nova Scotia.

As we have heard, one of Develop Nova Scotia's top priorities will be to work with communities, service providers, and other levels of government to build a strong, vibrant, high-speed Internet system across Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, government is taking the necessary steps to protect, strengthen, and grow rural Nova Scotia. Included in this commitment is support for our tourism sector. 2017 was the fourth consecutive year of growth for Nova Scotia's tourism sector.

Continued growth requires continued investment, and it is with great pleasure that I stood with the Minister of Business to announce a \$2 million infrastructure investment for Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia's most iconic tourism site.

Additional investments in tourism are being made throughout the province as we keep our eye on the target of doubling our tourism revenues by 2024.

Mr. Speaker, innovation is critical to the long-term economic success for our province. As we have heard, our startup community is thriving, incubators are growing, and our higher education institutes are producing graduates for the knowledge economy.

The tech sector is rapidly becoming one of our larger employers. Of particular significance is the growth in oceans technology, information technology, communications, FinTech, and geomatics.

This year, the world renowned NSCC Centre of Geographic Sciences will introduce a new geomatics data analytics program supported by industry, and complementing the many courses geared towards retaining our graduates here at home with good paying jobs.

Our traditional industries are also experiencing a locally-grown, locally-driven technology revolution. Agri-tech and aqua-tech are taking us to new, previously undreamed-of solutions to the world's growing needs for food sustainability.

Our forestry sector is also experiencing technology advancements that will support our rural residents in the decades to come.

As we all know, Lunenburg County is the Balsam fir Christmas tree capital of the world. The new smart tree, which retains its needles for three months longer than a

traditional Balsam fir, will allow Nova Scotia exporters to supply new markets and command higher prices. I'm so delighted with this innovation that I'm nursing a smart tree at my own home.

Mr. Speaker, government is creating the conditions for more businesses to be successful here. We're reducing the regulatory burden on business, and we're improving government services that support economic growth to build a stronger province for all Nova Scotians.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'll take a moment to recognize communities of Chester-St. Margaret's: the Prospect Road communities, including Bayside where I joined the congregation of the Baptist Church recently to celebrate its 80th Anniversary; Peggy's Cove and area, our most iconic tourism site and second only to the Halifax waterfront in terms of visitation; Tantallon and area where the St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association and St. Margaret's Bay Community Enterprise Centre are leading community leadership and entrepreneurship, and environmental protection; Hubbards and area where the twinning of Highway No. 103 will revitalize the tourism sector and drive commercial and residential growth; the Aspotogan communities, featuring the redevelopment of the former Mill Cove military station; Bayswater with its magnificent beach and the Swissair memorial site; the growing Blandford community which includes the Innovacorp Spark 2018 winner, Deep Cryogenics.

Coming down Mahone Bay we have Chester, which features the largest keel boat regatta in all of North America and home of Matt Faye, Special Olympian gold medal winner this year. There are the communities of Chester Basin, Gold River of the Acadia First Nation, and Western Shore, home of Nova Scotia's world-famous site, Oak Island. Going inland, we have New Ross which is surely the most independent and resourceful community in the region.

Mr. Speaker, I'll take a moment to recognize the support of my family. My wife, Mary Lynne, you're truly the love of my life and my soul partner. When people comment that you are a great asset to my political life, I remind them that in fact you are the greatest asset of all my life. My son, Kevin, I'm proud of you for the sacrifices you have made to remain in Nova Scotia, and like myself, focusing on strengthening Nova Scotia's future. Daughter Sarah, there are great opportunities for smart young people in the tech sector right here in Nova Scotia, so consider leaving the West Coast and come back to the "Best Coast."

Mr. Speaker, the government has every right to be proud of the accomplishments of the First Session of this 63rd General Assembly. As we know, achievement is always preceded by preparation. This government laid a lot of pipe since coming to office in 2013 in order to prepare for the investments we can now make for the benefit of all Nova Scotians. I am particularly proud that we introduced the universal pre-Primary education and reformed our education system to focus on student success. We've allowed victims of domestic violence to take leave from work. We introduced a thorough and independent

review of electoral boundaries in the province. We've maintain strong fiscal management that allows government to invest in the future of Nova Scotians. We are reducing taxes for lower-income Nova Scotians and businesses, and we strengthened the protections for Nova Scotians online with the Intimate Images and Cyber-protection Act.

Mr. Speaker, as we go forward with this Second Session of the 63rd General Assembly, I am excited by the government's agenda. Government recognizes the courage and confidence of our young people in themselves and in the future of this province, and giving youth the tools to succeed and grow here at home will continue to be the government's focus.

Government will also continue to embrace one of our greatest assets, Nova Scotia's seniors who are leading the senior entrepreneurship wave that is sweeping across Canada. We recognize our changing demographics, and we welcome the opportunities and benefits that come with an older, more experienced population.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians expect and deserve a world-class health care system. It is government priority number one to make that happen. Health care needs are changing and we are adapting. Working with our partners in the health care sector, we are developing a sustainable, long-term approach to accessing primary care physicians, mental health and addiction specialists, modernized health care facilities, and long-term care.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to introduce policies that address the needs of our most financially vulnerable populations. Following our introduction this year of the largest tax cut in Nova Scotia's recent history, we are introducing new wage exemption measures, allowing those receiving income assistance to keep more of the money they earn while they transition from financial assistance to the workforce. Indeed, this is truly a transitional time in Nova Scotia's history. We are introducing progressive government policies that align with growing industrial confidence and capability.

Mr. Speaker, it is a true pleasure to work with this government and to represent the residents of beautiful Chester-St. Margaret's. With that, it is my honour today to second the motion that the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne pass as read. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, with full permission to start from the top.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour for me to reply to the Speech from the Throne on behalf of the Official Opposition. I want to thank His Honour for the speech and the members for Clayton Park West and Chester-St. Margaret's for moving and seconding this speech.

It is a true pleasure to formally welcome the member for Cumberland South to our caucus. (Applause) We are very proud of his election victory, and we are excited to watch him as he represents the people of Cumberland South with compassion and commitment. He has already hit the ground running, addressing doctor shortages and an unexpected school closure. I also want to thank everyone who put their names on the ballot in Cumberland South. Their determination to make our province a better place is truly remarkable.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne reminded us of the incredible contributions of the many Nova Scotians we have lost. The passing of Kenny Greenham is one that touched all of us personally. I would like to echo the Lieutenant Governor's kind words and extend the deepest condolences of the PC caucus to Kenny's friends and family.

As members know, the Progressive Conservative Party is in the midst of a leadership race, and while there will be many times in the future when I will be able to stand to speak in this great Legislature, this is the last time I will reply to the Speech from the Throne as interim Leader.

I want to begin by saying what a true privilege it has been to act as Leader these past seven months. It is not lost on me that this year, 2018, marks the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote in our province. And I know I stand on the shoulders of strong, brave women like Gladys Porter, Maxine Cochran, Yvonne Atwell, and Alexa McDonough, who worked so hard to blaze a path for women in this Legislature. I must say it truly is very humbling. I want to take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues for their support, their wisdom, their advice, and friendship, and most importantly, for putting their faith in me during a very difficult time. Thank you to all of you.

I also want to thank my children, Chloe and Jack. When I first started here five years ago, Chloe was 15. Now she is 20, entering her third year of university in Calgary. Jack is now 16 and learning to drive and making me very, very nervous. But they truly are great kids. The new responsibilities I took on with this job meant that I spent less time with them and I know all the members in this Chamber know what that's like. I want to thank Chloe and Jack for their understanding; they never, ever complain, and even though they had the right to complain, they didn't. I love them very much. They've never had the opportunity to come to the Legislature and often we speak about that and they often say, Mom, that's your gig, not ours.

It really hit me a couple of years ago when Chloe was in Grade 12, and I know a lot of members can relate. She was playing rugby that year, in Grade 12, and I didn't get to see her play once. I know you all can relate to that. It really hit me though that I was able to make time to speak at the provincial rugby tournament, but I didn't get to see Chloe play. I want to apologize on record to her for that.

I want to thank my constituency staff and constituency president, Shawn Ryan. They have done an incredible service when my duties kept me from Pictou West. I owe them a great debt of gratitude.

Finally, I want to express my sincere thanks to the staff of the PC office and the PC caucus office. Under the direction of Jim David and Kym Purchase, the staff members in these offices have made the last several months much, much easier. And a big shout-out to our president, Tara Miller, who is a true friend and inspiration. Day or night, they do their jobs with tireless dedication and unmatched professionalism. They truly are indispensable to me.

[3:30 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, since the last Speech from the Throne, members of our caucus have experienced heartbreaking loss. On December 31st, Susanne Harrison passed away. She was a woman of great faith and dignity, and she was a wonderful partner to the member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley, who we all truly adore and are so grateful that he is able to sit in this Chamber with us. In June, the member for Pictou East lost his brother, Todd, after a brief but very courageous battle with cancer. Todd loved his three children fiercely and relished his job as a “Bouncer for Canada.” They will both be missed by many. May God bless them both. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker, in the past few weeks there has been an announcement in our PC family that has brought us all much joy. On August 23rd, the member for Inverness and his wife, Lucie, welcomed not one, but two, beautiful baby girls into their family. (Applause) Ivy and Willow will have the best parents, they really will. (Standing Ovation)

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne is not simply a formality. Despite all the pomp and circumstance that surrounds it, the speech is supposed to outline the government’s priorities and agenda for the coming months or years. It is supposed to address the most pressing issues that impact the people that we all serve. Today with this speech, I feel the government has not addressed that.

Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, there is a health care crisis in this province, and the only ones that are turning a blind eye to it is the government that sits across from us. This speech simply did not acknowledge or address the hardship and the heartache that thousands of Nova Scotians experience every day because they don’t have a family doctor and they live in pain on every growing wait-list. They are subjected to hallway medicine because there is no room in our hospitals. They are sent away from hospitals without receiving care. Unfortunately, some watch their loved ones die without dignity and without privacy in overcrowded hospitals. This is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, a few - very few - words in a well-crafted speech do not do anything to help those Nova Scotians who put us all here in this Chamber. It does absolutely nothing.

There is nothing in this speech to erase their suffering and their worrying or give them hope that something will change. What is called for in Nova Scotia is health care that takes on a new approach: bold action and empathy for the people that we serve.

What we got today felt a lot like what we've received the last five years. Last night in Dartmouth East, citizens showed up to share their heart-wrenching stories - stories about no family doctor and stories about no access to important medications or therapeutic services. We were told about MRIs cancelled at the last minute because the person's family doctor retired and there was nowhere to send the results. Mr. Speaker, the person who told us that story had cancer. It's impossible for any of us to comprehend what they're going through, and yet health care wasn't even mentioned in the Throne Speech until the bottom of Page 7 in a few paragraphs.

Mr. Speaker, how can Nova Scotians trust their government to begin fixing our health care system when this government won't even admit that the system is broken? They won't admit that we are in a crisis. When the government hasn't made it the number one priority, what are the rest of us to do? We have to make noise. We have to be the voices. We have to share their stories. We all know that not everyone's story makes front lines. Not every story gets on the headlines, the front page of *The Chronicle Herald*. I could stand here for hours after hours, telling stories.

I am so disappointed in this speech and in this government for not addressing health care in the Throne Speech. Once again, they have squandered an opportunity to make a difference and provide some hope to Nova Scotians who are ill and frightened. I have people coming through my office that have conditions that need to be monitored on a weekly, bi-weekly basis. They don't have anyone. I can't help but say, Mr. Speaker, I am actually angry now. It has taken five years for me to say this, but I am mad and I am angry.

I am angry that this government let so many Nova Scotians down and broke their trust. Today, I had hoped and I thought, "I'm going to give them a chance. I bet you it will be in the Throne Speech how they are going to fix the health care system. They're going to reach out and ask us to collaborate and help them get a plan." But that didn't happen.

You know, it wasn't so long ago that the Premier vowed every Nova Scotian would have a doctor. I think we all recall that, 2013, as we were knocking on doors, "I'm going to get a doctor if the Liberals get in." Yet, today, all he offers them is vague and empty promises and, of course, reannouncements after reannouncements. At best, a doctor for every Nova Scotian promise was a pipe dream to some. At worst, it was a crass political ploy.

Nova Scotians deserve better. We know better and we should give them better. They deserve a government that says we know there is a crisis. We can admit there is a crisis. We understand you are suffering and you are in need and here are the concrete steps

we are taking to alleviate that suffering because we are here to serve you, not our own agendas.

Mr. Speaker, Page 9 of the speech says, “People often turn to government when they feel they have no other option.” Don’t we know that is all true. But more and more people can’t trust this government, their last option, to help them. Tens of thousands of Nova Scotians have turned to their government because they don’t have a doctor. They are sick and afraid and they call their government because they have no other option. But this government is not helping them. This government is not giving the tools for me to help them and I feel useless, and I feel like I’m failing my people. In fact, the number of Nova Scotians without a doctor keeps growing. We can deny it all we want, but it keeps growing and growing and growing.

Mr. Speaker, to someone who has been without a family doctor for months or even years, a speech that tells them their government is working hard to make sure all Nova Scotians have access to health care they need, when what they really need is action. They need a government that will actually take action and help them.

It is reminiscent of the broken promise of a doctor for every Nova Scotian. This is not about me but I haven’t had a doctor for years, my children don’t have a doctor, my father doesn’t have a doctor, my cousin doesn’t have a doctor - and none of us signed up on the list. I can reassure you the 55,000-some that is on that list - you can easily, easily double it. I am just one small family.

It’s truly a shame, Mr. Speaker. After all, the reason we are here is to serve Nova Scotians, not to pay them lip service. Not to give them petty words in fancy speeches. This Speech from the Throne is nothing, nothing more than a long member’s statement on the hard-working, industrious Nova Scotians. It has very little focus on the government’s accomplishments and it ignores the real problems this government has created in health, education, long-term care, and I could go on and on. I am very disappointed.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I would like at this point in time to move that we adjourn debate today and I look forward to concluding my reply further on. Thank you very much. (Applause)

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

The motion is carried.

At the conclusion of this session, it’s my pleasure to invite all members and the guests in this gallery to the Red Room for a reception immediately following the adjournment here today.

The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, thank you for inviting all of us to the Red Room. You may have noticed in that well-crafted speech that was spread out that there was a celebration of those special Nova Scotians who represented our province at the national games in Antigonish. It's the first time the games were hosted outside of a major Canadian city and the people in greater Antigonish and surrounding communities should be commended.

I wanted to invite all members of the House to the convention centre from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Monday, September 10th to celebrate those amazing Nova Scotians, their families, and hundreds of volunteers who made our province proud on the national stage.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, that concludes government business for today. I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow, Friday, September 7th between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Business tomorrow after the daily routine and QP will be Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the House now rise to meet tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.

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

The motion is carried.

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

[The House rose at 3:43 p.m.]