



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2018

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2018

Sixty-third General Assembly

Second Session

1:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKER

Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. We'll begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

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

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition. The operative clause is:

“WE THE UNDERSIGNED REQUEST THESE THREE (3) STREETS EDGEWOOD DRIVE, TOWER HEIGHTS, STUART STREET BE REPAVED AS THEY ARE IN A STATE OF SERIOUS DISREPAIR.”

Mr. Speaker, it is signed by 89 individuals who live on those streets, and I have affixed my name per the Rules of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS****STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS****GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

RESOLUTION NO. 50

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

Be it resolved that Rule 60 of the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly is amended as follows:

(1) No. 5 in paragraph (1) is replaced by the following:

5. Natural Resources and Economic Development;

(2) No. 8 in paragraph (1) is replaced by the following:

8. Health;

(3) clause (ba) of paragraph (2) is deleted;

(4) subclause (i) of clause (c) of paragraph (2) is replaced by the following:

(i) considering matters relative to early childhood development, education and labour;

(5) clauses (d) and (e) of paragraph (2) are replaced by the following:

(d) the Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee is established for the purpose of considering matters relative to natural resources and economic development including agriculture, aquaculture, business, energy, the environment, fisheries, forestry, infrastructure, marketing, mines, public works, science, technology, tourism, trade and transportation;

(e) the Community Services Committee is established for the purpose of considering matters relative to community services, culture, heritage, human rights, municipal affairs, recreation and sports; and

(f) the Health Committee is established for the purpose of considering matters relative to access to and delivery of health care services.

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

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

Is it agreed?

I hear several Noes.

The notice is tabled.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 22 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 203 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Homes for Special Care Act, Respecting Staffing Levels. (Mr. Gary Burrill)

Bill No. 23 - Entitled an Act to Implement the Canadian Free Trade Agreement. (Hon. Geoff MacLellan)

Bill No. 24 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 203 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Homes for Special Care Act, Respecting Inspections. (Mr. Gary Burrill)

Bill No. 25 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 327 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Ombudsman Act. (Mr. Gary Burrill)

Bill No. 26 - Entitled an Act to Establish a Mental Health Bill of Rights. (Ms. Tammy Martin)

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

I did neglect to mention at the top of the order paper that the topic for late debate tonight, as submitted by the honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River, is:

Therefore be it resolved that the Liberal Government is failing to provide comprehensive services for survivors of sexualized violence in all regions of the province.

That's late debate at the conclusion of the daily routine, at the moment of interruption.

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

RESOLUTION NO. 51

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

Whereas on September 12, 2017, Nova Scotia RCMP Constable Frank Deschênes, who served with the force's Traffic Services unit in Amherst, was tragically killed after he stopped to assist stranded motorists along the highway near Memramcook, New Brunswick; and

Whereas Constable Deschênes' distinguished record of service demonstrated not only the highest degree of professionalism, but also his love for serving and protecting the public, evidenced by his willingness to help motorists at the roadside on that fateful day; and

Whereas our communities are made safer and better places in so many ways because of the selfless and dedicated service of law enforcement officers like Constable Deschênes, who are willing to place themselves in harm's way, every day;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me on the anniversary of his death in offering our condolences to the family and friends of Constable Frank Deschênes and thanking all those whose dedicated service is protecting our communities.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

It is worth noting that the proper place for that resolution in the agenda would have been under Government Notices of Motion. Nonetheless, there it is.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

DESCHÊNES, FRANK: DEATH OF - 1st RESP. RD. SAFETY DAY

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Today is a sad anniversary. September 12th marks one year since RCMP Constable Frank Deschênes was killed while helping a stranded tourist change a tire. Frankie served at the Amherst RCMP detachment, and he was a committed police officer and a loving, newly-married husband. Frank died as he lived: in service to others.

Mr. Speaker, last year this Legislature ensured that Frankie's death was not in vain. By making September 12th First Responders Road Safety Awareness Day, we set aside a day to honour Frankie Deschênes and all first responders across our province. We also acted to make our first responders safer by raising awareness, requiring drivers to slow down and move over when they pass an emergency vehicle with flashing lights.

Today my thoughts are with Frankie's widow, Savannah, and all those who risk their lives to make our lives safer. Thank you.

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

COOK FAMILY: LAND DONATION - THANKS

MS. LENORE ZANN: The Acadian forest in the Cobequid Hills of New Annan is dominated by sugar maples, beech, birch, and scatterings of pine, ash, and hemlock. They are pristine forests, known for their maple syrup outputs and for being some of the highest quality Acadian forests in the area, a natural and undisturbed habitat for lots of Nova Scotia wildlife.

Thankfully, Mr. Speaker, due to the generosity of the Cook family, 366 hectares of this forest at the headwaters of the French River will remain undisturbed. The sons of the late Truro surgeon, Dr. George Cook, have made a benevolent donation of their family's land through the Government of Canada's Ecological Gifts Program and I have to say it is reassuring to know that love and concern for our forest is so prevalent.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

[1:15 p.m.]

**BEYDOUN, HUSSEIN - CARDIOLOGIST:
PROFESSIONAL OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.**

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the significant accomplishments of an exceptional Nova Scotian, Dr. Hussein Beydoun. Born in Beirut, Lebanon, Dr. Beydoun studied at the prestigious University of Padua in Italy, considered one of the oldest and most recognized medical schools in the world. From there, he went on to study internal medicine at the New York Medical College before coming to Halifax to complete postgraduate training in adult cardiology at Dalhousie University.

Today, Dr. Beydoun is a full professor at Dalhousie University, taking on both academic and clinical roles and serves as the director of the cardiac cath lab at the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre, where thousands of patients from the Maritimes receive heart procedures each year. What's more, Dr. Beydoun founded and now directs the interventional cardiology diploma training program which trains cardiologists from all over the world. For his incredible work and contributions, Dr. Beydoun was named this year's Lebanese Professional of the Year at the 11th Annual Nova Scotia Cedar & Maple Gala. I ask all members to join me in thanking and congratulating Dr. Beydoun for his work.

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

GIOVANNETTI, VANESSA: ORGAN DONATION - LIFE SAVING

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to recognize Vanessa Amanda Giovannetti, the beloved daughter of a fellow physiotherapist and classmate of mine, Irma Vaughan. At 31 years young on August 18, 2018, Vanessa passed away while waiting for a lung transplant. Vanessa had cystic fibrosis, but despite that, she lived life to the fullest. After obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree from Acadia University, Vanessa married the love of her life. Organ donations save lives and it is as easy as filling out a donor card. Last year, Nova Scotia had 36 transplant recipients, the highest number of the Atlantic Provinces. While 2016 had 53 transplant recipients and 2015 had 48 transplant recipients, there are many, many more waiting. With a decline in donor recipients last year, we could all make a difference and, next time, I hope you will all consider filling out your donor card.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

GOTTINGEN ST. FEST.: COM. UNITY - THANKS

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank and shout out a couple of key people who have created a wonderful, new neighbourhood tradition in Halifax Needham.

The Gottingen Street Festival happened this past Saturday evening in several different sites coordinated by the North End Business Association. Outdoor vendors sold jewellery, clothing, hair products, handbound books, funky fridge magnets, fudge, and hot sauce. Many of the vendors made the products themselves by hand.

The UNI Festival, for United Not Isolated, turned an empty lot just off Gottingen Street into a town square complete with more vendors, fantastic live music, popcorn, places to sit, and lots and lots of people greeting each other, supporting local makers, appreciating the tunes, and smiling.

The UNI Festival strengthens the vision of Martez Wiggins, a local man, a hip-hop artist, and a father who works at Alteregos Café & Catering and wanted to bring the neighbourhood together. Patty Cuttell-Busby, executive director of the North End Business Association helps to find and manage the funds, the advertisers, and the logistics. I expressed my gratitude to them both.

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

DOLBEL, FRED: COM. SERV. - THANKS

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, on July 26, 2018, the Toronto-Dominion Bank singled out Fred Dolbel as a volunteer to be recognized from our community whose efforts make the community richer and more inclusive. The recognition was accompanied by a cheque for \$5,000, which Mr. Dolbel promptly donated to the St. Margaret's Bay Seniors Association. The association has a broadly-based membership that includes seniors in Timberlea-Prospect.

Fred is the backbone of the seniors association, a leader in the organizational structure of the Bay Treasure Chest, a founder of the newly-opened St. Margaret's Bay Community Enterprise Centre, an advocate for affordable housing, and a member of the Chamber of Commerce cohort to launch a website to showcase the attributes and events of the region for both residents and visitors.

I ask the members of Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in recognizing the work and achievements of Fred Dolbel and thanking him for his vision, leadership, and selfless dedication to the organizations and communities he serves.

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

REDDEN, ALIX: VICTORIA CO. CFO - CONGRATS.

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, Alix Redden is happy to return home after five years living away from Nova Scotia. The 29-year-old Victoria County native spent many

years living in different parts of Canada but now is home working as the new chief financial officer for the Municipality of the County of Victoria.

Redden grew up in Iona and graduated from Rankin Memorial High School, received a Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting, and furthered her studies with a Master of Business Administration at Saint Mary's University. After graduation, she sought out new adventures and obtained a job in the Northwest Territories with the Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

I ask all members of the Legislature to join me in congratulating Alix Redden on her new position as chief financial officer and wish her the very best in the future.

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

DESCHÊNES, FRANK: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I stand to pay respect and tribute to Constable Deschênes, who lost his life a year ago today helping a stranded motorist.

First responders across our province put themselves in harm's way every day, supporting and providing services to Nova Scotians. I want to remind Nova Scotians that the move-over legislation has been on the books for nine years. People need to slow down and move over. Lives depend on it.

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

MLA, LUNENBURG W.: BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the MLA for Lunenburg West on his birthday. The MLA for Lunenburg West had an amazing career in law enforcement, where he protected many of our communities and was a role model to many. He has transformed that into a position in public life where he has steered the direction on some of the most important legislation in a generation.

I appreciate the work he has done and I just want to wish the member for Lunenburg West a happy birthday.

MR. SPEAKER; The honourable member for Pictou Centre with his rendition of "Happy Birthday."

ST. F.X. - HOST: SPECIAL OLYMPICS - WELL DONE

HON. PAT DUNN: On behalf of this side, Mr. Speaker, a happy birthday to the member.

Nova Scotia played host to the Special Olympics National Games for the first time in 24 years. The major event was held at St. Francis Xavier University, where 111 athletes came together from across Nova Scotia to compete. In total, Team Nova Scotia earned 134 medals - a very successful game for our athletes. Visitors to Antigonish and St. Francis Xavier University were amazed with the numerous polite, cheerful, and helpful people they met. Numerous family members and coaches were pleased with the excellent venue. A majority of participants were within a short walk to their sports event.

The games in Antigonish marked the first time the national event was hosted outside a major urban centre. Kudos to X.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**AMONG FRIENDS SOC. CLUB:
MENTAL ILLNESS SUFFERERS - COMMEND**

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, today the NDP caucus introduced legislation to protect the rights of persons experiencing mental distress. For those who suffer but are not able to access mental health care, there are few alternative options available, so we are lucky to have organizations such as Among Friends Social Club.

Among Friends offers an array of free social and recreational activities for those suffering with mental illness. Run out of my neighbour the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre's facility, the club brings people together who might otherwise find themselves isolated by their illness. Through games, picnics, trips around the city, and more, Among Friends creates a space for those suffering with mental illness to connect and share their stories, but also to just have fun.

Bev Cadham, the program's coordinator, has worked tirelessly to keep this valuable offering available to the Dartmouth community despite many setbacks. Please join me in thanking Bev and her associates for hosting this invaluable accessible mental health care option.

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

ST. BENEDICT CATHOLIC CHURCH: DIVINE RENO. CONF. - INFLUENCE

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Saint Benedict Catholic Church for hosting the Divine Renovation 2018 conference. This conference hosted 650 delegates from across the world, adding to Saint Benedict's reputation as a well-respected parish worldwide. It was such a highly-anticipated event that it sold out quickly and had a long waiting list to follow. Many of the delegates were religious leaders, priests, and laypeople from across the world, including countries such as Germany, Australia, and the U.K.

The story of Father Bernie O'Neill and the amalgamated parishes of St. Pius X, St. Lawrence, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help, now known as Saint Benedict's, sparked the interest of many churches across the world, which added to this conference's popularity. Thanks to this, parish leaders Father James Mallon and Father Simon Lobo have had the opportunity to speak at various religious conferences across the world. Father Simon has plans to continue the Divine Renovation movement through writing his new piece, *Divine Renovation Apprentice*.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of this House to join me in recognizing Saint Benedict Parish and this recent event and wish them continued success in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY: MENTAL ILLNESS - LISTEN

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, September 10th was World Suicide Prevention Day. It's a day people shy away from. It's a day that brings up memories of terrible pain and loss for some and moments of phenomenal hope and triumph for others.

Suicide does not discriminate. No age, race, gender, sexuality, or economic standing are exempt.

It is estimated that in Canada each day, 10 people will end their life and 200 people will attempt to.

I ask all members of this House to join me in being an ear for those in need. To remind anyone who is suffering that they are not their pain, their story is worth telling, that even on their worst days they are enough, and that our world needs their presence, not their perfection.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

MENTAL ILLNESS: COM. SERVS. - INADEQUATE

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, in my community of Dartmouth North there are many people who live with mental illness and addictions. I have heard horror stories of people waiting at emergency departments in mental health crisis for over 13 or 14 hours only to be told to go home and wait for phone calls.

I know transgendered people who cannot find adequate services to address their gender dysphoria, and young people in my neighbourhood have nowhere to turn when they are anxious, depressed or overwhelmed.

We know that stress around poverty, lack of stable housing, lack of medical care and access to medications, hunger, and being socially isolated can all trigger mental illness.

In order to treat mental illness and provide good mental health services in our province, we must address the root causes of some of these mental illnesses.

Solutions like adequate wages for working people, a real and significant increase to ESIA and disability support rates, rent controls, more supportive housing initiatives, and solid investments and supports for students would go a long way to addressing many mental health issues in our community.

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

CANOE TO THE SEA: COM. FUNDRAISER - PARTICIPATE

MR. BILL HORNE: Mr. Speaker, Canoe to the Sea is an event that took place in the Fall River community on Father's Day, June 17th at Lake Thomas.

More than 100 people from across the HRM launched their canoes and kayaks from the new beach behind the Gordon R. Snow Community Centre to make their way to Senobe Aquatic Club on Lake Banook.

This fundraiser is organized by the Shubenacadie Canal Commission. Participants travel along the historic canal system from Lake Thomas in Fall River to Lake Banook in Dartmouth.

I had the pleasure of participating in this event with my daughter, Kelly, in separate kayaks and found it to be a wonderful experience. I encourage others to participate in the event next year.

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

BROOKFIELD H.S. REUNION: RETURNING GRADS. - RECOG.

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, community roots grow deeply, and nothing can attest to that more than a 65-year reunion this summer of graduates from Brookfield Rural High.

Fourteen of those graduates, one from as far away as Calgary and recovering from a recent heart operation, made the trek home because that is what Nova Scotians do. Former teachers, secretaries, a Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame inductee, and a world traveller, they come back and they stay because of the people, the scenery, and the community life.

I believe this says a lot about our province and the people who live in it. It makes me proud to know that I am also a part of it.

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

TRURO FIRE BRIGADE: 150th ANNIV. - RECOG.

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, celebrating their 150th anniversary this month, the Truro Fire Brigade stands as the third oldest fire brigade in Nova Scotia.

With old notebooks that contain minutes from the very first meeting, old photos on the walls, and scrapbooks documenting days gone by, the Fire Brigade is a living piece of history in Truro.

In light of their anniversary this month, this year's volunteer recruitment drive, Walk in our Boots, will be a three-day celebration from September 28th to 30th.

Firefighting displays, memorabilia, and other demonstrations will be featured boasting 35 members who volunteer to protect our town. The Truro Fire Brigade is an essential component, not just to Truro's history, but to our current and building community.

I would like to ask the House to join me in acknowledging the legacy of this Brigade.

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

J&M REEVES: EXPORT AWARD - CONGRATS.

MR. HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the firm of J & M Reeves Christmas Greens of New Ross, who won the Nova Scotia Business Inc.-sponsored Lunenburg-Queens Export Achievement Award for the 2017 export year.

J & M Reeves received their award at the annual Lunenburg-Queens Business Excellence Awards held last March. I will also note that it was J & M Reeves who provided this Legislature with the beautiful Christmas tree in 2017.

The company was started in 2009 by John Reeves and his son, Matthew, working out of the wonderful village of New Ross. The company is a real family affair, particularly during the all-important and ever-short harvesting season.

Since the founding of J & M Reeves Christmas Greens, the company has expanded to approximately 150 acres of trees and has developed strong domestic and international markets. The core principle of this family company is the belief that promotion of real trees

and the co-operation among growers and shippers benefits everyone in the Nova Scotia industry.

I ask the members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating J & M Reeves on the receipt of the Lunenburg-Queens Export Achievement Award.

[1:30 p.m.]

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

EAVIS, BLAIR: KING LION, SACKVILLE - CONGRATS.

MR. BRAD JOHNS: Volunteers are the backbone of our community, and I'm proud to be able to stand and recognize the contribution of various volunteers from my community here in the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, today I want to rise and congratulate Mr. Blair Eavis on recently being elected the King Lion of the Sackville Lions Club, having been a member of that club since 2014. Blair is a very active and committed volunteer of the Sackville-Beaver Bank community. He serves on a number of boards throughout the community, including the Sackville Rivers Association and the Cobequid Cultural Society.

I would like to thank Mr. Eavis for his commitment and time. It's residents similar to Blair who make Sackville-Beaver Bank a wonderful community to reside in.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

PANAM CANOE 2018: ATHLETES AND SUPPORTERS - WELCOME

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: I rise today to welcome the PanAm Canoe Championships to Lake Banook in Dartmouth, which opens this evening at Dartmouth High School.

Dartmouth will be welcoming over 350 athletes from at least 16 countries from North and South America, and we have never been more poised or proud to do so. Spectators will have the opportunity to witness truly elite athleticism over the coming weekend. These games will be made even more exciting as they serve as a qualifier for the 2019 Pan American Games in Lima, Peru.

Lake Banook is a world-class lake that has been the incubator of so many local athletes, including Craig Spence, Mark de Jonge, and Alex Scott.

I welcome all the visiting competitors and their supporters, welcome home our local heroes, and good luck to everyone this weekend.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

BUSING ACCIDENT: FIRST RESP. - RECOG.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, today just after 8:30 a.m., Bus No. 131, serving Herring Cove Junior High and carrying 12 students, went off the road and flipped into the ditch at Old Sambro Road. To say this is every parent's worst nightmare is an understatement.

I want to take a moment to recognize all the EMTs, police, and service people who responded within minutes of this accident. I especially want to thank the community and Principal Sean MacDonald of Herring Cove Junior High for their caring and professionalism. Thank you, Principal MacDonald, for always, always rising to the occasion. Thankfully, there were only minor injuries.

To the parents and youth impacted, I will work with the department and the school to ensure that those kids get the services they need to get through this.

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

GALE, AVERY: LIFE-SAVING COURAGE - COMMEND

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: First, I would like to say to the member for Lunenburg West, look across and see what could happen in five years.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge 16-year-old Avery Gale, from Sydney River, for saving the life of 90-year-old Kenneth Cross, from Marion Bridge. Without hesitation or worry about his own safety, Avery jumped into the water and helped the retired lobster fisherman get safely to shore.

Kenneth lost his balance and fell off the community dock. Fortunately, Avery heard the hollering, and he ran and jumped in. Avery Gale is definitely a hero and gave no thought to consequences as he helped bring Mr. Cross to safety.

I stand today to say how proud we all are of Avery Gale for being at the right place at the right time and to thank him for having the courage to do this amazing act of kindness.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

CNSCF: PRISONER DEATH - CONDOLENCES

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: I rise today to stand in solidarity with the prisoners inside the Central Nova Correctional Facility, located in Dartmouth North, and to express my

sympathy to the friends and family of the inmate who died yesterday after being found unresponsive in his cell.

On August 19th, the prisoners inside the Burnside jail released a statement outlining a peaceful protest shedding light on some of the conditions inside Burnside: lack of access to medications and timely health care, lack of access to exercise equipment, and the lack of rehabilitation programs. They announced yesterday that their protest is ended, but conditions have not gotten better.

Mr. Speaker, 60 per cent of the people housed at Burnside are on remand. They have not been tried or found guilty of any crime; however, the issue of remand should not even come into play when it comes to providing these prisoners with their fundamental human rights. As Nelson Mandela once stated: “A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones.”

We need to do much better in Nova Scotia.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

HATFIELD, DEREK: CDN. SAILING HALL OF FAME - TRIBUTE

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, the member for Lunenburg West in two years may look as young as I do.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a former resident of Mahone Bay, Derek Hatfield, who was inducted into the Canadian Sailing Hall of Fame June 1, 2018. Unfortunately, Mr. Hatfield passed away July 2017 unexpectedly, at the age of 63, after a brief illness.

Mr. Hatfield was proclaimed as a renowned single-handed Round the World Racer, winning first class in the 2001-02 Around Alone.

Mr. Hatfield raced the Vendée Globe in 2008 and took the podium in the VELUX 5 Oceans single-handed Round the World Race, and was the recipient of the Rolex Sailor of the Year in 2010, as well as won Sail Canada and Ontario Sailing's Sailor of the Year Awards in 2003.

Piloting the *Spirit of Canada*, a 12-metre sailboat built with friends and family, he completed an around-the-world sailing race on his own in 2003 and in 2010-11. He was the first Canadian to do this twice.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you and the members of this House of Assembly please join me in recognizing Derek for his many accomplishments - he was a great ambassador for the sport.

MR. SPEAKER: I just want to remind all members that the time allotted for a Member's Statement is one minute each, as indicated by the clock on the wall.

The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**DELANEY, REBECCA/THERIAU, BEN:
SPECIAL OLYMPIANS - CONGRATS.**

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a group of Special Olympians, from Queens County, who represented Nova Scotia at the 2018 Canada Summer Games in Antigonish, held from July 31st to August 4th.

Building on their success in the Special Olympics Provincials in Halifax, Ben Theriau won three gold medals in the 200 metre, 400 metre, and 4 x 100 metre relay, and a bronze medal in the 100 metre. Ben will also be representing Team Canada at the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi in March 2019.

Jamie Belong won gold in the 4 x 100 relay; Rebecca Maule won bronze in the shot-put event; Rebecca Delaney won gold in the 4 x 100 metre relay; and Colby Oickle won gold in shot put.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say how proud we are of the achievements of these five young athletes. They did their community and their province proud.

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

SEMAAN, MATTHEW: COM. SERV. - COMMEND

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize an exemplary individual from my riding who never ceases to amaze those around him. At just 17 years old, Matthew Semaan has volunteered his time to countless events and organizations that are close to his heart. These include: Teen Soyo Youth Group; the Annual Lebanese Festival; the IWK Health Centre; the Annual Community Barbecue in Clayton Park West; and special events at Mad Coffee.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that members of this House join me in commending Matthew for his participation in the community and for showing others how lending a hand can make a big impact.

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

**GALLANT, JEREMY/MACDONALD, CYRIL:
SPECIAL OLYMPIANS - RECOG.**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two Cape Breton athletes who will be on Team Canada at the inaugural Unified Cup International Soccer Tournament being held in Chicago. The tournament will have a roster of 24 teams.

Special Olympian Jeremy Gallant of Whitney Pier and Cyril MacDonald of North Sydney are the only two Team Canada members to come from east of Quebec. This tournament is being held in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of Special Olympics and features athletes both with and without intellectual disabilities. Cyril is the regional coordinator for Special Olympics in Cape Breton.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish our two athletes the very best in Chicago as part of Team Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

BROWN, ANDY: PUBL. BUS. - CONGRATS.

MR. KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Andy Brown of Conundrum Press in Wolfville. Andy specializes in the graphic novel genre and is renowned in Canada as an industry leader. He has run his publishing company for over 20 years and is now opening a boutique this fall which will feature an art gallery and a book store that's located above The Odd Book and Eos in Wolfville.

We are all very appreciative of citizens like Andy who are dedicated to building our creative economy here in Nova Scotia. I would ask all the members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Andy on his new Wolfville-based business, his publishing career, and wish him all the best for the future.

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

CELTIC COLOURS: 22nd ANN. FEST. - BEST WISHES

MS. ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, fiddles will take centre stage in Port Hawkesbury on October 5th, as Cape Breton's Natalie MacMaster and Scotland's Blazin' Fiddles kick off the 22nd Celtic Colours International Festival.

This year's Celtic Colours will present 49 concerts, a nightly festival club and more than 300 cultural events in communities across Cape Breton Island. There will be a variety of returning performers, as well as a host of new national and international performers.

Mr. Speaker, I wish the organizers, volunteers and performers a successful 22nd Celtic Colors International Festival.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

BENJAMIN, KAIT: L.G.'S EDUC. MEDAL - CONGRATS.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, Kaitlyne Benjamin received the Lieutenant Governor's Education Medal at a ceremony held in Halifax last May. This award is presented annually to two Grade 11 students from each high school in Nova Scotia in recognition of their academic performance and qualities of leadership and service that they demonstrated in their school and community.

Kait, a student of Park View Education Centre, was highly involved with her school, her community, sports, and academics. She competed in Park View soccer, rugby, and track and field programs. She was also a member of the South Shore United football club's Under-17 AAA girls team. Kait served as student council co-president and participated in the IB program where excellent marks were her priority. In addition to all of this, Kait found time to volunteer with several events, including Hit It for Health, and the Health Services Foundation - Radiothon. She even helped coach an under-13 club volleyball team.

Congratulations to Kaitlyne Benjamin, a remarkable young lady with a bright future ahead of her.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

NAYLOR, IAN - POLICE CHIEF: BK. OF CONDOLENCES - THANKS

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today to recognize Chief Ian Naylor and his staff at the Amherst Police Department. The chief, his officers and staff, are putting together a book of condolences for the officers who lost their lives in the recent Fredericton tragedy. The Amherst police have shown great support for their colleagues in Fredericton. It shows how close we can be as a community even though we are in different provinces.

I ask that all members join me in thanking the Amherst Police Department for showing their colleagues in Fredericton compassion and empathy.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

WE ARE YOUNG ASSOC.: SENIORS OUTREACH - COMMEND

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to tell the House about an organization founded by two young women in my riding. Katie Mahoney and Cara Boudreau founded the We Are Young Association in 2015 after Katie had taken a senior out for the day. They did some things we might take for granted - getting groceries, getting your nails done - and Katie heard all about this woman's life. It moved her to do more. So together, Katie and Cara founded We Are Young, or WAY, to grant unfulfilled wishes to Nova Scotian seniors who are 70 years and older.

So far they have granted eight wishes, and they've all been very different. One senior got a tattoo in memory of her son who had passed away. Another had been told he was too tall to be a pilot, so he got to pilot a glider. Another got to visit a childhood family camp via helicopter.

WAY does much of its work in kind, but they also have a golf fundraiser every fall. Tomorrow, that tournament will get under way at the Links in Brunello. I wish Katie, Cara, WAY's volunteers, and the golfers all the best as they make dreams true for seniors.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

SCOUTS AND VENTURERS: COM. PROJ. - COMMEND

MR. TORY RUSHTON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Scouts and Venturers from across Cumberland County on receiving their Chief Scout & Queen Venturer Awards from the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia.

This year, a number of these youths adopted graves at the Springhill Hillside Cemetery as their meaningful service project. This project includes tending to graves at the cemetery that do not have Perpetual Care or loved ones left in the community. The Scouts and Venturers also raised funds to sponsor some of these graves for Perpetual Care. They are also working with members of the Hillside Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund Management Team who also matched every grave that the scouts did.

Mr. Speaker, I commend these Scouts and Venturers from across Cumberland County on their outstanding project and wish them all the best in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

VEINOT, JUSTIN: VOL. OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker I rise today to congratulate Justin Veinot on being named the 14 Wing Greenwood Community Recreation Volunteer of the Year for 2018. Mr. Veinot's dedication and enthusiasm for sport has had a tremendous impact on

many local youth as he is involved in various coaching positions from multiple sports ranging from boys and girls soccer, ball hockey, ice hockey, while also serving as the Greenwood Minor Basketball president.

As the MLA for Kings West, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to Justin Veinot for being recognized as the Greenwood Community Recreation Volunteer of the Year and thank him for providing mentorship to young athletes in our community and for his commitment to sport in our province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

MACLENNAN, DAVID: CONTRIB. TO ATHL. COM. - CONGRATS.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate David MacLennan of Scotsburn for his many long-time contributions to athletics and the community at large.

David is well-known for his participation in long-distance running and is also an enthusiastic supporter of the Joe Earle Memorial Road Races and other events in Pictou County.

David recently won his 12th Johnny Miles Marathon in New Glasgow and a record fifth win of the Blue Nose Marathon in Halifax. Aside from his constant training, David coaches middle distance running with the Pictou County Athletics program and was also recently named an honorary co-chair of the 2018 Marathon of Respect and Equality.

David is a humble, generous, and kind individual who is always a great inspiration and representative of Pictou West.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

SNOW QUEEN LEISURE WORLD: NEW OWNER - RECOG.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: You know it's summer in Antigonish when the Snow Queen Leisure World opens for the season. It's the type of place where traditions and memories are made, whether it be evenings playing mini-golf or taking a spin on the go-karts or trying your luck in the batting cage. Most visits to the Snow Queen involve ice cream. It's part of many childhoods including my own, and that's no different for Garrett Juurlink, the new owner of the Snow Queen Leisure World.

You see, Mr. Speaker, this Spring the Leisure World didn't open like it has for decades. It was for sale as the owner was ready for retirement. Thankfully, Mr. Juurlink saw an opportunity to own a piece of Antigonish that holds so many fond memories for the

community. He purchased and opened the amusement park and canteen in July and the response from locals has been amazing.

Snow Queen Leisure World is back open for business and it will continue to be a special place to visit for families and visitors, an Antigonish landmark for hopefully generations to come thanks to Garrett Juurlink.

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

**RENNEHAN, ASHLEY/HOPKINS, DANIEL:
SPECIAL OLYMPIANS - CONGRATS.**

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate two Special Olympians, Ashley Rennehan and Daniel Hopkins, who represented Shelburne County at the Special Olympics Canada Games 2018 hosted in Antigonish from July 31st to August 4th.

Building on their success in the Provincial Special Olympics in June, Ashley Rennehan from Shelburne won a silver medal in the shot put and Daniel Hopkins from Lockeport won a silver medal in the 200m.

Mr. Speaker, as MLA for Queens-Shelburne, I would like to congratulate Ashley and Daniel on their achievements and thank them for being great ambassadors. They have made their community and their province so very proud.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston-Dartmouth.

LAKE ECHO BAPTIST CHURCH: 30th ANNIV. - CONGRATS.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the Lake Echo Fellowship Baptist Church on the occasion of their 30th Anniversary celebration on September 16th, 2018.

Lake Echo Fellowship Baptist Church is very focused on building community within community through support from events such as the Mineville Community Association Summer Fair and the Community Breakfast held after Hurricane Juan. The church is very inclusive, providing ministries to men, women, youth, and children.

Lake Echo Fellowship Baptist Church provides ministries for men, women, youth, and children under the leadership of Pastor Doug Duncan and Family Ministry Associate Pastor Scott MacKenzie. I applaud and congratulate Lake Echo Fellowship Baptist Church on the many significant achievements and wish them continued success in the future on their efforts to build community within community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

SHARPE, EVAN: SPECIAL OLYMPIAN - CONGRATS.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, several athletes from Nova Scotia reached the podium during the Special Olympics National Games. Stellarton's Evan Sharpe, an amazing athlete, took home silver in the pool for the 200-metre freestyle and made a great showing in other events. He also knocked eight seconds off his personal best time in the 100-metre competition.

This was Evan's first national event and the popular athlete was overjoyed with his personal accomplishments during the Special Olympic Games. The competitive athlete demonstrated his dedication and commitment during the past year preparing to make the Nova Scotia squad. I ask all members of this Legislature to join me in congratulating Evan Sharp for his excellent performance at the National Games.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

RIVERVIEW HERBS: 30th ANNIV. - CONGRATS.

HON. MARGARET MILLER: For 30 years, Mr. Speaker, a Maitland business has been growing fresh herbs that have become a staple at many fine restaurants and markets throughout this province. Riverview Herbs is a family-owned and-operated farm along Highway No. 215, in the historic community of Maitland.

The farm runs year-round, they specialize in fresh cut, culinary herbs, as well as over 150 varieties of herb transplants. They are also renowned for their famous brand of basil, pesto, and a line of specialty greens.

People enjoy the efforts and products of Riverview Farms by purchasing freshly picked herbs and greens at the markets and stores throughout the province and many restaurants appreciate the delivery of fresh ingredients to their doors to enhance their fare and entice the health-conscious diner.

I'd like to recognize and offer our congratulations to Riverview Herbs and Riverview Farms for their three decades of operation in providing a great local offering to consumers and for contributing to the economic health of our community. We are proud that they call East Hants home.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

WORLD ALZHEIMER'S MO. - CHALLENGE STIGMA

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize September as World Alzheimer's Month. All of us in the House know someone who is living with Alzheimer's. One of the cruelest diseases, it robs people of what makes them who they are; it robs them of their memories. It is the responsibility of each of us to raise awareness and to challenge the stigma surrounding this terrible disease. According to Alzheimer's Disease International, two out of every three people globally believe there is little or no understanding of dementia in their countries.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the House to join me in recognizing World Alzheimer's Month and to take steps to challenge the stigma around the disease in their everyday lives.

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

COM. VOLS.: SHORE CLEAN-UP - THANKS

MR. GORDON WILSON: I rise today to thank the students of the Options and Opportunities Program of Islands Consolidated School, as well as the Freeport area volunteers and staff of the Nature Conservancy of Canada. This group spent last World Oceans Day cleaning up the shoreline of Boar's Head Reserve along Long Island. The reserve is a habitat for migratory and shore birds, as well as part of the ecosystem for nearby whales.

This is truly a group effort, also involving the Bay of Fundy Discovery Centre Association, the Central Grove and Tiverton Heritage Society, the Digby Salvage & Disposal and the Municipality of Digby. The 500 metres of coastline cleaned that day are one-third of the reserve's coastline. The group collected three truckloads of debris, including many old buoys, lengths of rope, and water bottles. It is these water bottles and the rest of the plastic garbage that are particularly hazardous to the wildlife and marine ecosystem.

On June 8th, these volunteers did their part to clean a bit of the coastline of garbage that is consistently washing up on our shores. and I thank them.

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

ROOP, LOGAN: UPCOMING ATHL. - COMMEND

MR. LARRY HARRISON: I seem to make a habit of drawing attention to young athletes from my constituency, but I get great pleasure in watching them develop. Eleven-year old Logan Roop from Brookfield is already showing promise in two sports, baseball and hockey. In his third year playing in the Bible Hill Truro Minor Hockey Ball

Association, the talented and versatile Roop pitches in addition to playing shortstop and third base. His true love is hockey and Roop will be moving up from Double A atom to Triple A Pee Wee with the Bearcats this year.

I wish to offer support and encouragement to this talented young man and all the other athletes in the constituency.

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

MACDONALD, MARIA: ACAD. EXCELLENCE - CONGRATS.

MR. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate recent Guysborough County graduate Maria MacDonald for her outstanding academic and volunteer achievements. She is the recipient of the very prestigious Wessex Scholarship and the Governor General Academic Medal. She received many more scholarships as well: The Divert Nova Scotia Champion of the Environment Scholarship, the RBC Scholarship, and the Nova Scotia Nurses Union Scholarship, just to name a few.

Maria is an accomplished musician, talented athlete, avid volunteer with various school and community groups, including many health-related initiatives, like the Community Health Board. She says that health is not merely the absence of illness, but encompasses ones' physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Maria, not only for deserving these awards, but for being accepted to the St. F.X. nursing program. I know she will do great things and I wish her the very best.

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

SACKVILLE RIVERS ASSOC.: 30th ANNIV. - BEST WISHES

MR. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, this year the Sackville Rivers Association celebrated its 30th anniversary on June 7th. This non-profit, volunteer-run charity is dedicated to preserving the rivers that run through the communities of Sackville and Bedford and Beaver Bank. In the past, the association has been busy with establishing active transportation trails, attracting fish & wildlife back to the community, and helping to keep Sackville's waterways clean of litter and debris.

It was a pleasure to be able to attend their anniversary celebrations, and I would like to recognize the invaluable contributions this organization makes in helping to make Nova Scotia a greener and cleaner place to live. I would also like to wish Walter Regan and all the volunteers of the Sackville Rivers Association all the best and looking forward to 30 more years of success.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

DAUGHTER, MARENA DANIELLE - BIRTHDAY WISHES

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Today I rise to wish a very happy birthday to my youngest child, Marena Danielle. Marena is my brightest star, whose eyes have shone from the very first day she was born.

Last week, Marena started a new chapter in her life by starting her first year of university at Saint Mary's University. I am confident she has made the best and right decision by staying local, as did her brother, her two sisters, and all her cousins - and of course her mother and all her aunts and uncle. Nova Scotia is so fortunate to have universities world renowned and a college that attracts students from across the country and the world.

I am so lucky to have Marena as my daughter. Marena, je t'adore. Bonne fête à vous!

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

MACINNIS, MADISON: RUGBY ATHL. - CONGRATS.

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate 16-year-old Madison MacInnis of Mira Road, who recently helped the Nova Scotia Keltics U-16 team win gold at the 2018 Rugby Championships held at Saints Rugby Park in Truro.

Madison MacInnis has been playing rugby for two years and is a member of the Riverview Rugrats Rugby team, the Caledonia Rugby team, and the Cape Breton University women's club team.

It is a pleasure to ask all MLAs to join me in congratulating Madison and to wish her all the best in her career in rugby.

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

AFFORDABLE FUELS: FIREWORKS SPONSOR - RECOG.

HON. IAIN RANKIN: I would like to recognize Steve Williams, president and CEO of Affordable Fuels and Metro Home Heating, for their support as a Fireworks Sponsor for the fourth year in a row for the BLT Canada Day event.

Affordable Fuels and Metro Home Heating has been a strong supporter of BLT Today, which organizes and hosts a number of events and activities in the community in partnership with local businesses and other non-profits.

Affordable Fuels takes great pride in ensuring residents in the community are satisfied with their heating needs while offering the best possible prices in the market. A locally-owned and operated business, Affordable Fuels has always maintained a high commitment of customer service to their clients.

I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Steve Williams for his contribution to the community and wish him continued success.

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

**CAMERON-KELLY, MARY - CAPT., CF:
ROLE MODEL FOR ASPIRING PILOTS**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: I rise today to congratulate Captain Mary Cameron-Kelly, a North Sydney native who just celebrated 37 years in the Canadian Forces.

A stamp was recently unveiled marking Mary's career as Canada's first female CP-140 Aurora pilot. Mary has become a significant role model for young females. Even though it took her four attempts to get into flight school, she didn't give up. Mary chased her dream and is now living her dream.

It is a true honour to thank Captain Mary Cameron-Kelly for her service to our country and commend her for her determination and her expertise.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage with 30 seconds.

SULLIVAN, HELENA: 95th BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: I would like to wish Helena Sullivan, a long-time member of our community, a very happy 95th birthday today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much for those very thoughtful members' statements. It's always a great pleasure to hear the great things, people, and places that are in our great province of Nova Scotia.

[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 RECOMMENDATIONS - FULFILL

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is for the Premier. We learned that an inmate found unresponsive in his cell at the Burnside correctional facility died yesterday. We don't know the circumstances of that death, but we do want to know that he wasn't in an unsafe environment. It reminds us of the 2014 death of an inmate at the very same facility. The FOIPOP commissioner has determined that the Department of Justice lacks sufficient reason to keep secret documents about that 2014 death.

The Premier promised to make Nova Scotia the most open and transparent province in Canada. Will the Premier commit today to releasing the information that the FOIPOP commissioner says should be public?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. First of all, I want to pass on my condolences to his family. This is a tragedy. This individual was brought into custody. This is not the outcome that anyone wanted.

In terms of when it comes to the FOIPOP officer, there is a protocol to go through. There is a process to go through. Different times, information is released for different reasons. I don't know why this information wasn't released at the time, but I trust those who work in government to determine what is allowed to be released and what else they're doing their job.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, like the Premier, the Department of Justice claims to have one of the most open and transparent approaches in this country when it comes to jails. Yet, unlike other provinces, Nova Scotia does not require public inquiries in prison deaths and the department keeps documents secret, even when the FOIPOP commissioner says they should be public.

I'm sure it is not lost on the Premier that the commissioner's recommendations are not binding, only because this government refuses to grant her independence. Will the Premier immediately direct the department to immediately fulfil its promise to be open and transparent by following the recommendations of the FOIPOP commissioner.

THE PREMIER: First of all, she's the FOIPOP officer, Mr. Speaker. Further to that point, the Auditor General is a member who reports to this House. His recommendations are not binding. We continue to receive them.

I want to remind the honourable member we had 10 recommendations around the most recent issue from the FOIPOP officer, that we have implemented nine and are looking at the 10th one. We continue to take those recommendations and how they best improve public access and public policy.

MS. MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, let's just admit this government has a problem with transparency. They routinely ignore the recommendations of the FOIPOP commissioner. They allow the FOIPOP portal to sit inoperative for five months, denying Nova Scotians access to information they deserve to see.

This Premier is so averse to revealing documents that he openly, actually, admits to taking steps to ensure that certain communications are done in a manner that keeps them out of the hands of the FOIPOP system.

My question to the Premier is: Does he still stand by his statements that he is the most transparent and accountable government, or has he finally come to the realization that just maybe there's only 27 people that believe in him?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want again to remind her most recently we were given 10 recommendations around health. We've accepted nine of those. The 10th one is being looked at.

I also want to remind her that the website she was referring to did not impede anyone who had a FOIPOP information being given out when they were given out. What that website was actually there for was when a FOIPOP is released to the person who actually will be receiving the information, we give a period of time and then we make it available to all Nova Scotians. That's the first time that has happened.

We continue to work with making sure that the information is available and can be available to Nova Scotians is there. It's why we continue to build on open data. I know it's frustrating for the honourable members, but there are certain things, information we receive, that is not allowed to be put out in public. It's that simple.

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

PREM.: TWO-TIER MENTAL HEALTH CARE

MR. GARY BURRILL: If a person in Nova Scotia today needs mental health supports, they can go in one of two directions. If you have benefits from work or a higher income or private insurance, you can get an appointment right away in one of the private psychological services there are around the province. But if you don't have that kind of access to credit or income or benefits or private insurance, then you need to access the public services of the Nova Scotia Health Authority and that means a wait of two, three, four, six, nine, ten, twelve months sometimes in our province.

I want to ask the Premier if he will acknowledge that we have a two-tier mental health care system in Nova Scotia today: one for those with resources and one for those who don't.

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I know you tabled a bill earlier today in this House referring to this very issue. There are many complex challenges with how we provide services, whether it's in the public or private system, when it comes to the issue of mental health.

One of the things he would know, we continue to make sure that the decisions we're making are based on evidence; making sure that we continue to make programs available.

Dr. Stan Kutcher has been an important part of those conversations and Starr Dobson has been part of those, continuing to make sure that we put the resources in that he is referring to, to provide those services today, but also dealing with the evidence-based information that we have that we know that if we continue to put that wrap-around service around our young people in schools, we can identify what the challenges are earlier on and the outcomes are much, much better.

MR. BURRILL: Forty per cent of people don't have the kind of benefits that will access counselling services for them. There was a report a couple of years ago from the Canadian Psychological Association that said that in Nova Scotia 50 per cent of the need for counselling services is, at the moment, going unmet.

Can the Premier tell us if he is satisfied with a system where, in effect, every second person is not getting the counselling services they need because they haven't got the money?

THE PREMIER: Again, we continue to work with our partners on evidence-based solutions to the challenges facing Nova Scotians when it comes to the issue of mental health. I've said to the honourable member, we know there is more work to do. We're going to continue to make improvements to the system. It will be based on evidence.

It is simply not the idea, as the honourable member would suggest, that we just throw money at the challenge. Every health care provider will tell you that's not the solution. The solution is making sure that when we make these investments it's around evidence. That's why we made the investments in the wrap-around service we are providing in schools. There is clear evidence that the earlier we can address the issues facing young Nova Scotians, the better it is for outcomes for them as they continue to grow through adolescence and into adulthood.

MR. BURRILL: What there is evidence of is that all kinds of other jurisdictions in Canada are moving ahead by leaps and bounds with the vision with which they are addressing mental health, and Nova Scotia is being left behind.

In Newfoundland and Labrador or in P.E.I., you can walk in on a same-day basis and receive counselling services any time. In Quebec they've got a superlative suicide

prevention program they made investments in. Ontario is spending more than, almost twice what we are as a percentage of their health care on mental health care.

I want to ask the Premier if he will acknowledge that in the last five years when it comes to mental health, under this government's leadership, we in Nova Scotia have fallen way behind.

THE PREMIER: Again, I want to thank the honourable member for his question. As I said to him earlier and I will say it again in this answer, the decisions that we make around the investments made in health care, particularly around mental health, will be evidence-based. It's why we've taken the recommendations of health care providers to ensure that we put in place programs that have early detection, identifying the challenges, and making sure then at that point we are providing those services so as they move through adolescence into adulthood we have dealt with the challenges they are facing.

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

PREM. - FOIPOP REQUEST (2014): FULL RELEASE - CONFIRM

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is for the Premier, Mr. Speaker. In 2014, the PC caucus office submitted a FOIPOP request to the Department of Community Services asking for information about the government's decision to cancel Phase 3 of the Riverview Adult Residential Facility in Pictou County. Our office received a heavily redacted document and we appealed the government's heavy-handed approach to keep information such a secret.

The FOIPOP Commissioner agreed with us, saying that to automatically keep draft documents a secret is using advice to the minister, exemption too broadly. Despite all of this, the department said it would not abide by the FOIPOP Commissioner's ruling.

Why would a government that promises to be the most open and transparent government in Canada ignore the ruling of the FOIPOP Commissioner and withhold information that should be made public?

THE PREMIER: The FOIPOP officer continues to make recommendations to our government and we take those recommendations seriously. One of the challenges for departments - particularly the Department of Community Services like the Department of Health and Wellness - is given very sensitive information individuals. In that, they make decisions based on ensuring they are protecting the identity of the people who are either in their care or requiring support from us in the province.

We're going to continue to make sure that we continue to put the information that we have that we can release we will release, and the information that is believed to be information that shouldn't be out in the public that we need to protect, we will.

MS. MACFARLANE: The privacy commissioner said that the government's heavy-handed approach in this case was entirely inconsistent with the purpose of FOIPOP and the well-established approach the FOIPOP legislation be broadly interpreted in favour of disclosure.

In June, the government said it would actually release the information to our caucus office in approximately 30 days. As of this morning, Mr. Speaker, our office still had not received any information, but we checked. The government said they were still working on it, more than 60 days after they promised to release the information. Will the Premier please lift the veil of secrecy in this case and release the information about Riverview?

THE PREMIER: The privacy officer, I'm sure, would also tell the honourable member that more than 80 per cent of the requests that come into our government are sent out. When you look across the country, that is a continually impressive number, but we know there is still more work to do.

She would also know - and many members of her caucus who have been in government would know - some of the requests require a lot of detail with a lot of pieces of paper that are part of that. That takes time to gather. So there are some of those that go beyond the extensions.

What she's referring to now is a documentation that would have gone through by people within the department who wouldn't have released the information because of the sensitivity associated with some of that information - that is my understanding. So now, the FOIPOP officer has made a recommendation. We still need to go through to make sure that that information that is sensitive, that is personal and should not be out in the public domain, does not go in the public domain.

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

H&W - MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY: LACK OF UPDATE - EXPLAIN

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Nearly seven years ago under a previous government - I'm sure the minister can figure out which one that was - the five-year Mental Health and Addictions Strategy was developed so that government could make measurable progress on improving access to assessment, treatment, care, and support around the province. That strategy needed to be updated and renewed over a year ago and this government hasn't done so yet.

I ask the minister: Why hasn't the government updated the five-year Mental Health and Addictions Strategy which was produced almost seven years ago?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for raising this important question. In fact, the strategy has helped inform the work that's been done by

government and our partners, as well as the community providers of mental health services and our Health Authorities, for actions and investments. That work continues.

As well, government has had a number of other sources of recommendations to improve mental health services. Work is under way. In fact, in the very near future, we'll have a next phase ready to go out the door, but we do have the information and an action plan around mental health. Again, we haven't stopped to wait for the updated strategic plan. We've been taking action based on recommendations from professionals on the front line all along.

[2:15 p.m.]

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, the most important part of that strategy was to hold government to account no matter who is in office. We know that there are important parts of the original strategy that are still incomplete. To our knowledge, the work on reviewing mental health services to make sure that they are effective with sex, gender, and diversity in mind still has not begun and the province is still not collecting and monitoring data related to alcohol, drug use, and gambling.

Can the minister explain why this work has not been a priority for his department and when will that information and that part of the strategy begin?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, the work around the recommendations and the strategy have been ongoing throughout the lifespan but we haven't stopped there. As a government, we have identified that mental health and addictions is a very important pillar of a health care system. We've been investing heavily recognizing in particular the needs and the value of investing in youth mental health initiatives. We've taken those steps. We haven't stood still. We've invested. We've worked with front-line professionals and experts in the area. We have received recommendations from numerous sources, including a panel on mental health services that reported to the Minister of Health and Wellness. We have seen these as foundations for the work that we have been doing and will continue to do in the space.

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

H&W - INFO. & PRIVACY COMM'N.: RECOMMEND. - IMPLEMENT

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: My question is also to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Some days, it seems like the government never met a privacy recommendation that it didn't ignore.

This week, Information and Privacy Commissioner Catherine Tully expressed extreme disappointment in the response of the minister to recommendations her office made in the wake of a pharmacy data breach. As we now know, a pharmacist reviewed

dozens of private client records that should never have been accessed. Ms. Tully made several significant recommendations to safeguard pharmacy records in the future. The vast majority were ignored.

She suggested a protocol to investigate anonymous tips so that future breaches can be identified sooner. That was ignored. She asked the Department of Health and Wellness three times to meet with her to discuss the report. Again, she was ignored. I'll table that, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the minister is: What excuse could the minister possibly have for refusing to meet with the privacy commissioner to discuss better safeguards for medical data?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I appreciate the member's question about the allegations that the department refused to meet with the privacy review officer and her staff throughout the preparation of the response.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, the privacy review officer submitted a report and recommendations in late July. The process has the department prepare a response to that within 30 days. That work was undertaken. The privacy review office did contact the department and indicate that they would make themselves available should we have questions or require clarification.

If the member opposite would care to read the report and recommendations provided by the privacy review officer, the recommendations are very clear and didn't require further clarification.

MR. ORRELL: It's increasingly clear to me that if this government isn't forced to do something in the best interest of Nova Scotians, it won't bother. Legislation required the minister's department to respond to Ms. Tully's recommendation within 30 days, which they did. But there's no legislation that requires the department to enact transparency safeguards like making user activity data available to the privacy commissioner, so it should come as no surprise that the department waves it off with the phrase: it's under consideration.

Mr. Speaker, this government has repeatedly demonstrated that it cannot be trusted with sensitive personal data, yet it refuses to take steps to fix the situation. My question to the minister is, when will this government end its policy of secrecy, stop treating privacy like a joke, and give the office of the privacy commission the teeth it needs to protect all Nova Scotians?

MR. DELOREY: I assure the member opposite, all members of this Legislature, and indeed all Nova Scotians that we do take the concerns and the responsibilities of maintaining personal health information very seriously, Mr. Speaker.

That's why we have taken steps and, in fact, have already implemented many of the recommendations from July's report. We didn't wait until I completed my response to that report within the 30 days provided. We actually started taking action right away. We have already implemented several of the recommendations, and others continue to be in progress.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

MUN. AFFS.: OXFORD, TOWN OF: LIONS PARK SINKHOLE - ASSIST.

MR. TORY RUSHTON: My question today is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. On September 7, 2018, the Town of Oxford wrote the minister asking for assistance regarding the sinkhole that has developed at the Oxford and Area Lions Parkland. As of this morning, the mayor had still not received official word from the minister.

The costs have been adding up and are only going to increase as time passes and the source of the problem is determined. Addressing this problem without assistance from the province has been draining on the town's reserves, and I'll table their document. I also sent a letter to the minister on September 10th requesting assistance. I'll table that document.

My question is: Is the minister willing to work with the Town of Oxford and the Oxford Lions Community Centre to seek provincial and federal funding to help alleviate this issue?

HON. CHUCK PORTER: I can confirm that I did receive some correspondence from the Town of Oxford. We have been in touch with the CAO for the town. We have asked for some further information around costs associated with the challenges they are having managing this issue. We have committed to them that we will certainly look at how we can support them going forward with this particular next phase of their assessment.

MR. RUSHTON: Thank you to the minister for that commitment. As we know, the cost of the sinkhole itself will continue to cause problems for this small town until a resolution can be found. The town will not be able to continue with the ongoing expenditures without the assistance of provincial or federal government assistance.

The Hantsport abattoir is a prime example of how a situation can deteriorate when the province tries to figure out a solution to fix it. Will the minister commit today, to the Town of Oxford and the Oxford Lions Community Centre, to ensure they fully support it until this issue is resolved?

MR. PORTER: I appreciate the question. As I stated in my first answer, we've certainly reached out to the Town of Oxford. We'll continue to work with them. We have

asked them for a quote on what the next phase may cost. We're certainly willing to work with them and support them as we are able, going forward until the issue is resolved.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

EECD - OXFORD REG. EDUC. CTR.: CLOSURE - ASSESS. STATUS

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Over the last two weeks the community of Oxford has been dealing with the sudden, indefinite closure of the Oxford Regional Education Centre. My colleague, the member for Cumberland South facilitated a town hall on September 4th so parents could express their many concerns. We know, because of mortar issues at the eight-year-old school, that students are being sent over 25 kilometres away to Pugwash. Some parents in Oxford are so frustrated with the education centre's sluggish response to this matter that they are refusing to send their children that far to classes. I'll table that.

To his credit, the minister has acknowledged the obvious, that a school this new shouldn't be shut down for structural issues. My question is: When will engineers have completed their assessment of the structural flaws at the Oxford Regional Education Centre and when will parents get the detailed information on the status of their school?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Obviously, the situation is an unfortunate one. I recognize the inconvenience and frustration that parents and students are experiencing. We have a mandate, though, to ensure that they are safe when they are entering into one of our buildings. We have obviously asked the engineers who are looking at the situation for us to expedite this process as quickly as possible, without reducing the quality of their work, in assessing these issues. As soon as we have more information, we'll be communicating that to the public.

I know that the members opposite hosted one town hall; the regional education centre also hosted three town halls and have been doing their very best to keep parents and community members up to speed on this file as it progresses.

MR. HALMAN: It's one thing for parents, students, and staff in this school to know in advance that their school will be out of commission for a couple of weeks, but it's the sudden nature of this whole situation that really concerns everyone involved. The community only found out about this dangerous structural issue days before school was to start, forcing everyone to make alternative arrangements.

The minister indicates his department isn't aware of similar issues at other schools built within the last 10 years. My question is: Has the minister's department confirmed with TIR what the structural issues are and whether other schools built at around the same time as Oxford Regional have similar structural issues?

MR. CHURCHILL: TIR is on site. We did send the deputy down. They've conducted evaluations. We're also looking for a third-party independent to provide us with some further assessments, with the goal of getting our kids back to school, after we identify the extent of these issues, as quickly as possible.

I know this is an inconvenience, I know the lack of a timeline is problematic for people, but the fact is that we communicated to the public as soon as we were made aware of these issues and we'll keep the public and parents updated as information comes in, in real time.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

JUSTICE: PROV. CORR. FACILITIES - CONDITIONS IMPROVE

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. The prisoners at the Burnside jail have just ended their 20-day strike. In a statement today they say: "It is with heavy hearts we write that shortly after the end of our protest, a fellow prisoner incarcerated here lost his life. The conditions and environment here speak for themselves. Since the protests started we have been locked down with even less time spent outside, in contact with our families, or getting any recreation. We know how these conditions hurt the mental health of people imprisoned here."

Mr. Speaker, will the minister admit that conditions in our provincial correctional facilities are dangerously harming the mental health of the Nova Scotians imprisoned there?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from my colleague. The circumstances most recently in the passing of an inmate are tragic, and our hearts and prayers go out to the family members who are grieving.

With regard to the facility, there's a significant amount of change taking place. That change is very progressive. It's implementing new strategies and expanding programs. It's providing services to inmates.

Is there more work to do? Absolutely. We're committed to doing that work.

MS. CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, the prisoners at the Burnside jail - the majority of whom, I will remind you, are still awaiting trial - have been calling for access to mental health treatment. They describe having medications summarily cut off, delays in being able to access necessary medications, not having access to appropriate medical professionals, and not receiving compassionate care.

As the striking prisoners so eloquently stated, "Medical treatment is a right: being deprived of health care is not part of our sentences."

Will the minister commit today to immediate action to improve access to mental health care for prisoners?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, my colleague would know that we had an opportunity to tour the facility. She's very aware of the forensic side of the facility and the mental health programs that are available there, both on the forensic side and also on the custodial side. We recognize that these are important programs. There are health care services available within the facility on a frequent basis.

My colleague speaks about the delay in some of the appointments. That does happen. That's based on the availability of corrections officers to ensure the safety of those who are providing health care services within that environment. That is our priority: the public health and safety of all who find themselves within that particular facility.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

TIR: POTHOLE REPAIRS (KINGS N.) - DELAY EXPLAIN

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Last Spring, I met with representatives of his department to go over the plan for filling potholes this year. They committed to spending a week in Kings North, followed by a week in Kings South, with the plan of having the work mostly done in May and June.

However, very little pothole filling was done in May and June. By mid-July, I was receiving so many complaints from my constituents that I sent off an email to the deputy minister and a letter to the minister.

My question for the minister is: Will the minister please update this House and the residents of Kings North about why it took so long for pothole filling to get under way this year?

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member opposite, and I will confirm that he has been talking to our department and to me about the issues in his constituency.

The easiest answer is that we have 23,000 kilometres of roads in the province and we have a lot of potholes that we're filling constantly. The thing about potholes is that they reoccur. They happen; they go away; we fill them; they come back.

We are looking at technology on a wider scale that might help us with that problem.

MR. LOHR: I will confirm that that is true: there are a lot of potholes.

A week after my email, the deputy minister toured my area, and then later a tender came out for Kings County for RIM. In that tender, Kings North has gotten some attention. However, it is now September, and they are still filling potholes and likely will not finish filling potholes in Kings North this year. As in most other years, they never actually get to them all, and I believe it is a question of lack of resources.

My question for the minister is: Can the minister assure the people of Kings North that potholes will be filled earlier next year by having a dedicated crew for Kings North and a separate dedicated crew for Kings South?

MR. HINES: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to remind the House that in the current budget we're operating on, we saw significant increases in the capital budget and in the operating budget for the first time in many, many years.

In terms of the ongoing battle we have with our road system, which is one of the oldest road systems in Nova Scotia because of our rich history of settlement, it's a constant battle for us to undertake to get the problems done.

The issues are not only in Kings North. They're in every part of the province. We'll continue to work dedicatedly towards fixing them.

[2:30 p.m.]

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

H&W – PICTOU CO.: DR. RECRUITMENT - UPDATE

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. This past July, doctors Chris Elliott and Tom Park, who operate the Aberdeen Walk-In Clinic, announced they would be temporarily closing their clinic on August 5th. The closure was the result of a lack of physicians to cover the clinic's operating hours. Unwilling to further jeopardize the primary patient care of Pictou County residents, the doctors have decided, as of today, to reopen the clinic, although their concerns about doctor recruitment and compensation remain.

Can the minister please provide an update on the doctor recruitment efforts for Pictou County?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to advise the member that I appreciate the work of the physicians operating the Aberdeen Walk-In Clinic. In fact, I met with them earlier this summer when they expressed their concerns of the situation and we discussed what their concerns were. Staff within the Health Authority and the department continue to work with them.

As far as the compensation and recruitment efforts not just for Pictou County but for all of Nova Scotia, Mr. Speaker, we continue to be listening to physicians about what works. We've made significant investments in March, based on feedback and input from Doctors Nova Scotia, which saw an increase in compensation for comprehensive family care, as well as incentives to attract more patients to practices.

We've invested in residency positions, Mr. Speaker, so there's a lot more going on. I can continue as we move into the second part of the question.

MS. MACFARLANE: I want to thank the minister. He did meet and I appreciate that. Doctors Elliott and Park understand the needs of their patients and don't want to worsen the state of health care accessibility in Pictou County. Our health care system, as we all know, is in a crisis and it is a sad statement, Mr. Speaker, that the doctors are doing more to try and solve the problem than this government.

Without a family doctor, more and more Nova Scotians rely on walk-in clinics for their care, but the province has chosen to leave these clinics out of their enhanced fee regime.

I'd like to ask the minister: After that meeting I realized that you indicated to them that you said the door was not closed, so could you please update me with what communication you've had with them recently?

MR. SPEAKER: I'd like to remind the honourable member to keep her questions directed through the Chair.

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. The member is correct, at the conclusion of the meeting I indicated the door is not closed. What I did indicate was explaining why the changes in compensation were targeted at comprehensive family care practices, because that's what Doctors Nova Scotia brought to our attention and recommended, that it is that type of environment that will serve the patients of Nova Scotia, the residents of Nova Scotia. It will be the recruitment and retention mechanism that was not to extend that increase in compensation to the walk-in clinic services, which are more transactional in nature, rather than having people attached to a clinic.

The work that has been ongoing with the physicians in this case was to look to see can the work being provided, the services being provided at that walk-in clinic be reconstituted in such a way that they fulfill the requirements to be comprehensive family care and, if that can be achieved, they would be eligible for the compensation fee.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

H&W – N.S. HEALTH AUTH.: ANTI-PHYSICIAN CULTURE - CHANGE

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, my local regional hospital has been under great strain due to the loss of several specialists and family doctors. The shortage has been across many specialties, namely anaesthesia, internal medicine, psychiatry, obstetrics, and emergency care. The reasons the doctors are giving for leaving vary, from licensing rules and regulations to frustration due to poor management within the Health Authority.

There is an anti-physician culture in the Nova Scotia Health Authority. The people of Cumberland North and throughout the province need access to doctors now; they can't wait for years for residents to be trained.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: What measures is he taking to change this anti-physician culture that is leading to physicians leaving Amherst, Pugwash, and across the entire province?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I'm pleased to highlight that list of challenging specialist positions that the member highlighted. In fact, just earlier this morning, I joined representatives of Dalhousie Medical School to announce the 15 specialist residency positions that will be commencing this July, that those positions fill those very areas that the member has highlighted.

We know where the challenges are and we are taking steps to address them. I'd like to assure the member that when residents are completing their training they are actually providing care to their patients. You are not waiting for care when residents come into the province to perform their training; you're getting the care when they hit the training.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, in August over 900 people of Amherst and Pugwash met and rallied to have their voices heard about the poor health care conditions.

Many local doctors spoke about the challenges they are facing and one shared that she had just finished 21 days on call herself, 24/7, but the working nurses were not heard. Why? Because they were muzzled. They were told that they were not allowed to attend the rally and they weren't allowed to speak.

Residents of Cumberland North deserve to hear from all health care professionals. We live in Canada - a democracy.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: Why have you taken away the democratic rights of nurses to speak publicly? Nurses should not be muzzled.

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, to clarify the record, in no way did I muzzle nurses in Cumberland or anywhere else in the province. In fact, the nurses in Cumberland - earlier this year I met with them to hear their concerns, and following that meeting there have been changes made to the medical unit in that facility based upon the concerns that they brought forward. The Health Authority took those concerns forward and they adjusted the staffing, as the nurses in that facility requested.

We listen to our front-line health care workers and we make changes where and when we can.

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

STATUS OF WOM.: SEX. VIOLENCE STRAT. – THERAPEUTIC COUNSELLING

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act.

In the past few days we've heard some awful examples of the service gaps that exist across the province for people who have experienced sexual violence, including the absolutely unacceptable case of the woman in Truro who was allegedly turned away from the hospital with only a pamphlet.

These gaps will only widen as programs previously supported by the Sexual Violence Strategy come to an end. An appropriate and ongoing investment in therapeutic counselling is critical to supporting the growing number of survivors coming forward.

My question for the minister: Of the \$1 million budgeted to continue the work of the Sexual Violence Strategy this year, how much will go towards therapeutic counselling for survivors?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question, and I would like to say that we have certain expectations when we go and we ask for help and we go to a hospital or a health facility. Unfortunately, sometimes those aren't met, and I was dismayed to hear that that had happened.

I do want to let the honourable member know that the continuing money that is available for the Sexual Violence Strategy is in the area of prevention and we have been very clear about that.

We were also very clear when the money was being rolled out during the Sexual Violence Strategy that any monies were not to be for ongoing programs beyond that, including – there were some indications, I believe, along the way that some counselling

was being done, but we were very clear at the time when the money rolled out that this was not to be for multi-year funding for that purpose.

MS. ZANN: Thank you for that response. As a survivor myself, I know how important it is to have sexual assault services available when they are needed in communities right across the province.

There is a growing demand for trauma-specific therapeutic counselling programs to help survivors, and earlier this year the Sexual Assault Services Network of Nova Scotia identified the funding of 13 new therapeutic counselling programs as a first priority.

Is the minister willing to provide ongoing funding for the 13 new therapeutic counselling programs to meet the present and growing need for these services, and would she commit today to working with me and the Minister of Health and Wellness to make sure that Truro is added to the list of communities set to next receive a sexual assault nurse examiner?

MS. REGAN: I am always more than happy to work with my colleagues across the floor to improve services to women in this province, and I am always very happy to work with the Minister of Health and Wellness on any issue.

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

H&W: SEPT. 23rd RALLY - MIN. ATTENDANCE

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: My question is also to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Last session, I extended a few invitations to the minister to join me in a health care rally in North Sydney. The minister did not see fit to accept and to join us. He did come to town some time later to close the Northside General Hospital and the New Waterford Consolidated Hospital - or should I say it more accurately, he watched silently as the Premier announced the closure of these hospitals.

On September 23rd, there will be another rally in North Sydney and I'd like to invite the minister to attend. They're not asking politicians to speak, so this should be right up his alley. So my question to the minister: Will you join me at this rally on September 23rd in North Sydney?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, what took place in June is that we went to Cape Breton, we highlighted the investments we're going to be making. (Interruption)

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

MR. DELOREY: We highlighted the investments we're going to be making to move health care services in the Cape Breton region forward. This is seeing investments in both New Waterford, North Sydney, as well as expansion of the emergency room cancer centre at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital and other investments in Glace Bay as well. We're investing in the future of health care for Cape Bretoners and all Nova Scotians. We'll continue that work.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, we didn't come to do those announcements. The Premier made that announcement. We sat silently while the Premier made that announcement. The purpose of the rally is for the community to express their concerns about the state of health care today and their concerns about the future of two fewer hospitals in our area. The minister is working on a plan for the delivery of health care in the area and the residents are anxious to know what that plan is. I know I've said the politicians aren't invited to speak, but if the minister wanted to share his plan, I'm sure we could make that exception.

So my question to the minister: Will the minister come to North Sydney, share his plan for health care at the Cape Breton hospitals, yes or no and I don't need a long answer, just yes or no so the people will know if he's coming or not?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I've been very clear. We've been very clear as to the work that's ongoing in the Cape Breton region, in particular Northside and New Waterford, North Sydney and New Waterford. That includes investments in new primary care facilities and expansion, a doubling of nursing home beds, long-term care has space there, expansion in the Cape Breton Regional Hospital, as well as the Glace Bay Hospital. We've been very clear on that. There is more work to be done to work out specific details. That's the functional plan and that work is under way right now.

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

EECD – STOCK TRANSPORT.: RURAL ROUTES - CONSIDERATION

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. The minister knows that there have been rough spots at the beginning of this year for sure and a lot of calls are coming into my office. One parent phoned saying that her child was expected to walk half an hour just to get to a bus stop. Other examples came in of rural students, many who are five- and six-year-olds, needing to walk the shoulders of busy streets, higher speed limits, no traffic lights, no crossing guards, and, most importantly, no sidewalks.

I promised to bring these concerns to the minister and I'm doing that now. As the Stock Transportation contract is being evaluated, can the minister offer assurance that busing the rural routes will receive the extra considerations required to ensure safety and timely delivery of our children?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I appreciate that. Too many families have experienced frustrations and uncertainties with busing, particularly in the Halifax area. We've instructed them to put additional resources on the ground to sort those immediate issues out so our kids are getting to and from school. I am happy to report that we are at about 98 per cent now of our students in HRM who are getting to and from school on time, but we know we need to do better and that's why we're going to review busing policies, best practices within this province and other provincial jurisdictions to make sure that we are doing our very best from a policy and regulatory framework perspective.

MR. LARRY HARRISON: The other concern I have is that the parents are calling Stock Transportation to find out what is going on to try and get some explanations or answers and they have not been receiving the responses from Stock Transportation. So my question is: Will the minister create a reliable avenue where these concerns can be lodged, recorded, reviewed, and addressed in an appropriate manner?

[2:45 p.m.]

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, we did get concerns coming into the department that parents were unable to speak with people when they were calling Stock Transportation phone lines. We did instruct the region, however, to provide a telephone number and communication information directly into the region's office to all parents in HRM, so that they would talk to a person directly and those folks would help them deal with the issues they were dealing with in terms of knowing where the buses were and making sure their kids were getting on their on time.

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

**EECD - COLE HBR.-E. PASSAGE SCHOOLS:
SOC REVIEW - UPDATE**

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: My question is to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. Fifteen months ago, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development halted the school review process for Cole Harbour High, Auburn Drive High, and all its feeder schools. In spite of my non-stop year-long efforts to raise this issue in the Legislature and the media and the endless emails I sent to the minister, the minister refused to speak to the fate of these schools.

Last Friday, the minister sent out a letter to the parents and teachers advising them all that he was taking no action on the schools in the short term. This neither surprised nor reassured parents, students, nor myself, and they still have no idea what's going to happen a year from now.

Can the minister tell me what he intends to do with the SOC recommendations as well as the recommendations in the report that the school board never had a chance to release?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: In fact, we have had several meetings with the SACs from both those school communities that have involved members from Dartmouth and Cole Harbour, and Preston. Those meetings went well.

We communicated to each and every parent in the school community that we would be following through on the school review committee's recommendation to keep both schools open. There will be an announcement in the very near future in terms of what the future services provided at those schools will look like. I think it will be really positive information for the students and for the broader community in those areas.

MS. ADAMS: With all due respect, Mr. Speaker, the SOC report recommended a whole lot more than just keeping a couple of high schools open, so they're not reassured.

It is outrageous to me that the minister and his government can bring in legislation dissolving an entire level of government but can't get kids to school on time. It's outrageous that they can take principals out of unions and restructure the entire school administration, but they can't tell my constituents in my areas or neighbouring constituencies what's going to happen in their schools next year.

I'm going to ask the minister once again a question I asked him a year that he said yes to, but then didn't follow up on. Will the minister meet with me and the principals of Cole Harbour High, Auburn Drive High, and the new Island View High School to begin the discussions on the future of the education services in Cole Harbour, Eastern Passage, and beyond?

MR. CHURCHILL: We have made transformative changes in the education system that the member has referenced. We did that because we know we have been failing our students. We have not allowed them to achieve their greatest potential in our school system, and we haven't provided our teachers the supports that they need to do their job to the fullest of their potential.

Every single time we have brought in these changes that we know are needed to improve student achievement and well-being, the Opposition Party has fought for the status quo. They have fought against those changes. I'm proud to actually be part of a government that is working with communities to make these changes that are long overdue.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

H&W - MENTAL HEALTH CARE: ASD SUPPORTS - EXPLAIN

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Autism is not a mental-health disorder or issue in and of itself. However, just like everyone else, people on the autism spectrum suffer from mood disorders and experience psychological distress, and they deserve access to supportive services and treatment.

Our caucus was recently informed by an advocacy group that people with an autism diagnosis are being screened out of eligibility for community-based mental health counselling services. These individuals are being referred to mental health services by their family physicians, showing up at their choice appointments months later, and upon disclosing their ASD status, being informed that they are not eligible for counselling services because of it.

Can the minister offer any explanation as to why people with ASD are being discriminated against when it comes to accessing mental health care?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for bringing this concern to the floor of the Legislature. As she noted, that was information that was brought to her attention by an advocacy group, I'm not aware of that information. If she would like to forward it on to me, I'll certainly look into it.

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

OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS**MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Resolution No. 18.

Res. No. 18, re Health Care Crisis - Acknowledge - notice given Sep. 7/18 - (Hon. C. d'Entremont)

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

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, if I could remind the House that this Resolution No. 18 is:

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

Whereas there can be no doubt there’s a health care crisis in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas tens of thousands of Nova Scotians don’t have a family doctor, emergency rooms are too often closed, wait lists are too long and too many people have lost hope; and

Whereas despite the seriousness of this situation and the negative impact it has on Nova Scotians, the Liberal Government didn’t even mention health care until Page 7 of a 12-page Speech from the Throne;

Therefore be it resolved that all members urge the Liberal Government to acknowledge that there is a health care crisis and make the health care the number one priority and take immediate action to fix the system.”

Mr. Speaker, when I was deciding what to say on this resolution today I figured that the best way to start is we know there’s a health care crisis. Everybody on this side of the House knows there’s a health care crisis. Nova Scotians who come to my office every day and every other office in here and I’m sure the Liberals’ office knows there’s a crisis in health care. When you have ambulances backed up in emergency rooms, not doing their job out in public where they do best, when you have people going without a doctor.

As a matter of fact, Madam Speaker, just as early as today I got a call from a resident whose grandmother is a diabetic. Her family doctor just had to resign because of a health issue. This lady is running out of her insulin. She is not well enough to sit in an emergency room to get her insulin, and private clinics or walk-in clinics are usually done and full before they have a chance to even get on the list.

To me, that is a crisis. When you have our citizens going without the necessities of health care, the necessity of a family doctor when they need it, it is a crisis.

What I did, Madam Speaker, is look up in the dictionary what a crisis meant and I got a couple of different definitions. One of them is: A time of intense difficult, trouble or danger. I would say that fits a crisis, especially in health care, a time when difficult, important decisions must be made. Madam Speaker, that is not happening right now - we need those decisions made.

A turning point of disease where important changes take place, indicating either recovery or death - I have heard it said many times that our health care system is on a downward spiral and death is imminent.

The Collins English Dictionary says, a crisis is a situation in which something or someone is affected by one or more very serious problems. Madam Speaker, I gave a

situation a minute ago that I think is a very serious problem. You have an older lady, a grandmother, a mother, who cannot get her insulin because she does not have a family doctor and cannot go to the emergency room because the waits are too long and she can't be there. If that's not a crisis, what is?

The Cambridge English Dictionary says a time of great disagreement, confusion or suffering, an extremely difficult or dangerous point in a certain situation. Madam Speaker, if that is not a crisis, and we are not facing that crisis in our health care system, I don't know what is.

A few facts, Madam Speaker. Between July 29th and September 8th of this year - basically the month of August - hospital and collaborative health clinics across this province were closed over 3,100 hours. This is monitored on the NSHA site - 3100 hours works out to be 129 days of actual closures of emergency rooms or collaborative practices.

I don't know what that means to people who say there is no crisis but when you go to an emergency room and they are not there, or you have to go to the newspaper to find out what emergency room to go to, or as in the case in Cape Breton, soon enough we're not going to have an emergency room on the Northside and/or New Waterford.

I've had it said to me, Madam Speaker, from somebody who works at one of the biggest employers in the Northside area, Marine Atlantic, that even just recently we saw that there was a fire in the North Atlantic on a fishing boat and one of our Marine Atlantic vessels picked up the three gentlemen who were sitting in the ocean, no lifeboat, in survival suits. They were taken to Port aux Basques. If we were to have some kind of disaster, something happens on that ship and we have numbers and numbers of people who are injured on their way to North Sydney, we'll never get them to the regional hospital. We won't have the resources to get them all there, whereas, transporting them to the Northside General would be easy. I'm sure the people that work there would answer the call.

But without that facility, Madam Speaker, that's not going to happen. As we know, back in June, the government came into town to tell us about an important infrastructure announcement. That announcement came out on Sunday evening. At six o'clock, that email was sent to my office. Nobody is in their office at six o'clock in the evening on a Sunday night nor should they be. That's a day for family, most people are home. Doctors and everyone else involved in the health care system didn't receive this information until eight o'clock the next morning. The only reason I got it was someone called me to tell me they were going to announce closures. I was on my way to the city for a meeting on Monday morning. I had to turn around and go back.

In talking to a few people, they thought it was an announcement about the hospice that the Rotary clubs and stuff have been fighting for over the last number of years for Cape Breton. To their shock, it was the closures being announced.

They were going to change the landscape of health care in Cape Breton by taking two fewer hospitals. And, yes, they had one doctor talk about how great it was that he was going to get the upgrades to his cardiac unit and be able to bring doctors in. We agree with that. But the emergency room doctors were on a talk show the next day and said they weren't consulted - after the government and the health care authority had said they were. So make an announcement with no consultation, basically.

We asked what the plan was, timelines, money, where, when, how and why. We were told that would be in the details to be studied over the next nine to 12 months and when that happened, they would make a plan on what's going to happen. Is the hospital going to close before the building of the so-called new facilities, the long-term care facility, the collaborative practice, the laundry facility? Are they going to close that beforehand? Is it going to contain everything that it says it's going to contain?

We're going to lose 40 acute-care beds on the Northside and, I believe another - and I could be wrong - 20-some acute-care beds in New Waterford. (Interruption) 27, I'm told, thank you. So I asked where are these acute-care beds going to go? They said either the Regional or the Glace Bay General. But there are no beds in the Regional right now.

There are over 50 people waiting at the Regional Hospital for long-term care. So the announcement was we're going to build a long-term care facility. Fifty beds in New Waterford and 50 in the Northside.

But what they failed to realize is there are 50 people, 48 people, waiting in the Northside General for long-term care beds. That's those 50 people. You can't take the 50 from the Regional Hospital and put them in the 50 that are already occupied on the Northside that's not even built yet. They're going to build another 50 in New Waterford where already there are 30-some people waiting for long-term care beds already.

So where are the acute-care patients going to go? What happens to an elderly couple whose wife or husband gets sick and they are admitted as a patient in the hospital? Now the people have to drive - seniors, people with no income to allow that to happen - to either Sydney in the best-case scenario or Glace Bay which is over 45 minutes away to visit their loved ones in the hospital or to receive primary care that we can't get because the emergency rooms are closed in Glace Bay and New Waterford.

To make it even better than that, this summer they couldn't even keep Glace Bay Hospital open. There was one emergency room open, basically, for all of Cape Breton Island this summer.

I've had the opportunity to visit that emergency room and there were people waiting there for 14, 16, 18 hours at a time to see a doctor to have their prescriptions filled or for some kind of acute emergency.

I was speaking to one emergency room doctor who, when she came in at eight o'clock on Monday morning, found her first patient had registered at four o'clock Sunday afternoon and waited there all night to see a doctor. If that doesn't constitute a crisis, Madam Speaker, nothing will.

[3:00 p.m.]

So not only do we have emergency room backups that way, our ambulance system that goes to the Cape Breton Regional is lined up to get in there. At one point during the summer, we had no ambulances available on Cape Breton Island, we had to bring in one from Antigonish, which leaves the Antigonish area short of an ambulance. So what would have happened if something acute had happened during that time the ambulance is being transported from Antigonish to some area of industrial Cape Breton? Or if something would have had happened on Kellys Mountain, where frequent accidents happen, and we needed an ambulance to come there? Where would they come from?

The government will say - and the Health Authority will say - that the Northside General is only half an hour away from the Cape Breton Regional Hospital, which is true. But people who live in Point Aconi, Alder Point, New Harris, New Campbellton that need access to those services, they're half an hour away from the Northside General. That makes it over an hour's transport for someone who's in an acute care situation, or distress, to a health care facility.

This is not just happening in Cape Breton. I fear in places like Shelburne. My fear is places like Pugwash that have emergency room closures as often as we do. The Roseway Hospital is closed as much as the Northside General was. Cape Breton-Richmond, what's going to happen? Is it easier just to close the facility down because we can't find the resources to staff them? Where's the plan to staff these institutions?

Madam Speaker, we had three emergency rooms closed in Cape Breton this summer and we're bringing in travel nurses to work the emergency department at Cape Breton Regional, \$50 an hour plus expenses to work there. Where are the emergency room nurses that were in the Northside General, Glace Bay, or New Waterford? Why aren't they staffing those facilities? And why aren't we taking that money and training some of our own nurses? Some of the nurses from CBU graduation this year weren't offered positions in the Cape Breton Regional Hospital system. They've left and gone to other parts of the province or country. Why aren't we training those individuals to work in these facilities and using that money to keep our own people home and working where they know the situations?

Just recently, we had the retirement of one of our senior doctors in the Northside who practised there for many, many, many years. She was practicing there before I got to work there and I've never known her not to be practising. She retired and one of the local doctors decided, out of the goodness of his heart, he was going to take most of her patients

which the people were very relieved at, but not two weeks after that he took ill and had to give up his practice. So the last number of days all I've gotten is people in my office - young men, women, children - crying because what are they going to do? They have no doctor and they have no hope of a doctor coming in the near future, or if they were told of a doctor coming in the near future. They're in a crisis situation. They don't have the professionals to care for them especially when they need it.

We were promised back a couple of months ago, maybe a year ago now, when we were doing this same type of debate when we had lost over 30 doctors in Cape Breton at any given time. Specialists, health care professionals, regular family doctors - all kinds - that they would be given exit interviews to find out why they were leaving. To my knowledge, Madam Speaker, that hasn't happened.

People again, in the Northside and industrial Cape Breton, are planning another rally on the 23rd of September. They're going to plan on doing it indoors; they've had a couple outdoors where they've been rained on. They've been cold and wet, but they still showed up because there's concern. The indoor rally is going to happen on the 23rd of September so people can voice their concerns. The note I got was, we'd like you to attend, but we're not going to ask any politicians to speak.

As we heard in Question Period today, I invited the minister to come down and listen. Listen to what the people have to say. If the consultation had been done, that listening would have been done already. So, come, please, Mr. Minister. Give us your plan for health care on Cape Breton Island. Give us the assurances that the people on the Northside and New Waterford and Glace Bay and Sydney - because these closures are not just going to affect people on the Northside - when they have to go sit in a regional hospital's emergency room or Glace Bay's emergency room, they're going to be concerned because now they're waiting longer as well.

I ask the minister to come down and give us his plan because we're facing a crisis, Madam Speaker, and that crisis is health care. If anybody in this room doesn't believe there is a crisis, I think they want to go and look up the definition of it. As I said earlier, because there is a crisis, because of that, people are suffering, people are going without.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Madam Speaker, one thing I believe we can all conclude when this debate does draw to a conclusion is that there is a consensus amongst the members of this Legislature, and across the province, that health care is important to all of us. We all want our families and our loved ones to be able to access the care they need when they need it.

I'm proud of the dedicated professional health care providers delivering the quality care on the front lines every day and night across this province. Day in and day out they

are caring for our loved ones and, indeed, in some cases, ourselves. Our government is grateful for those services.

We know it isn't easy. Health care needs are changing the way we deliver and health care has to change as well. Some of our doctors, nurses and other health care professionals want to work in a more collaborative system, working together as teams, and we need to support those efforts.

It's about finding the right balance. We have, as a government, with our partners, shown flexibility, giving doctors the choice of where they want to work within the province. We've worked with Doctors Nova Scotia to create a suite of incentives for family doctors. We've invested \$39.6 million to increase pay and offer incentives to help attract more Nova Scotians to a doctor or nurse practitioner to ensure they have access to the primary care they need.

Here's how the breakdown of that investment works: \$13.9 million is going towards increasing the pay for family physicians; \$6.4 million is going toward patient attachment, a one-time incentive of \$150 for each patient a family doctor takes on; \$4.2 million for a technology incentive to encourage family doctors to use technology to communicate with their patients; \$6.6 million in an enrolment incentive to encourage family doctors to develop an up-to-date patient list on a voluntary basis; and \$8.5 million for the electronic medical record incentive trust and electronic medical record support.

These investments were influenced through collaboration with Doctors Nova Scotia and are about helping Nova Scotians find a family doctor, helping with recruitment as well as retention of those who are currently servicing our communities.

It is also about acknowledging the hard work that our doctors do. Since 2017 we have funded nearly 80 positions to help create and strengthen collaborative family practice teams across the province and improve access to care for our citizens. Those physicians include 32 nurse practitioners, 39 family practice nurses, and six other health professionals, including social workers and licensed practical nurses.

In February, we launched a new physician immigration stream to help attract more international doctors and specialists to Nova Scotia. This process makes the immigration stream easier and faster for those who have already received a job offer. We've seen 10 doctors successfully come through this stream so far and immigration staff continue to work with the Nova Scotia Health Authority to attend job fairs and other recruitment fairs in the U.K. and beyond.

We are the only province in the country that is adding new spaces to our residency program, Madam Speaker. We have added 10 new family medicine residency spaces at Dalhousie University, and I was very pleased this morning to announce the details about the 15 new specialty spaces we are adding to the Dalhousie specialist program. As health

care professionals on the front line know - we know as well - that offering more residencies is an effective tool to retain and recruit physicians. This will mean more doctors training and working in Nova Scotia.

Today the president of Doctors Nova Scotia, Dr. Tim Holland, has supported this initiative, as he did earlier this year when we announced the 10 family practice residency positions in Truro for the province, six of which are dedicated to the Northern Zone when they start up in July. Dr. Holland, Doctors Nova Scotia, and physicians across this province recognize that residents are valuable members of our health care team. They provide valuable health care services while they receive their training in the residency program, Madam Speaker, and they are more likely to stay and practise in the province where they received their residency training.

We are working with our doctors, our specialists, health care professionals, and our medical school to improve our health care system, including the access to primary care. We've created a new Practice Ready Assessment program that assesses internationally trained family doctors to be eligible to work here in Nova Scotia. The first group of candidates is expected to begin assessments early in 2019.

We're offering a tuition relief program which forgives up to \$120,000 of a doctor's tuition if they're willing to practise in an underserved community for five years; we're funding an additional 25 new seats in Dalhousie University's Nurse Practitioner Program over the next two years; and we've also introduced the new Nurse Practitioner Education Incentive earlier this year and this incentive will cover the salaries of up to 10 registered nurses while they return to Dalhousie University to complete the two-year Master of Nursing nurse practitioner program. In return, they, too, commit to working in a designated community for five years. This program and the training provided by Dalhousie University also provides opportunities for some of the training to take place in other communities like Cape Breton.

We're offering an emergency shift premium in an effort to help cover hard-to-fill ER shifts and we are seeing some success. We've also implemented a locum incentive program which is for replacement physicians to help with both short- and long-term vacancies. This change makes it more financially attractive for physicians to come and fill those services.

Our new Community-Based Paramedic Program will also work to help take the pressures off of our emergency departments, and we're building more dialysis units across the province to improve access to patients and reduce the travel requirements. Projects are under way in Kentville, Digby, Bridgewater, Glace Bay, Halifax, and Dartmouth. We're building a new health care centre in Shelburne which is expected to be finished this Fall. Work is also underway at the South Shore Regional Hospital which will include renovations to the emergency department, an endoscopy unit, and a new dialysis unit. We have also launched two major health care redevelopment projects to establish the

foundation for the future of health care in the province - the QEII redevelopment and the Cape Breton Regional municipal health care redevelopment projects.

In Cape Breton, we are building two new community health centres and two new long-term care facilities in New Waterford and North Sydney; we're expanding the emergency departments at Cape Breton Regional Hospital and Glace Bay Hospital; we're more than doubling the size of the Cape Breton Cancer Centre; and we're launching the Community-Based Paramedic Program in CBRM - all as part of the CBRM health care redevelopment initiative. After the announcement, Madam Speaker, the Cape Breton emergency room doctor, Dr. Chris Milburn said: a rebuild of both the emergency room in Glace Bay and the emergency room in Sydney is really looked forward to, and is going to create a nicer department with better flow that is easier to work in and more attractive to recruiting and retaining physicians here in Cape Breton.

These projects are once-in-a-generation opportunities to change the way health care is delivered to Nova Scotians. The QEII redevelopment includes the expansion of the Halifax Infirmary, the Dartmouth General Hospital, the QEII Cancer Centre, the building of a new outpatient centre at the Halifax Infirmary site, and a community outpatient centre in Bayers Lake.

[3:15 p.m.]

The Hants Community Hospital in Windsor now has a new operating room and a renovated one as a result of this redevelopment initiative and investment. It's the first time in about 30 years that there have been two ORs up and running at that hospital and that means another 800 surgeries can be performed there each and every year.

We're also supporting Nova Scotia's first residential hospital by moving five beds from the Victoria General site of the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre as part of the redevelopment initiative. We are doing these projects because the health care needs of Nova Scotians are changing. We want to ensure they have the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

We also want to encourage doctors and other health care professionals to come to Nova Scotia to work. That's why we're trying to build modern state-of-the-art facilities that meet their needs and expectations as health care providers.

As you can see, there's a great deal of work under way. What works in some communities may not work for others, so we're trying new things. We're looking at the needs of those communities. We're doing things both to address immediate needs, and also look at how we find long-term solutions to ensure that access to care and quality care for our residents will last for years to come.

We're seeing progress. As of September 1st of this year, over 19,000 people in Nova Scotia have found a primary care provider as tracked through the Need a Family Practice list. Since we launched the new Patient Attachment Incentive Trust on April 1st of this year, we have doctors from every zone in the province take on new patients. Nearly 460 doctors have taken advantage of the incentive, which has resulted in more than 9,500 Nova Scotians finding a family practice as of August 31st of this year.

Since April 2017, more than 150 family doctors and specialists have started working here in Nova Scotia, with more set to start in the next few months. Four orthopaedic surgeons were recruited this year, one each for Valley Regional, Aberdeen, Dartmouth General, and the QEII Health Sciences Centre.

These are just a few examples of the progress we are seeing, but we do know that there's more to be done. We understand the concerns of Nova Scotians, especially those who are trying to find a doctor or nurse practitioner to provide primary care services. We understand these needs. We understand these challenges. Our government is working tirelessly to support those Nova Scotians, and we will not stop.

Since being appointed Minister of Health and Wellness last summer, I have visited communities from one end of the province to the other, touring health care facilities and talking to health care providers, other professionals, and community organizations. I have visited hospitals and emergency departments in every health zone, approximately 20 hospitals and several emergency departments. I have visited numerous collaborative family practices, a combination of new practices that have transitioned into a collaborative model and those in communities where it has historically been hard to recruit health care providers. I have visited a number of long-term care facilities and met with staff who work within them. I have met with doctors, nurses, other health care providers, mental health professionals, and others on the front line to understand their concerns and suggestions for improvements.

They have given us honest feedback and ideas, suggestions to improve, and they have also reinforced the work and initiatives under way. They acknowledge that the steps we are taking are making a difference throughout this province.

What are we hearing? We're hearing that the incentive program for nurse practitioners is being credited for helping to fill hard-to-fill positions, most recently positions in the Advocate and Parrsboro areas. Nurse practitioners, who we have hired, tell us that they're taking patients off the 811 registry and providing quality primary care services. They have also indicated that they are feeling fulfilled by the opportunities presented as they work in a collaborative team environment along with other health care providers like family practice nurses and physicians. Those who work in collaborative care tell us one benefit of the model is they're able to say yes to family members or spouses when individuals need doctors or access to a family practice. They're taking more patients off the 811 list.

Doctors are telling us that they want to work in this environment. We have also heard from doctors who have decided after many years to move to a collaborative model because they see it as a recruitment and retention tool.

One of our long-term care homes in the province has told me that the funding for primary care services has allowed them to hire a nurse practitioner for their primary health care clinic. They have also taken it a step farther to recruit a physician, and they plan to start taking people off the 811 registry this Fall.

We are listening. We're making changes that Nova Scotians want. It may not be as fast as people want. We know this transformation won't happen overnight, but it is happening. It will take all of us working together to build a sustainable health care system for all Nova Scotians, and right here in this House we need to start working together. That's why today we presented a proposal to create a standing committee on health care. The mandate is to focus on health care and health care service delivery. It's an all-Party committee, where on all sides of this House we will come together, work together, and find solutions for health care.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order. Time has elapsed.

The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Madam Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to speak to what truly is, I think, the number one issue facing this government and perhaps facing this province. We do spend approaching 50 per cent of the provincial budget on health care. I think what we have seen with this government is that that money can be ill spent and not achieve the impact that it ought to.

I want to make a point, just starting out, that I do believe we are in a crisis. I also think that that crisis was not inevitable. When my predecessor in Halifax Needham, Maureen MacDonald, was appointed as Health and Wellness Minister at the beginning of the government that came in in 2009, the situation she and that government faced was not dramatically different, demographically, from the situation that the province is in now. Yes, perhaps our population is skewing even older now than it was then, but the finances were not dramatically different. The infrastructure was not dramatically different. The panoply of different forces, from pharmaceutical companies to Doctors Nova Scotia to unions and on and on - that whole cast of characters who needed to be engaged was not dramatically different than what this government has faced.

But I think the approach and the way that goals were set and the way that strategy was arrived at were dramatically different. I think, from everything I have been able to glean from speaking not just with the Honourable Maureen MacDonald but also from speaking with people who worked with her, from speaking with people who interacted with her in the Public Service, from speaking with doctors who got engaged in thinking about

our health care system during that time, there was a sense that the question of how to navigate a very difficult terrain was going to be arrived at collaboratively and respectfully, by seeking information and by engaging people who knew and had a stake in arriving at the best path forward.

That is where, frankly, this government has really misstepped. To start out trying to fix a problem by disrespecting so many people who you need to have engaged in arriving at the solutions is just a fool's errand.

A couple of things that could have been done differently but weren't: number one, negotiating the health accord. It is incomprehensible to me that a Liberal Government with a uniformly Liberal Atlantic caucus in Ottawa could not arrive at a deal that actually recognized the (Interruption)

MADAM SPEAKER: Order. The member for Halifax Needham has the floor.

MS. ROBERTS: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It is incomprehensible to me that a provincial Liberal Government with Liberal MPs uniformly in Ottawa could not arrive at a deal that recognized the very specific demographical challenges that Nova Scotia faces in terms of an exceptionally aging, older demographic.

It is 100 per cent understandable that many people like to come home and live in Nova Scotia, after working many of their working years elsewhere in Canada. That makes complete sense to me. We live in an amazing place, and sometimes the job market is really hard. But then it does not make sense - I believe that the Minister of Health in Alberta even commented - it does not make sense then that when people come to Nova Scotia at the time of their life when they are pretty much inevitably going to need more health care than in their 30s and 40s and 50s, that that is not in any way recognized in the financial deal for health care funding.

That's one thing that could have been done differently and absolutely should have been done differently, and frankly is going to hamstring us for years to come - for the length of that health accord.

This is a challenge, and in my role now interacting as I sometimes do with various parties that watch government, including public servants, Nova Scotia has to get past the idea that a new government comes in and the first thing you do is you walk away from the work that was done by the previous government. It is an irresponsible misspending of the effort of public servants, and we pay them to do our work as a province.

The amount of work that went into, for example, arriving at the Collaborative Emergency Centre model and rolling them out with a plan for how to move forward with

more, for that to have simply stopped when this government came into office is so unfathomable to me that that should be considered an act of fiscal prudence. It's not fiscal prudence when you have wasted the effort, when you have wasted the work, when you walk away from the investment in time and energy and creativity and relationship-building that arrived at something that was working, that was making things better.

Sure, you know, there is always more work to do, and I know that in the NDP Government when first Maureen MacDonald and then my colleague, the honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid were Health Ministers, they did not get to all the work that needed to be done. There was definitely a sense that, okay, we're going to deal with emergency room closures, we're going to tackle that problem, and they tackled that problem and they moved the dial and it wasn't easy.

There's no part of - I don't believe and I would never say that governing is easy. It wasn't easy, but it was carefully done. Work was done and the dial was moved and we were making some progress and we walked away from that.

The Mental Health and Addictions Strategy which has been referenced multiple times today - people in community-based organizations, first-voice citizens of Nova Scotia who have experienced, either as people who struggle with their own mental health or as people who love people who struggle with their mental health, were engaged in the process of designing the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, and they were invested in its success. Again, this government kind of just walked away from it, walked away from it instead of building on that momentum.

I do think that we are in a crisis and I don't think that the crisis was inevitable. Really, I think the lesson that this government has not learned is one that was very evident in Cape Breton with the announcements of those hospital closures, that people will only support change that they have had a hand in crafting.

If we do not, as leaders, make sure that we have some followers with us, we're shot before we start, especially when the people who you are trying to lead have the skills, have the relationships, have the personal reputations in their communities, have knowledge that we need. We have to engage with them or else the effort will not go well.

I do think that we're really paying a price, not just for the specific decisions that have been made but for the deep sense of so many people working in the health care system that they have been and are continuously being disrespected and disregarded and not engaged, not invited to be part of crafting a solution.

I met this Spring, shortly after the last session, with some first-year medical students at Dalhousie and then a medical student who was just entering her residency in family practice. In each case, the young professionals who I met with - well the first-year student

and the resident were all interested and had always been interested in family practice, all three of them from Nova Scotia, deeply rooted here, with families here.

[3:30 p.m.]

The resident whose significant romantic partner is at Dalhousie Medical School a couple of years behind her is leaving Nova Scotia to do her medical residency in Ontario. Why is that? One of the quotes I wrote down from that meeting was “it’s not the numbers.” She was referring to how much money family practitioners make in Nova Scotia. It’s not the numbers; it’s feeling like you are less valued. That is the feeling medical students and medical residents who are interacting with family doctors currently working in Nova Scotia - that is the message they are getting from those family doctors. They feel like they are less valued, that they have been devalued.

In any professional environment, in any space we have occupied in our other professional lives, we should know this - people give us their best effort when they feel like we want their best effort, because we actually value them. That is a great mistake this government has made.

On a very practical level, we know there are not enough nursing home beds, there just aren’t. We can wish that away, but we see the results backing up through emergency rooms and right out the door of emergency rooms into ambulances and onto our highways where there are no ambulances available. To have ceased investment in long-term care beds was folly. I think we can invest, looking into the future, with an eye even further into the future.

This demographic situation we are in is not forever, but it is for the next 20 years. We are not at the beginning of our aging population challenge; we’ve got a long time to go. I think as a province and as a government, we have to at least commit ourselves to wanting people’s last years as Nova Scotians to be years lived with dignity.

I have several times been to the home of an elderly woman who has stage 4 cancer and some mobility challenges and is going blind and lives alone, in public housing, in a one-bedroom apartment. She wants to go to a nursing home, but she cannot because she is not ill enough.

I think something else we owe Nova Scotians is to be honest about the state we’re in. We are in a situation where we think it is okay that an elderly person who is palliative and getting palliative care is not ill enough to go into a nursing home where somebody would be checking on her on a regular basis, where she wouldn’t be alone. Yes, she gets lots of home care, but I think of her when we talk about how wonderful it is that, when the Premier specifically talks about how wonderful it is, that we have cut down the wait-list for nursing homes. We have cut down the wait-list for nursing homes because we don’t let people get on the nursing home list.

And then, for the people who are in nursing homes, we have made the situation for those nursing home administrators, for those nursing home staff, so challenging that, on that end of it, it is hard to provide the dignified care people deserve. I do think we're in a crisis. I look forward to seeing how, in the three years that remains of this government's mandate, they try to pull us out of it.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today and speak about health care in Nova Scotia and the state of health care in Nova Scotia. I listened intently to the minister as he spoke for 15 minutes about all the wonderful initiatives that his government is taking and the only thing I could picture as I was listening to him was a hamster running on a hamster wheel. If you ever Google "hamster on a hamster wheel, hamster wheel fails," I think that's probably what's happening here.

For all the initiatives that the minister is heralding, we're going backwards. We're going backwards and there's no other way to describe what's happening to health care in this province other than going backwards. It's nice to stand in here and talk about all these initiatives, but if they're not moving the province forward, then you better rethink what you're doing.

I was encouraged at the very end of his 15-minute speech, when the minister said that he understands the concerns of those Nova Scotians who can't access primary care. Complete afterthought in the eyes of this government - oh yeah, and by the way, I understand there are some people are worried over here, too - when their initiatives are getting them no where. That's why they're getting no where. If you don't truly understand that people can't access primary care, you're never really going to address it.

The minister talked about visiting people and meeting with people. I think he should have a look at the show *Undercover Boss* and maybe he should go to an emergency room and sit for 10 hours. Maybe, heaven forbid, he'll call an ambulance and have to wait in the ambulance for 18 hours outside of a hospital to get off-loaded into the emergency room. I don't think you can properly understand - when you put on your suit and take your entourage and go to visit somewhere - what's actually happening. I can sense from the minister that he doesn't understand from the words that he says and the structure of his speech - just at the very end, he understands.

There's a different reality in Nova Scotia than the minister is clearly aware of. That reality is that as of September the Need a Family Practice Registry monthly report reported that 56,630 people had registered that had not yet been placed with a family practice. Now, of course, that's an increase over August. Which would be an increase over July, which would be an increase over June, which would be an increase over the time that this government took office in this term and certainly in the time that they took government in

2013. Things are getting worse and worse and worse and yet the minister talks about his meetings and his visits and his initiatives. But they're going nowhere.

Let's take the hamster off the wheel and let's talk about what's really happening in this province. You talk to Nova Scotians around the province and they say to you, "I don't have a family doctor. I don't know where to turn for care." "Did you register on the list?" "Yes, I did but I haven't heard anything." A complete vortex - get your name on the list, but it doesn't do anything.

Or: "Did you register on the list?" "No, why would I?" Statistics Canada says the number's not 56,000, they say it's 100,000. I can tell you that the number of people in this province worried about access to primary care well exceeds 100,000. Most everyone in this province is worried about their doctor - are they going to have a doctor, my doctor is going to retire in a few years.

These are the concerns of Nova Scotians. It is not limited to 56,000 people. It's not limited to 100,000. It's pretty much everyone. People in this province are extremely worried about how they are going to access primary care and they are not comforted by a 15-minute speech from the minister talking about the visits he has made. They're not comforted by that.

There's only two ways to access health care in this province: through your family doctor and that's a big problem, or through the emergency room and that is a big problem, in most parts of this province. No wonder people are concerned and all they want is for their government to accept their concerns and understand them, and they haven't seen that.

When we have a government that talks about their initiatives or says they are going to redraw the landscape of health care in the province - my colleague talked about the closures in Cape Breton. Imagine making a decision to close hospitals and saying, well, we've made that decision, now we're going to come up with a plan. Most times you'd come up with a plan before you make those decisions.

It is completely remarkable that this government would go to people and say, we're taking this channel to access care away and some day we're going to figure out what we're going to do. Why would that be of any comfort to any Nova Scotian?

In response, you are seeing community groups pop up across this province that are trying to take matters into their own hands. They see the crisis, they understand the issues. They don't see help coming so they're saying, what can we do? The municipal council is allocating money for recruiting, community groups gathering up. Those groups should be supported - they will find the answers much quicker than the minister's shiny shoe tour. We need to be listening to those groups about what is best for them community. They know where people with connections to their community who are practising medicine elsewhere

are. They know who in their community is in medical school or wants to go to medical school.

They should be supported but instead, the Nova Scotia Health Authority - presumably at the direction of the Department of Health and Wellness, at the direction of the minister - frustrates those groups at every single opportunity with hurdle after hurdle after hurdle.

Why is that? That's the question we should be asking. The answer is because they don't want to accept the reality of the depths of the crisis in health care in this province. They would rather create the illusion of however many initiatives the minister talked about, that are not improving things. Nothing to see here, move along, don't look here, look over here. It's the way they govern and we are feeling the impact of that now, as Nova Scotians.

Now I happen to have a family doctor. My family has a family doctor. I can't completely put myself in the shoes of somebody who doesn't because when one of my children needs to get to a doctor, they can get to a doctor. But there are over 100,000 people who don't have that luxury - and I'm going to call it a luxury because access to care in this province is now a luxury. It's not even being accepted, let alone addressed by this government, and that is the problem.

Now it's not all doom and gloom, I did hear something good from the minister. He's going to establish a health care committee, a Standing Committee on Health Care. I think that has the potential to be a fine idea. If done properly, it would allow Nova Scotians to speak directly to the legislators in a formal setting about health care, express their ideas, express their concerns but that has to be in addition to the system. You can't use that committee to stifle another committee.

[3:45 p.m.]

The concept of saying, yes, we're willing to listening to Nova Scotians is a major step forward for this government. They're saying we're willing to listen. Now, we know from watching their responses with the FOIPOP commissioner and other government officials that listening doesn't always translate to action, but listening is the first step. I do acknowledge that that will be a good thing. That has the potential to be a good thing and we'll be watching how that unfolds.

I didn't hear the minister talk about mental health and, being the week in recognition of mental health awareness, I think it is something that the minister should be addressing. He used to say that one in five Canadians are impacted by mental health. But now, they say it's two in five and we know the societal cost that that has to families and communities and the cost to government in terms of mental health. It touches a lot of portfolios in the government, across the Department of Community Services, across the

Department of Justice. It's a determinant of financial status and poverty, too. It's an important thing.

In my own community, this government has shown where they rank mental health on the priority spectrum when they temporarily closed a short-stay unit at the Aberdeen Hospital for three months. I think we're pushing four years on that one now, so, we know how this government views mental health and access to mental health services. There's money there, \$200 million. I've heard from my colleagues opposite here today that that's below kind of the national standard of what other provinces are doing.

We need to have a focus on making sure that people can access care in this province and that means physical health care, that means mental health care. That means a government that understands that the needs of the people are evolving and the government needs to deliver services in a way that meets the needs of the people. It's a main responsibility of our provincial government, delivering health care. If you can't deliver good health care, if you can't deliver good education, if you can't contribute to making the economy successful, then you're failing as a government. The only thing worse than failing as a government is not accepting you're failing as a government because if you don't accept it you will never try to address it.

So, I just wish that this government would have something more to say to Nova Scotians than there's nothing to see here. I wish this government would have something more to say than it's all under control, because it's not. It's not and, if they would acknowledge that and they would listen to some of the ideas that would come forth from Nova Scotians perhaps through a new committee, perhaps through the channels that are already happening every day, if they would listen to some of those ideas, then we can move health care forward. That's the only time we look but the government has to be a willing partner in that process and, as of today, we haven't seen that and that is the shame. But tomorrow is a new day, tomorrow is a new day.

Maybe this government will wake up tomorrow and say we do accept. We do accept and we will take steps to move forward that will actually have a direct impact on the health of Nova Scotians because, when you can't access primary care and you are in need of it, you get worse. Your conditions get worse. Your symptoms get worse. Your health deteriorates. When your health deteriorates, the cost to society increases and the financial cost to the government when they ultimately, finally, get around to addressing it, is much higher. There are many conditions in this province that just seeing a doctor could address, but they go unaddressed and possibly end up in a hospital stay, at which point, it's \$1,500 a day.

Our health care system, if you're really sick in Nova Scotia, you're probably going to get good care. We have tremendous hard-working health care professionals in our system. They just need some help from a government that will support them so we can give more care to more people. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I want to thank everybody for their interventions on that resolution.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MADAM SPEAKER: Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 19.

Bill No. 19 - FOIPOP Commissioner Independence Act.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: It is my honour to stand for a few moments and speak to this issue which has been a standing news item for a number of years. First of all, I want to thank our privacy commissioner, Catherine Tully, for her hard work in this province when it comes to the protection of privacy and also in letting the information flow for the transparency of governments. I know she has the best intentions in making recommendations to this province in order to just be as transparent that it possibly can be.

Openness and accountability with the people we serve is the cornerstone of our democracy. I would go as far as to say that government has the obligation to share information with its citizens. People really have to know why governments are making certain decisions. They need to make sure they understand the information and the research that goes behind it.

I can say that the Premier used to subscribe to this line of thinking. It wasn't long ago that the Premier promised to make Nova Scotia the most open and transparent province in Canada. There was a smattering of applause there. It's safe to say that they've fallen just a little short of fulfilling that promise, so the independence of our privacy commissioner, Ms. Tully, is crucial to the proper working of our freedom of information and protection of privacy system. Every other province understands this and has made their FOIPOP officer - their privacy commissioner, whatever they call the position - an independent officer of their Legislatures. Every province, except for Nova Scotia.

In those other jurisdictions, this means the commissioner need not answer to a politician. They need not adjust their behaviour to please their political boss. It means the commissioner is guided by the law and that's the way it should be. That's how our Auditor General operates, reporting to the Legislature, never to a minister.

That's how the Conflict of Interest Commissioner operates, free from political oversight. That's how the Ombudsman must operate. And that's how the FOIPOP commissioner should operate in a province that is truly open and transparent.

I must confess that it's puzzling to me that this government has refused to take this step for so long. It's a government that says it's committed to openness. It's a government that refuses to bring our legislation in line with other provinces. Until this change is made, this Liberal Government is only paying lip service to openness and transparency.

When this measure has been debated in the House previously, members on the government side have maintained that independence of the FOIPOP commissioner is unnecessary, that the office has all the power that it needs. I think the Premier actually reiterated that during Question Period today. In fact, I think that was exactly what the Premier told reporters very recently.

I disagree. The commissioner does not have all the authority necessary to do the job as effectively as possible. As members know, it stands now that the commissioner can review FOIPOP requests and make recommendations. The government, at that point, once those recommendations are made, can look back at the privacy commissioner and can say, thank you very much. It's too often that that is where it ends.

As an example, in 2014, the PC caucus submitted a FOIPOP request seeking information about the cancellation of Phase III of the Riverview Adult Residential Care Facility in Pictou. Actually, we asked a question about that today. We received a heavily redacted record and, of course, appealed to the commissioner. It's hard to make heads or tails of a report that has more blacked out lines in it than it has lines you can actually read.

In May of this year, the FOIPOP commissioner recommended that information needs to be released. However, she does not have the power to compel that the information be released. The Department of Community Services decided to stand by their decision to keep some information secret while saying it would release the rest of the information to the PC caucus office, even though the commissioner would suggest that all of the information needs to be released. We can understand that when you're protecting the privacy of information of individuals, the health information, those kinds of things, I can understand that stuff being blacked out and kept because that's not the information we're necessarily looking for.

Again, the Department of Community Services decided to stand by their decision to keep some of that information secret, saying that it would release the rest of that information to our office. No information has been forthcoming. On July 6th, the PC caucus office asked the department to send the information or confirm in writing that they had decided to ignore the commissioner's recommendations. Pick one. If you're going to ignore it, just say you're going to ignore it, or provide us with the information. To date, we have received neither. Without the authority to compel the production of documents, the

government can ignore the recommendations of the FOIPOP commissioner. That's a great example of this.

In the case of a 2014 death of an inmate at the Burnside jail, the FOIPOP commissioner determined that the Department of Justice had improperly kept documents secret. Thank you very much, said the Department of Justice, your recommendations are noted, but, of course, we will not be following them. Without the authority to compel the production of documents, the government can ignore the recommendations of the FOIPOP commissioner, and Nova Scotians again remain in the dark.

This government's practice flies in the face of every reason we have an FOI system. Nova Scotians should not only know the information the government wants them to know, or should I say that the government only wants people to know what they think they want them to know. That's neither open or transparent. Nova Scotians have access to all the information that they're entitled to under the Act.

This bill that we have before us today, Bill No. 19, allows that to happen. It allows government to fulfill its obligation to share information with its citizens. It injects some transparency into our system. By doing so, that strengthens our democracy. It's simply the right thing to do.

[4:00 p.m.]

With those words I, of course, urge members to support this important piece of legislation. But again, from the examples that I've cited, we have very little faith that the government is going to fulfill this. I mean, obviously, we're here during Opposition Day debating an Opposition bill, and hopefully they'll take these recommendations and truly think about them. I hope they take the recommendations of the Privacy Commissioner, Ms. Tully, because I think she makes a valid point. She makes a number of recommendations that I think should be followed.

Yes, as the Premier mentioned in the response that he had earlier on today that, of course, we've implemented a few of those recommendations. But the one that truly makes sense, the one that really provides teeth to the Commissioner is, of course, the one that continues to be ignored.

We can try to continue to tell the government or try to understand why the government wants to hide information and, quite honestly, I think we've all had the opportunity to be part of government and we all see these things go across a desk and understand that some of that information is going to be a little hurtful to a minister, to a department, to a program, but it doesn't matter. (Interruption) That's right, the Minister of Community Services is right, it doesn't matter because that information is supposed to go to the public. They are supposed to know why government, why the Department of Health

and Wellness, why the Department of Community Services, all the other departments of government, why they made a certain decision.

This is without getting into the debate or discussion of a portal or how information is received by government and how that flow works. It is simply the basis of how our FOI system works, our freedom of information works.

I would stand here and also say, okay, great, again an Opposition bill, we're just sort of saying things for the sake of saying things. But again, we're not the only ones here that have this very discussion going on. The media, the press corps that is here in this House, have reported on this time and time again and feel they have trouble doing their job because they're not getting the information from this government in order to have truly balanced articles, information to go forward to the public. When you don't have the information, then of course it is a lot more work for the press corps to do. Even though I know they're up to the challenge of getting those pieces of information, their life would be a lot easier and they would be able to report on other things as well, should that information be available to them.

It's appalling actually, I don't know how many people in the government side have ever received a freedom of information request or the information from a request. It's quite disappointing when you see them. You ask a question, could you provide me with emails from the Minister of Health and Wellness discussing the closure of the Northside General Hospital, is a great example. If we haven't done that FOI, we probably should. But what we're going to get back are probably two or three emails and the majority of it blacked out - who it was from, the time it was done. It might say Northside General Hospital, but it's not going to say anything else. Nowhere would we be able to find the information of why government made a decision to close that hospital.

This is the information that we need, what is the rationale? Beyond what the Premier stands up in this House to talk about, what the Minister stands up in this House to talk about, it quite honestly only goes so far. You know, a 40-second response - well, what I say is it's not a 45-second response. When the Premier stands it's always more than a 45-second response; I think he goes over his one minute, quite honestly, every time. But that's okay, we're hoping that he gets the information out there but he can't even do it in the time that's allotted to him. He can't do it in the extra time that's allotted to him. That's a challenge when all we have is this and we get a blacked-out that. How can anyone trust the government to provide them with the actual reasoning for any decision that it makes on a whole bunch of issues that are important to Nova Scotians? Like I say, I only take the Northside General Hospital as an example of a decision that is made by government.

We know what the communication lines are, we know what CNS has provided to us, and we know what the ministers and the Premier have given us. But a 30-second press release or a minute and a half worth of speech, or even the 15 minutes that we heard from

the Premier does not provide us with the opportunity to truly feel that this government is transparent.

Transparency, of course, is a huge - I think it is the cornerstone of our democracy, the transparency of our governments to our population.

Again, we can continue on this. I know there are some other speakers and I look forward to, of course, their interventions on this Bill No. 19 to make the Privacy Commissioner, the FOIPOP commissioner, a truly independent officer of this House of Assembly.

It's not much to ask for. I think this is the way it should work, and I think we should all agree, and I am looking forward to the response from, of course, the government's side. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: I want to thank the member for the 15 minutes of back and forth here. I understand how it can be disappointing to apply for a FOIPOP and not receive all the information that you want.

I look back on my own personal experience. Probably about five or six years ago before I was actually an MLA, I applied to the Department of Community Services to get, essentially, my life story from the Department of Community Services as someone who was a ward of the court for the majority of my youth and teenage years. And you are right - what you receive back is a lot of blanked-out information, a lot of blacked-out information, and I can say that at the time I was pretty upset, but then I realized why.

I realized that there were people in those - actually, it was probably about eight years ago, I think it was when the NDP were in government that I applied for that information, but I understood.

The more I talked about it, the more I reached out to people in that department, and the more I understood the FOIPOP system the more I realized why it was done, and it was to protect some of those individuals - foster families may not have wanted to be named, may not still be foster parents. It protected their locations, it protected social workers, people who may have had conflicts with, or those children may have had conflicts with, or may have not, in their own mind - myself, and I am talking from personal experience, people who I may have not been fond of, so things like that.

It was to protect them, it was to protect doctors, and recommendations, and we have to have a system where people are able to be fully honest with each other to make recommendations for the betterment of all Nova Scotia and, at the same time, be able to be protected from any type of negative consequences or backlash from people who don't agree

with the decision. Even if it's a good decision or not, there are always going to be people who don't agree with the decision.

It could be the best possible decision, and I will use pre-Primary, for example. When we made the choice to implement probably one of the greatest programs this province has seen over the last couple of decades, something that has done wonders for my community; in fact, where a large percentage of my community are unable to afford child care, it has done absolute wonders.

The number one question I've gotten about pre-Primary was: When is it coming to my school? So, we made this decision, and of course these decisions are made on a whole bunch of different studies. They're made with recommendations from different jurisdictions, and working within government - and there were people across the aisle who didn't agree with it, there were people in different communities who didn't agree with some - the minority of people in Nova Scotia didn't agree with it, but that decision was made, and it was a great decision. We want to be able to protect people so that they're able to work openly and honestly and to do what's in the best interest for Nova Scotians.

I understand the frustration when you don't get all the information you want. I will say that I look across the aisle, and there are people across the aisle who have been in government and those changes weren't made. There are people across the aisle who I'm looking at who were very powerful members of previous governments - not the member for Sackville-Cobequid. The member for Sackville-Cobequid is actually a great individual who I owe a dinner to. But those changes weren't made.

One of the things that runs through my mind as I sit here in the Legislature - and I understand the process a lot better now than when I first started, obviously, and I understand the role of the Opposition in government, and the back and forth. But I always find it strange that you hear members who had a lot of influence, who had a lot of power within their Party when they were in government, say, why aren't you guys doing this? If we get in government, we're going to do this. I often think, why didn't you do it? You had an opportunity. Why did you not do it?

I guess it's part of the political game to try to find an issue and pick and pick and pick until it becomes a larger issue that you can gain votes and do all that stuff. It's all part of the game, I guess, but I would say to those members that if these ideas were so great - if they were so needed - I think you had an opportunity. And I hope that the next time - because obviously we're not going to be in government forever. No government lasts forever. I would like to be here 20 years from now, but let's be honest. I hope that if any members across get an opportunity to stand in this position that we're in, and some of us are over there, that you make those decisions and make those choices.

Some of the words that we've heard here today are "accountability" and "transparency." I would say that we've made some very positive changes when it comes to

accountability and transparency. It may seem small, but I don't think that the ministers and the individuals who made these changes necessarily get enough credit for some of these changes. One of them is the online publishing of the ministerial expenses - the senior bureaucrat expenses. This is not a small thing. Federally and provincially, in the past we've seen where, when there's no accountability and when there's no transparency, you end up with a \$40 orange juice. Then you see the outrage from the public.

People want to know where their money's being spent. When you have ministers and senior bureaucrats who are in charge of massive amounts of money and huge budgets, the public wants to know that that money is being spent properly. They want to know that when their ministers and those senior bureaucrats are travelling, they're not staying in five-star hotels and they're not treating it like their own.

I have never seen examples, provincially anyway, of this happening. I think most people, if not all the people, who have come through this Legislature have a deep and profound respect for the public purse. We might not all agree on how to spend money, but I think we all can agree that it is an honour and a privilege to stand here and be able to invest in programs that we think, and the public thinks, are best for them.

[4:15 p.m.]

Speaking of transparency, I wanted to speak about some of the things that have happened that I think we all can be proud of around transparency within government. One of the things that I've heard over and over from some of the members opposite is about lack of public consultation. That all plays into this theme here tonight about transparency and accountability.

I can tell you that I'll use, I think it was Bill No. 109, the Cannabis Control Act, for example, I think we were inundated and overwhelmed with public response.

We reached out, the government reached out, the Minister of Justice reached out to the public and said, this is going to be legal, this is happening, there's no stopping that train. But what should it look like? What do Canadians want it to look like?

We could have sat here, and we could have listened to different members in this House who thought we needed to stop it, we needed to continue to make it illegal, even though over and over we see that over 70 per cent of Canadians agree with some form of legalization of marijuana.

What we did is we stopped, and we backed up and we said, let's talk to the public, let's see what you want done. Let's hear how you want this distributed and what your opinion is on marijuana. I think it was 25,000 Nova Scotians, maybe one of the largest public consultations we've seen in a long time. It shows you how passionate Nova Scotians can be when properly engaged on these topics.

The feedback was amazing. I know, personally knowing the Minister of Justice for the last five years and the individuals involved in decision-making, I know they took that seriously and it was reflective in that law that Nova Scotians wanted proper and safe access to marijuana but, at the same time, they wanted to make sure that their children were safe. That's what accountability is and that's what transparency is.

I want to talk about another report along the way that we saw. We saw the Myra Freeman report, changes to the education system; 19,000 parents and educators responded. It was hard for me not to find an educator in my community who had not responded to the Myra Freeman consultation.

Some of the recommendations that came out of that report were civics lessons and coding, which is something that I personally was very fond of. There was an argument put forward that we needed to make these changes because these changes were already being made in other jurisdictions. Nineteen thousand parents responded, pretty impressive; 19,000 educators, parents, I'm sure some students responded, and changes were made. That report was based on public consultation showing accountability and transparency.

When that report was released, a copy was given to everyone in this Chamber. It was put online for all of us to see, to digest, and to comment on. That's what people expect from their government.

We're not the first to do it. We've seen consultation from all sides in the past but these pieces of legislation that impact our education system, that introduce cannabis to everyday life, legally, were important pieces. We needed to make sure we received the proper consultation on this.

We talk about being accessible and sharing information, I've seen from my own colleagues, and from the colleagues across the aisle. But since we're talking about government, I've seen from my own colleagues over the last five years, hundreds of town hall meetings. Not partisan town hall meetings where you bring people in who say what you want them to say. I've seen, and witnessed, and I've been part of town hall meetings where people have given positive feedback. They've also been very vocal with their concerns. I think this is a habit of a good politician, to continuously consult with the public.

I know, for example, the member for Timberlea-Prospect has probably had 12 or 15 public consultations on some very challenging issues; mental health, transportation, health. He didn't shy away from it. The member for Fairview-Clayton Park has held numerous public consultations on health and I bet you if you talked to both of them, if you pulled them aside and said did everybody agree with you, was it all positive, they'll say no. There was definitely some lively debate during this. You know, we did one in my community on mental health and we brought in mental health experts and we actually brought in some people that we knew did not agree with government, but we brought them

in so that the public would be able to hear and see all sides of the story and we'd be able to get the proper feedback.

The last thing I'll say is, one of the comments was we've fallen a little short of making this the most open and transparent province in the country. Well, Mr. Speaker, I disagree. I disagree. I've seen these members post information all over their social media, engage. I've seen the public consultation. I've seen report after report and legislation based on tens of thousands of Nova Scotians' feedback. If that isn't accountability, if that isn't transparency, I don't know what is.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my turn now. It's always an honour and a privilege to stand on the floor of this Legislature and engage in thoughtful debate. I have to say, this is I think my thirty-second session of the Legislature over the last 15-plus years in this Chamber and this is the most important day of the week for the legislative process. It's Opposition Day, and I say that seriously, it has been one of the most important days of the week even when I was across the floor in the government benches, because, often, the legislation that the Opposition Parties bring forward are issues that we hear from individuals within our communities every day and are I think the issues that government members hear every day.

Of course, there are times when legislation is quite partisan, it's at the heart or the root of the political Parties' attempt to address issues that their Party members feel strongly about. But, for the most part, you know, witnessing those 30-some sessions over the last 15 years, the majority of the Opposition bills that are brought forward come from Nova Scotians themselves, and trying to address issues that people face every day here in our province.

When we look at this bill, I think I've debated it within the last couple of years. It was introduced prior when we prorogued the House in a previous session, that this is a piece of legislation that may not be the most important top-of-mind issue or topic that Nova Scotians are talking about but, if you're a Nova Scotian who wanted access or wants access to information that the government has, I think they would fully support this. I think if you were to do a poll - I know the member for Halifax Atlantic mentioned polling around cannabis use - and that if you did a poll I think a high majority of Nova Scotians would look at this legislation and say this makes sense.

This just makes sense. It's not super partisan for one political Party, it's doing something that would hopefully make it easier for Nova Scotians to access information that really, truly belongs to them, or that they should really have and the government should share with them.

The one thing I have learned over the last 15 years is that not one political Party has all the best pieces of legislation or public policy or regulations. I've heard some great initiatives from every Party over the last 15 years on changes that are needed in our province. I must say some of the ones brought forward by the NDP were probably some of the best over the last 15 years, but each Party brings forward a number of important changes.

This bill really does four things, Mr. Speaker. It changes the title, for one, of the review officer under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to a review commissioner. It's really hard not to agree with that change of title.

The second thing is it makes the review commissioner an officer of the House of Assembly. I know my colleague mentioned in his response around the fact that we have an Auditor General in Nova Scotia who is an officer of the House of Assembly, as are the Ombudsman and the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. We believe it makes sense to include the review officer under that similar title and allow for that office to have the privileges that are given, for example, to the Auditor General's Office.

In this legislation, it also allows for the review commissioner to require any persons to answer questions or provide records where necessary to resolve disputes or ensure compliance with the Act. It's really, hopefully, allowing for disputes to be resolved before any kind of true complaint happens. If someone requests information that was heavily redacted or was missing or was denied, before you get to the point where there's an official complaint and a review or maybe an investigation, that hopefully each side could resolve it before it gets to that.

Another thing it does is allow the review commissioner to require a person to attempt to resolve the person's request for review prior to beginning any review. It's really giving power, I think appropriate power, to the office and to the title of the review officer.

I don't think too many Nova Scotians would say those four changes that are in this legislation are unreasonable or go beyond or over a line that we shouldn't go across. I would hope that the government recognizes how important Opposition Day is and doesn't just dismiss the bills that the Opposition Parties bring forward to the Legislature because they're not coming from a government MLA or government minister. We see it happen across jurisdictions in Canada and on the federal level that many good issues, legislation, regulations, policies come forward from a number of political avenues that governments adopt. It's not just the government of the day's agenda that they need to take good issues from and make them into legislation or public policy or regulations.

One of the reasons why this has been brought back to the floor is that we know, in recent months, there has been a number of serious issues around information and breaches and concerns that Nova Scotians have around the information that government keeps on

Nova Scotians. We know in the spring, the Information and Privacy Commissioner scolded the Department of Community Services about inappropriately withholding documents.

At the same time, we know that the track record of keeping private information private has been challenged a number of times with a number of different situations where information that should be protected was open to the public and for other people to see. We as a caucus would welcome the commissioner, who is an officer of the House of Assembly, so that she can report to all members of the House rather than to a single minister.

I think that's really at the essence of this legislation: allowing the powers that we give to other bodies here in Nova Scotia to be given to the review commissioner. It would go a long way to building a trust, especially with the public who right now feel a little bit concerned and know that there have been some issues over the last year or so, this would go a long way. If the government is unwilling to look at this specific legislation, then introduce their own.

[4:30 p.m.]

I know that happens, Mr. Speaker. It happens often. It happens with issues that I've brought to the floor of the Legislature when trying to change a piece of legislation or introducing a new piece of legislation that the government won't pass it through the legislative process but they'll bring forward their own bill.

I'm sure the members of the Progressive Conservative Party would welcome the government bringing their own bill forward, for example, to do the things that are outlined in this bill, to look at the Review Officer under the Freedom of Information Act and change the title to a Review Commissioner, to allow for the Review Commissioner to be an Officer of the House of Assembly, to allow the Review Commissioner to require people to answer questions and provide records and documents and to allow the Review Commissioner to require people to attempt to resolve the request for review prior to any official complaint or investigation.

It makes common sense and I don't see any true partisan approach to this legislation. I think it's really addressing an issue that many of us have heard from constituents over the last number of months, over the last year. I think this would go a long way to secure some of the trust that may have been lost due to some of the breaches of information and privacy information that we've seen over the last number of months.

I hope that even though it doesn't look like there will be a vote on this legislation and this piece specifically, but the government take it back to the department and look at what can we do to try to make sure that we treat the Privacy Review Officer similarly and in the same light as we do other agencies and other departments or identities here in the

province, as I mentioned, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, the Ombudsman and most important, the Auditor General, Mr. Speaker.

With those few words I just want to thank the members for listening but I hope they continue to recognize that (1) Wednesday is the most important day of the week here in the Legislature because it's Opposition Day, (2) that all the good ideas don't just come from government Parties and government MLAs, and (3) that we need to work together sometimes in passing good public policy and good public legislation. I think this one falls into that category, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LARRY HARRISON: I just want to take a few moments to speak to this bill. Information and trust - they are two words that I've had to deal with most of my working career, in fact all of it. As a United Church minister for 41 years, people would always bring me information and they would trust that I would keep that information, care for it and not put it out there.

Now in this job, since I've been an MLA, information is given to me by people and they want me to put it out there, so there's two different responses to the information but it all has to do with trust. In the other profession, trust that I kept it - in this profession, it is trust that I put it out there.

There are many ways that information can be obtained and used in 2018. Some of it is appropriate, some of it is inappropriate. We have seen examples of that certainly on the world stage involving foreign governments and Facebook and we know down south that Facebook and Twitter are not what a politician should be using. However, it happens.

We've also see it here in Nova Scotia recently with private drug information being snooped on by someone. This person couldn't be held accountable, under the law, and also the event last year of the young man walking right up into the FOIPOP portal, as apparently anyone could have done. Again, there was no basis for prosecution here.

I raised all these examples to make a point. The appropriate collection and care of information by governments is extremely crucial in this day and age. So, the question is do Nova Scotians trust that the government has this situation under control? Not sure. Do Nova Scotians trust that the number one consideration in addressing breaches and requests for information is the interest of the citizen?

You see, everything we do as elected representatives should be about people - what is in their best interests, even if it creates some very difficult circumstances for us who are trying to help them. I believe in a short period of time our party will be walking in the shoes of the government now. But I do want them to walk with shoes of integrity, I really do.

Now, Nova Scotia is the only province without an independent FOIPOP commissioner. I don't know, is there a good reason for that? I don't know. Is it in the best interest to have some independent person oversee what we do and how we do it? The reason I say this is that when you are accountable to a minister in a job for your employment and your career can be impacted, a FOIPOP commissioner is put in a very difficult situation when they believe that the interests and rights of the person requesting information from the government may outweigh those that the government to retain it or redact it.

My understanding is in some cases lately, the commissioner has done her job, interpreted the law, clearly stated that the record should be released, but the government held back on that release. There may or may not be good reasons for that, but there shouldn't be even the possibility of perception that any government could interfere or that a public servant could simply choose not to provide information that the law says they should.

We are talking about integrity and we're talking about public trust. Citizens should not be subject to an arbitrary rejection of access to information if they have a right to it. Citizens should also know that it won't take years and years to get it, that the commissioner can compel to release it if it is in accordance with the law. The information should be safe. Resources would be better served actually keeping our information safe rather than trying to block its release.

We are not confident that the entire story is out yet concerning the two examples I mentioned in the beginning. I think we need to know how the problem could have been avoided. That is in the public interest. Public trust in government is based not only on the work we do, but on the transparency surrounding that work. So not making the FOIPOP commissioner an officer of the Legislature makes a clear statement that the government, not the office with no vested interest, will decide what Nova Scotians have a right to know.

So, I'd like to call on my government colleagues who really consider what I'm saying. Search your principles and what you believe when you decided to run for office. Do you believe that the people who elected you should be entitled to access information if the law says it's okay and do you believe that the commissioners should be the final arbiter in the any decisions? Well, I hope you do and I ask that you support this in doing the right thing and support this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the insightful comments on this bill. That concludes Opposition Business for today. I will put it over to the Deputy Government House Leader to call business for tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. KEITH IRVING: I move that the House now adjourn until tomorrow afternoon, Thursday, September 13th, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. At that time, we will be calling Public Bills for Second Reading: Bill No. 10, the Liquor Control Act; Bill No. 13, the Day Care Act; and also Bill No. 16, the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Protection Act.

I move we so adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER: There is a motion to adjourn, for the House to rise to meet tomorrow Thursday, September 13th, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

We have now reached the moment of interruption, which features the topic of late debate as submitted by the honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River:

“Therefore be it resolved that the Liberal Government is failing to provide comprehensive services for survivors of sexualized violence in all regions of the province.”

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)

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

MS. LENORE ZANN: I am pleased to rise to my feet today to do late debate on the topic I have requested. I was thinking about asking for an emergency session because of this important issue that arose in my constituency, but I decided to just bring it forward today. I'm going to repeat it again:

“Therefore be it resolved that the Liberal Government is failing to provide comprehensive services for survivors of sexualized violence in all regions of the province.”

The reason that I call it like this, Mr. Speaker, is because we do not have equal access from one end of the province to the other. The sexual assault nurse examiner has been added as a program to some areas of the province and will be added into others soon. I am really, really hoping that we can also add it to Truro, which is of course known as the hub of Nova Scotia. It is the centre of central Nova Scotia. We are in dire straits there. There have been a number of cases come forward recently of women who have felt that they were not looked after . . . (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you could ask the House to please quiet down. It's very hard to concentrate on this important topic with people speaking really loudly behind me. Thank you.

When it comes to issues of women's health, women's sexuality, and women's abuse, unfortunately, history has shown that we have ignored the issue and swept it under the rug for far too long. Here in Nova Scotia, it still pains me to read of stories where there is sexualized violence in domestic situations, situations where somebody goes out with somebody for a night and winds up dead in a garbage can or in a hockey bag floating down a river, like the Mira River, for instance, in Cape Breton. Women are to be cherished. Women are to be respected, to be treated as equals. Unfortunately, our society is not there yet.

I think it was Gloria Steinem who said it's wonderful that women are now bringing up their girls and teaching their girls how to behave, but we need to now bring up our boys and get them to behave in ways as well that are more acceptable and more respectful towards women and girls.

[4:45 p.m.]

At the end of August, we all heard the story about a young 22-year-old Truro woman who visited the emergency department of our Colchester East Hants Health Centre to report that she had been raped. The visibly upset young woman was allegedly handed two pamphlets and turned away because the SANE program - Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner - is not available yet in Truro.

It was left up to her mother to drive her to Antigonish so that she could talk to members of the SANE program there at St. Martha's Regional Hospital. Apparently, she was not told that she could have gone to New Glasgow, which is somewhat closer.

Still, the story of this woman's horrible experience has now prompted another woman to come forward - and this is not public yet, but I have been given permission by that woman to talk about her story. She does not want me to use her name because she has already been so traumatized by what has happened that she does not want her three children to be affected any more, but she emailed me and she has emailed the Minister of Health and Wellness, and she has shared her own experience. I am not sure if the minister has read that yet, but she has sent it to both of us.

She, too, went to the Colchester East Hants Health Centre in need of support following a sexual assault. This time it was by her husband of 17 years, and she went because she felt that she had been raped and abused and she was in dire need of help.

She said that she felt re-victimized by the experience. She writes, after reading about another woman reaching out . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I'd like to remind the honourable member it's against the Rules of this Chamber to read a constituent's email without identifying the - you have to be able to identify the quote, from whom the quote came.

MS. ZANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The woman said to me, and twice now she's contacted me, that after reading about another woman, she reached out for help herself, and being denied she knew that she had to share her experience. She couldn't hold it in any longer. She said that she didn't want any sympathy, she didn't want attention, she just wants this to never, ever happen to anybody else again, and she is calling on me, as her MLA, to make this change happen immediately.

She is also calling on the Minister of Health and Wellness and begging him to do something to make this change immediately. She says the reason she was so traumatized and re-traumatized was because we do not have a SANE program in Truro.

With huge public campaigns like the Me Too movement and the Been Raped Never Reported movement - which maybe some people might remember was the Canadian equivalent that came out a couple of years actually before the Me Too movement - all of a sudden women were putting hashtags and putting on Facebook and Twitter their own stories and signs saying Been Raped Never Reported.

It was an empowering time for women, but also a watershed moment, and we cannot let that moment pass by, I don't think, without actually making it make a difference, which means acting.

As people who not only create the laws, but enforce the laws and regulate the laws, it is our duty to try to do the very best that we can to change the status quo. I think that looking after women, taking their issues seriously, and acting immediately is the way forward.

As we raise public awareness around sexualized violence and discuss the supports that are available, or more often shamefully not yet available, increasing numbers of people are coming forward ready to share their experience and seek help. When they do, as elected representatives, I believe we have a responsibility to make sure that the services they need are available wherever they are in the province. It's unacceptable that emergency services like the SANE program would only be available to some people in some communities.

I'm told that Yarmouth is going to now be put on the list, which is wonderful. Cape Breton is going to be put on the list, which is wonderful. But where is Truro on that list? Again, we are a community of many people. We have two universities, a university and a college, in our community. We all know that many sexual assaults and issues arise on university campuses, so we need to make sure that we keep that in mind as well.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that a committed and sustained government funding for the full spectrum of services is required. Services for survivors of sexualized violence must be trauma-informed, culturally competent, and available to all Nova Scotians: women, men, LGBTQ, youth, seniors, indigenous people, Acadians, Francophone, African Nova Scotians, immigrants, and refugees. Services must provide equitable access to information and resources across diverse communities and organizations. Please believe me when I say that when an individual is sexually assaulted, they are seriously traumatized, and they will need all the help that they can get to move forward. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I too was very concerned when I heard the media reports that a young woman who was a victim of sexual violence went to a health care centre, the Colchester East Hants Health Centre, and was turned away, given pamphlets. We heard the Premier himself speak that that should not have happened. That is not how anybody in such a situation should be treated, and I think everyone in this House takes this concern seriously. It's tragic that it happened and that it still happens. I think we are making gains in some areas of the province, though, with programs. It still is a big public concern, and the safety of all Nova Scotians should be a concern to every member of this House. It's a traumatic experience for anyone.

There's the SANE program here in Nova Scotia, which is the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner. That is coordinated by calling the local RCMP when someone arrives at an emergency room seeking help. A nurse should be contacted, and that can be done not just by the emergency room, but on site if a police officer arrives, they can contact the person. They should receive any of the care, which would include a rape kit and some counselling and someone to just talk to and who can empathize with them and help them know and recognize that their fears and what they're feeling is very true. I think most people just want to jump in a shower and clean themselves, but no amount of cleaning will clean you from this until you have some type of therapy, being able to speak about it. You'll have that fear for a long, long time. You may never lose that fear. I think by having these sexual assault nurses, they are a wonderful part of this whole sexual strategy program that we are implementing here in Nova Scotia.

There are community-based services and they're located, recently, in Halifax-Dartmouth, Lower Sackville, Antigonish, New Glasgow, Port Hawkesbury, Yarmouth, and there is a site coming to Cape Breton later this month.

MS. LENORE ZANN: But not Truro.

MS. LOHNES-CROFT: No, but they'll be there. Give us time. It will be coming.

The western region, the Tri County Women's Centre, has a contract with the NSHA to keep theirs going.

I want to talk about a program that is happening in my area. We have this magnificent program that was started, I would say, back in 2012. It is called Be the Peace, and it was done through a health and wellness federal program, had some provincial funding at times, that brought the community together - people from Justice, from Health and Wellness, from Education and Early Childhood Development, a broad base of people - people who were victims, women's centres - and there was a lot of listening and a lot of talking. They have created conversations between men and boys to understand what consent is and to go into the schools and to hold public groups. They have youth groups and men's groups and women's groups, and they provide some wonderful opportunities that are not available in other areas for people to provide assistance for people.

We all know that domestic violence and sexual violence are one of the most challenging types of cases that any law enforcement person, any health person, has to deal with. It's really important that people realize there are places to go and that when there is a sexual assault in Lunenburg County or Queens, if they go to Queens General, there is a counsellor available. That information can be sought through Harbour House. They have a 1-800 number. It's part of a community-wide partnership between the Health Authority, Second Story Women's Centre, Harbour House, the sexual health centre, the Town of Bridgewater Police, and the Lunenburg-Queens RCMP. There are lots of people involved in this program who are not involved in those groups but are just interested in having a more peaceful society and want to address the issue of domestic and sexual violence.

This has been available for three years and it is being expanded into the eastern and western zones. They have formed their own institute now so that they have their own board of directors. They are working very independently but they are very determined to continue the services they have and also to provide more opportunities to expand their program and to provide stronger mental health care.

I think the debate question was that there weren't enough services. Certainly there are not enough services, but there are some services, and the program is growing here in Nova Scotia. It does take time.

We have heard from the minister herself today during Question Period where she said she would gladly work with anyone here in the House, members of the Opposition and the Department of Health and Wellness, to continue to improve on these services.

We know that our universities are doing their part as well. We know there's a culture of alcohol in our province that has increased instances, and we have the cyberbullying that is going on with people of all ages. It's really affecting a lot of students in our public schools, and it's affecting people of middle age, because we all have access - well, not all have access, but a lot of people have access to the Internet.

Seven months of research went into a report with the universities and they came up with the recommendations for delivery of consent education and training, to responding to

sexual assault victims, develop a delivery of anti-oppression education for leaders on the campuses, to establish sexual violence protection advisory committees on campuses, and primary prevention initiatives reduce victim blaming.

[5:00 p.m.]

That is something that we often don't talk about but there is a lot of victim blaming, you know, what was the victim wearing, did the victim make eye contact with the person, and that culture has to change as well. Changing the culture on campuses is very important for us here in Nova Scotia and we know that our universities are really working hard on that. We've seen even Frosh Week change here in Nova Scotia. They are really implementing a lot of strategies, changing the way activities are carried out in our colleges and universities. I remember my son's first year at Saint Mary's University was the year of the rant and we were quite shocked that where he was going to university had such an incident happen in his first week on campus.

So, lots of things are going on. I want everyone to remember there is help for people who have been sexually violated in any way and to go to your nearest emergency centre and seek help.

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

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start off by thanking the member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River for bringing this forward and to thank the member for Lunenburg for outlining some of the programs that are offered out there, as well as the Minister of Community Services. There is not a person in this House or in this province who wouldn't agree that this is a crisis for the women and men of this province who experience sexual assault.

I want to reference the statement that the member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River said that she wanted to teach all boys in this province to behave better, because the sad reality is that 99 per cent of all rape is done by boys and men. I raised four of them myself and I remember teaching them the Stranger Danger song and, then, as I got older, realized that the majority of rape in this province and country is by someone you know. It is your spouse. It is your neighbour. It's your uncle, your grandfather, a brother, or a friend. It is not the stranger lurking around the corner. In very few cases do the women and men not know who their attacker was, but we are losing the battle in terms of the number of rapes that are going on in this country and our province.

So when we talk about spending money on programs and outlining what's available, the first question for me isn't about the treatment services. It's about the prevention. Are we winning that battle and the answer is no, no across the country. So, it's not just us. There are over 600,000 rape and molestation incidents in this country every year. Out of 1,000 sexual assaults, 33 get reported to police and only three lead to

conviction. So for those who have ever been violently raped, with only a three out of 33 convictions, it does not encourage very many people to come forward.

I do want to speak about the 14 per cent of victims who are men and little boys. They don't like to talk about it. I talked to counsellors who treat them. They don't ever want to report it because they somehow think it's even worse for them to report it than a woman or a little girl.

So the question I wanted to ask myself when I took over the critic role for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women is: What are we spending our money on and is it working? So I was very happy when I got my orientation right after the election about how much money we're spending on prevention as well as treatment for those who are violently abused. I was physically ill when I found out how little money was spent on prevention - about \$1 million a year - and I said yesterday in the House that isn't anywhere near enough.

We're also providing education, identification, and treatment, but the violent rape of our babies, children, sisters and brothers, parents or grandparents is increasing every year. Almost 19 per cent of those raped and molested, it's done by two people. It's not like each of us who have been raped is only raped or molested once. There are people who have been subjected to this over and over again over their lifetime.

So when I got oriented, I thought, great, what are we doing to try to prevent this? The government came up with a sexual violence strategy, \$6 million. They took a year to develop the strategy, and prevention was one of those things. I'm assuming, with \$6 million put in, that we will see a reduction in the incidence of rape.

I went to the sexual violence prevention and supports report by the Department of Community Services to our Standing Committee on Community Services, on December 5, 2017. I was excited to hear you got \$4 million over those last two years, and all of these community organizations got their support. They hired people. They put programs online, which everybody should have a look at - www.breakthesilencens.ca - training, which was really important.

I looked through the entire report, and there wasn't a single number. Now, I'm an outcome measures person, as a physiotherapist. If we're going to provide money for prevention and treatment, then I want to see proof that at the end of all of that, there was reduced incidence of rape and molestation and there was an improvement in the treatment programs.

Before we even had the committee meeting, everyone who was given those grants knew that they were about to come to an end - before they had even reported on whether they were successful or not. That would be incredibly disheartening for me to get a grant for two years knowing that it was going to end no matter how well our program did, to

have to tell people who were in the middle of a treatment program, sorry, the money ran out.

There are no statistics, so I asked at that meeting: Are there fewer rapes going on in this province? Ultimately, that's the most important question: Are fewer boys and men touching and raping little girls, little boys, older adults, and seniors less than they used to? They said they didn't know.

As a health professional in this Legislature, I have listened very carefully every day when everybody asks a question and everybody answers or doesn't answer a question, what is the evidence that what you spent our money on made a difference? I can tell you my nickname used to be the outcome measures queen of Canada, because if a family member called me up and said, "Barbara, if you did home care physiotherapy on my mother for 20 visits, what would be different at the end of that 20 visits?" I could tell them almost exactly what the difference was going to be from beginning to end. They had the right to know, if they were spending money on my services, that I was going to actually make a difference.

I'm going to ask the Minister of Community Services, ask all three sides, if any issue deserves co-operation, I don't know of any more than this other than, say, murder. This is a violent act that scars on the inside and outside, mentally, physically, socially, and financially. They last forever, and they impact the next generation and your spouse.

When we look at the statistics that Statistics Canada shows us, the number of rapes are going up every year. They are not going down. I want to reference our member who always speaks about the fact that we have pornography all over the Internet. We have instant access to violence all over our TVs. We celebrate it with caged fights.

I know it has to be a multi-pronged approach, and I commend the government for things like introducing the courts that are going to be dealing with this in a more sensitive manner. I'm going to encourage the government that when we are putting funding in, for whatever program it is, we have clear indicators for what success is. If we gave you a report card on whether that \$6 million achieved the outcome that you intended, I don't know how we would measure it. Yes, there's greater awareness. Yes, there may be more people reporting it. But the number of rapes is still going up. There are still 19 per cent of those being violated where there are two or more attackers. Of course, everyone knows Rehtaeh Parsons came from my constituency. They filmed it and put it out on the Internet.

We have to do better. We have to be willing to put aside all of the Party colours and the grandstanding and say to ourselves: Did that \$6 million do what it was supposed to do? How are we going to fund future programs across this province? Of course, we've all been talking about the SANE program itself.

I want every little girl and little boy and every adult who has been violated, molested, and raped to have the confidence that when they walk into an emergency room, everybody is going to know what to do.

I want every teacher to know what their obligation is. I want every parent to know what the warning signs are. I want every little boy to learn not just how to tie his shoes, and not just to know what the rules are for a particular sports event, but how to respect the opposite sex and their own sex. It is the parents' ultimate responsibility to make sure that their children know how to behave properly. It starts with us in the home. It takes an entire community to make sure that we are not condoning this behaviour in any way, that we are doing everything in this Legislature, and in the communities that we can.

I applaud the government for the initiatives they did do and those communities that poured their heart and soul into those programs that they had funding for for two years. I know the ones who lost their funding were devastated and want it back. I don't blame them. Moving forward, we need to have indicators that you can come back into the House and say, we spent the money on this and this got better. Or we have to change course and find something else that will do a better job.

MR. SPEAKER: Time allotted for late debate has expired.

The House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, September 13th.

[The House rose at 5:12 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 52**

By: Hon. Christopher d'Entremont (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas on Thursday, September 13th, 2018 the West Pubnico Golf & Country Club will be holding a special evening in celebration of its 50th Anniversary; and

Whereas on October 31st, 1965, a group of 37 interested individuals started the construction of a 9-hole golf course on 80 acres of land and it was officially opened in 1968; and

Whereas Stan Surette was elected the first president and 245 shares were sold. The West Pubnico Golf & Country Club then opened a 9-hole expansion in 1988 where Clara d'Entremont hit out the first ball;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly hope the West Pubnico Golf & Country Club continues to be one of the first courses to open for the season and that all join me in congratulating the West Pubnico Golf & Country Club on its 50th Anniversary and wish them much success in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 53

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas after many years of dedicated service to the Mineville Community, Ms. Melanie Naugle's Canada Post route was changed on July 13th, 2018; and

Whereas she has faithfully delivered the mail to the community for the past 20 years; and

Whereas she went above and beyond the call of duty by delivering packages and letters to the residents' homes, always with a smiling face and pleasant greeting;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize and congratulate Ms. Melanie Naugle for her dedicated and excellent service to the people of Mineville.

RESOLUTION NO. 54

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas the Lake Echo Fellowship Baptist Church (LEFBC) is holding its 30-year anniversary celebration on Sunday, September 16th, 2018; and

Whereas LEFBC is very focused on building community within community through support for such events as the Mineville Community Association summer fair and community breakfasts after Hurricane Juan; and

Whereas the LEFBC provides ministries for men, women, youth, and children under the leadership of Lead Pastor Doug Duncan and Family Ministry Pastor Scott Mackenzie;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House recognize and congratulate the LEFBC on 30 years of spiritual leadership and active involvement in the community.

RESOLUTION NO. 55

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Agriculture)

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

Whereas Saint Anne's Church of Lake Echo is holding its 50-year anniversary celebration on October 14th, 2018; and

Whereas Archbishop Anthony Mancini will be participating in the church service and anniversary celebration; and

Whereas the reception for the anniversary celebration will be held at the Porter's Lake Community Centre for both current and former members of the congregation;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House recognize and congratulate Saint Anne's Church on 50 years of spiritual leadership in our communities.

RESOLUTION NO. 56

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Alyre Theriault was recognized for his 10 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Alyre Theriault for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 10 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 57

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Andrew Hill was recognized for his 10 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Andrew Hill for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 10 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 58

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Ann Theriault was recognized for her 25 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Ann Theriault for her hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 25 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 59

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Barry Faulkner was recognized for his 15 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Barry Faulkner for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 15 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 60

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Blair LeBlanc was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Blair LeBlanc for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 61

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Christien LeBlanc was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Christien LeBlanc for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 62

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Colin LeBlanc was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Colin LeBlanc for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 63

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Daniel Gaudet was recognized for his 10 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Daniel Gaudet for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 10 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 64

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas David Comeau was recognized for his 10 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate David Comeau for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 10 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 65

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Delbert Comeau was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Delbert Comeau for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 66

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Donald Saulnier was recognized for his 20 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Donald Saulnier for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 20 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 67

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Gary Melanson was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Gary Melanson for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 68

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Gilbert Chandler was recognized for his 30 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Gilbert Chandler for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 30 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 69

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas James Comeau was recognized for his 10 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate James Comeau for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 10 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 70

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Jeanne Alice Comeau was recognized for her five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Jeanne Alice Comeau for her hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 71

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Jocelyne Comeau was recognized for her five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Jocelyne Comeau for her hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 72

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas John Comeau was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate John Comeau for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 73

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Judy Adams was recognized for her five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Judy Adams for her hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 74

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Julien Comeau was recognized for his 10 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Julien Comeau for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 10 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 75

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Kayla Doucette was recognized for her five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Kayla Doucette for her hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 76

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Nathan Dugas was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Nathan Dugas for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 77

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Paul Comeau was recognized for his 25 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Paul Comeau for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 25 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 78

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Paul Leavey was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Paul Leavey for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 79

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Paul Pothier was recognized for his 30 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Paul Pothier for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 30 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 80

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Ralph Dugas was recognized for his 25 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Ralph Dugas for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 25 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 81

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Raynald Poulin was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Raynald Poulin for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 82

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Robert Huber was recognized for his 20 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Robert Huber for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 20 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 83

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Roger LeBlanc was recognized for his 35 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Roger LeBlanc for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 35 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 84

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Roland Belliveau was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Roland Belliveau for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 85

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Ryan LeBlanc was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Ryan LeBlanc for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 86

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Steven Jeddry was recognized for his five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Steven Jeddry for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 87

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Tabatha Hicks was recognized for her five years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Tabatha Hicks for her hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past five years.

RESOLUTION NO. 88

By: Mr. Gordon Wilson (Clare-Digby)

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

Whereas the Clare Search and Rescue Association was founded in 1983 and is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping others; and

Whereas Clare Search and Rescue held its 35th Anniversary banquet on June 16, 2018, at the Meteghan Lions Club; and

Whereas Yvon Thibodeau was recognized for his 25 years of dedicated service;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank and congratulate Yvon Thibodeau for his hard work and commitment to the Clare Search and Rescue Association for the past 25 years.

RESOLUTION NO. 89

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Lands and Forestry)

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

Whereas the long- time Co-operative Education Coordinator for Halifax West High School is Andrew Gavas of Halifax; and

Whereas Mr. Gavas runs an impressive program of 100 participants at the school, giving students the opportunity to do career research, career planning, as well as build an impressive résumé with helpful certifications such as first aid and WHMIS; and

Whereas the course also allows students to explore a career in which they are interested through a 100-hour job placement, better preparing them for their post-secondary plans and allowing them to gain invaluable work experience;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in applauding Mr. Gavas for his commitment to assuring Halifax West students are prepared to enter the workforce after their post-secondary education.

RESOLUTION NO. 90

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as Luke Bonang are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Luke Bonang for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 91

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as Hayden Brittain are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Hayden Brittain for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 92

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as Tristen Conrad are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Tristen Conrad for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 93

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as Ryland Firth are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Ryland Firth for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 94

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as Isaac Fry are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Isaac Fry for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 95

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as Aiden Lovell are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Aiden Lovell for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 96

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as Macgregor Mills are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Macgregor Mills for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 97

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as William Munroe are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating William Munroe for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 98

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as Aiden Peddle are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Aiden Peddle for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 99

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as James Pettipas are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating James Pettipas for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 100

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as Finn St. Hilaire are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Finn St. Hilaire for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 101

By: Hon. Kevin Murphy (The Speaker)

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

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team is comprised of 12 players and four coaches, all from the Eastern Shore area; and

Whereas the Eastern Shore Breakers novice lacrosse team had an amazing season, finishing 21 to 0 and winning the Novice division in the Metro Minor Lacrosse League; and

Whereas young athletes such as Blake Thomas are to be congratulated on their athletic talent and abilities and their dedication to the sport of lacrosse;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Blake Thomas for an outstanding 2018 lacrosse season and wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavours.