



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2018

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2018

Sixty-third General Assembly

Second Session

1:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Ms. Suzanne Lohnes-Croft, Mr. Brendan Maguire

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of privilege today.

I'd first like to emphasize that this point is firmly and fundamentally rooted in the first and last rules of the Rules and Forms of Procedure of this House of Assembly. I am outraged that any member of this House would even attempt to change the Rules of this House by using the majority in committee. Does the Liberal Government not read the Rules of this House?

Mr. Speaker, Rule 1 of the House, and the committee established pursuant to the rules, Rule 1 of the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly states with regard to the Application of Rules: "The proceedings in the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia and in all committees of the House shall be conducted according to the following Rules."

Rule 2 goes on to specify that the Speaker shall be guided by: "Firstly - the usages and precedents of this House"

In accordance with this rule, as well as Rule 85, last week a motion was put forward by the Government House Leader to establish a new committee of the House and to change the mandates of existing committees of the House. The Government House Leader did so because the Rules of the House demand it. Rule 85, more specifically, states: “No Rule adopted by the House shall be dispensed with, unless by consent of at least two thirds of the Members present.”

Two thirds of the members of this House, Mr. Speaker. Rules governing votes in committees require a simple majority in accordance with Rule 61(1), but no committee can circumvent the Rules of the House of Assembly.

This morning in the Public Accounts Committee, the Liberal member for Clare-Digby made a motion to fundamentally change and significantly circumscribe the mandate of the Public Accounts Committee. The Liberal majority voted and supported it. The Liberal members adopted a motion that limited the mandate of the Public Accounts Committee to only addressing Auditor General Reports. This is outrageous.

I realize that scrutinizing government spending of such things as the Public Accounts is uncomfortable and politically embarrassing, but Nova Scotians have the right to know - how ironic that the government attempted to prevent government spending scrutiny on the Right to Know Week.

The mandate, Mr. Speaker, for the Public Accounts Committee is set out in Rule 60(2)(b), which states: “For greater certainty . . . the Public Accounts Committee is established for the purpose of reviewing the public accounts, the annual report or other report of the Auditor General, and any other financial matters respecting the public funds of the Province.”

That is very clear, and every single member of this House has a stake in it. All Nova Scotians do. For, after all, if a government is not prepared to be held accountable for all spending decisions, they are not governing in a democracy.

As a member of this Assembly, I do not accept that the tyranny of the majority in committee can pull a fast one and try to change the rules of the Public Accounts Committee. The Liberals could simply have continued just voting against topics they found embarrassing. In fact, trying to limit what topics can even be brought before the committee to only one part of the mandate established by the Rules of this House insults me, all the other members of this House, and you, Mr. Speaker.

The Standing Orders of the House of Commons expounds further that Mandates of Committees are directed by the House, specifically in Standing Order 108(1)(a). I order this because Rule 1 of this House also directs, secondly, to the standing and sessional orders and forms of the House of Commons in force at the time are to be referenced in cases not provided for in applying the Rules of this House. In this regard, I maintain our rules are

clear that you, Mr. Speaker, have a solemn obligation to ensure that a simple majority of a committee cannot change the mandate of that committee. That must be done in accordance with Rule 85.

The text of the motion I am prepared to introduce is: I move that my privileges as a member of this Legislature were circumvented and rendered null by the actions of Liberal members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts when:

- the Liberal majority of members, by simple majority, changed the mandate of the Public Accounts Committee which, again, is held in Rule 60(2)(b);
- they contravened Rule 85, which requires two-thirds of the members of this House to do so.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to act to ensure the Rules and Forms of Procedure are upheld and enforced for all members, not just the majority of a committee of the House. The mandate of the Public Accounts Committee cannot be limited other than by two-thirds of this House.

I ask you, therefore, Mr. Speaker, to overturn that motion and uphold Rule 60(2)(b).

MR. SPEAKER: I will take the matter of privilege under advisement and report back to the House.

Just before we get on with the daily routine, the topic for late debate, as submitted by the honourable member for Argyle-Barrington under Rule 5(5), is:

Therefore, be it resolved that all members of the Legislature condemn the Liberal Government for their disregard for democracy, transparency, and the Rules of the Legislature with regard to the behaviour of Liberal members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

This is the late debate for this evening at the moment of interruption.

We'll now begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

MR. SPEAKER: As Speaker of the House of Assembly, pursuant to Section 24 of the Ombudsman Act, I am pleased to table the following report: the Annual Report of the Office of the Ombudsman for 2017-2018.

The report is tabled.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): May I do an introduction before I do a motion?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the east gallery where we have with us tonight some people from Volta. Tonight, Volta will officially open its new, expanded space at the Maritime Centre with a community celebration. This marks an important milestone for Volta, and it's an important milestone for the start-up community in Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotia has become a place to watch for start-ups, with over 200 start-ups in Halifax and Sydney, and Volta is playing a big role in helping high-potential funders build great companies here.

I would like to introduce with us: Jesse Rodgers, who is Chief Executive Officer of Volta; Jevon MacDonald, co-founder of Volta, chair of the board, and co-founder of Manifold, a Volta resident company; and Ashley Kielbratowski, co-founder of Harbr, a Volta resident company.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the House to give these great Nova Scotians a warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 251

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

Whereas Volta, Halifax's technological hub, was started in 2013 by a group of energetic technology entrepreneurs; and

Whereas Volta is now a key piece of Halifax's innovation district, helping more than 70 technology companies get started while creating over 500 jobs, adding to the 4,000 people employed in high-growth sectors and attracting nearly \$70 million in venture capital to our province; and

Whereas Volta's community will gather tonight to officially open its new expanded space in the first three floors of the Maritime Centre;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Volta on its expansion, and thank Jesse Rodgers and the Volta team for helping us drive innovation and support entrepreneurs.

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. (Standing Ovation)

[1:15 p.m.]

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 252

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

Whereas Claire Ellison, a 17-year-old from Halifax, is one of the Junior Women's Quad who competed at the 2018 World Rowing Junior Championships in Račice, Czech Republic, from August 7th to August 12th; and

Whereas the World Rowing Junior Championships is an annual sporting event for rowers 18 years of age or younger from around the world, consisting of 13 boat classes which are raced over five days using the progression system of heats through to the finals; and

Whereas, Ms. Ellison and her quad faced an extremely tough competition which placed them in respectable sixth place overall;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Claire Ellison on competing in the 2018 World Rowing Junior Championships and for being an inspirational young female athlete and role model across the province.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 253

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

Whereas Ian Gaudet, a 15-year-old from Dartmouth, is a young paddler who competed in the 2018 Olympic Hopes Regatta in Bydgoszcz, Poland, from September 14 to September 16; and

Whereas the Olympic Hopes Regatta is an international event designed for future-generation athletes 17 years or younger from around the world looking to gain high-quality international racing experience; and

Whereas Mr. Gaudet received a total of three medals including one gold during this year's regatta and has a long-term goal of paddling for Canada in the Summer Olympics in 2024;

Therefore, be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Ian Gaudet on competing in the 2018 Olympic Hopes Regatta receiving three medals and for being an inspirational young role model to communities across the province.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 254

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

Whereas September 23rd to September 29th is the first Gender Equality Week in Canada; and

Whereas women comprise 51 per cent of Nova Scotia's population and gender equality benefits everyone - women, men, children, and people of all gender identities; and

Whereas the Department of Community Services and the Advisory Council on the Status of Women celebrate the diversity in our province and recognize the vital role that gender equality plays in building a stronger province where all Nova Scotians can grow and succeed;

Therefore be it resolved all members of this Legislature recognize the importance of ongoing work to ensure there is strong leadership in building gender equality in Nova Scotia.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 255

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

Whereas Easter Seals Nova Scotia is a not-for-profit registered charity that supports persons with disabilities by advocating for a barrier-free province and providing services promoting their mobility, inclusion, and independence; and

Whereas the Drop Zone is a major fundraiser for this organization and involves teams rappelling down 23 stories from Halifax's tallest office tower, after raising funds to support this feat; and

Whereas, last Friday, three members of this House, the Minister of Business, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, and the member for Halifax Atlantic together with teammate, Ruth Wawin, who is the constituency assistant for the member for Lunenburg all rappelled down 1801 Hollis Street as members of their team, Super Nova.

Therefore be it resolved the members of this House congratulate team Super Nova on raising over \$4,000 for the good work of Easter Seals Nova Scotia and congratulate all who scaled these heights to help this organization.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: May I make an introduction, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. DELOREY: I'd like to direct the members' attention to the east gallery where I'd like to introduce Emilie Chiasson. Emilie is the Atlantic regional director for Ovarian Cancer Canada and is in the midst of coordinating the third annual the Lady Ball event

celebrating strength in support of Ovarian Cancer Canada and it will take place at Pier 21 tomorrow. So, I'd request my colleagues in the Legislature to give Emilie the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

RESOLUTION NO. 256

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

Whereas all women are at risk of developing ovarian cancer, the most fatal of women's cancers; and

Whereas symptoms of ovarian cancer are easily overlooked because they can signal a wide variety of conditions; and

Whereas groups like Ovarian Cancer Canada help raise greater awareness about ovarian cancer leading to earlier detection which increases the chance of successful treatment;

Therefore, be it resolved that all members of the Legislature recognize September as National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Justice.

RESOLUTION NO. 257

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is home to many dedicated and talented lawyers who work tirelessly to improve public policy and justice, mentor the next generation of lawyers, and advance equality for all; and

Whereas each year, *Canadian Lawyer* magazine names Canada's 25 most influential lawyers to highlight the important and significant work jurists have done in the last 18 months; and

Whereas in 2018, Professor Naiomi Metallic, the inaugural Chancellor's Chair in Aboriginal Law and Policy at the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University was selected for this prestigious list and described by her peers as a true leader and innovator both in academia and practice;

Therefore, be it resolved that all members of this House join me in congratulating Professor Metallic on being recognized as being one of Canada's 25 most influential lawyers and for using the practice of law as a tool for reconciliation and improving the lives of Indigenous peoples.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 258

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Environment, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas young people have the passion, the intelligence, and the determination to make the world a better place for all of us; and

Whereas since Stella Bowles was 11 years old, her determination to see the LaHave River cleaned up has been inspiring citizens, governments, and all Nova Scotians; and

Whereas Stella is now 14, has just published a book, *My River: Cleaning Up the LaHave River* and recently received the International Young Eco Hero Award for her work to improve our environment;

Therefore, be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Stella Bowles and thank her for her work in inspiring change.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 259

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Environment, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas public and environmental health inspectors respond to emerging threats to public health, help prevent and control communicable disease, and support health promotion efforts; and

Whereas this work includes preventing and responding to threats to our food, water, air, and ensures that children have safe areas to play and communities have safe places to gather; and

Whereas September 24th to the 28th has been designated as Environmental Public Health Week;

Therefore, be it resolved that all members of this House recognize and thank public and environmental health inspectors across the province who do so much to ensure Nova Scotians remain safe and healthy.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 63 - Entitled an Act to Repeal Chapter 7 of the Acts of 2015. The Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition Commission Act. (Hon. Keith Colwell)

Bill No. 64 - An Act to Amend Chapter 293 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Motor Vehicle Act. (Hon. Pat Dunn)

Bill No. 65 - An Act to Reform Public Body Executive Compensation. (Hon. David Wilson)

Bill No. 66 - An Act to Amend Chapter 12 of the Acts of 2011. The Public Procurement Act. (Hon. David Wilson)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

SCOTT FAIRBAIRN, STEVE FAIRBAIRN - DET. CSTS.: HRP LONG SERV. AWARD - CONGRATS.

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate two constituents for their bravery and loyalty and for serving our community for 15 years with the Halifax Regional Police.

Twin brothers Detective Constable Scott Wayne Fairbairn and Detective Constable Steve Andrew Fairbairn are the recent recipients of the Nova Scotia Police Long Service Award.

It was an honour to be in attendance for this ceremony. It is with gratitude that we recognize the many hats a police officer must wear each day to keep our neighbourhoods safe. They are dedicated professionals who serve our communities individually and as part of a team with honour, pride, diplomacy and passion.

I ask all members of the House to join me in congratulating Detective Constable Scott Fairbairn and Detective Constable Steve Fairbairn on their Long Service Awards.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

ZUPPA THEATRE: *THIS IS NOWHERE* - BEST WISHES

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, starting tonight, downtown Halifax will become a stage and setting for the much-anticipated new performance offering by Zuppa Theatre Co.

This Is Nowhere is a theatrical adventure, scavenger hunt, and planning exercise in which audience members roam the city gathering clues, making choices, and witnessing performances here and there. With the help of a phone app, audiences are encouraged to think about the future of a city - this city, and to share their thoughts in a theatrical game.

The production is unprecedented in size and scope for theatre in Nova Scotia. It features over 40 local performers, two large choirs, and a total creative team of over 100 people. All of it happens in 13 secret locations and is accessible to people with hearing impairments, sight impairments, and people who need to use a scooter or wheelchair, and it is also free.

This Is Nowhere is supported by all three levels of government, including the prestigious new Chapter Grant from Canada Council. Zuppa is regularly praised for its innovative, exciting creations. The company has toured internationally and nationally and has won numerous awards.

I am very proud of my friends and colleagues for their latest offering and I wish the entire team a happy opening and wonderful run.

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

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I know that she does not want me to do this but we're going to do it anyway. If I could bring the members' attention to the east gallery where we are graced today with the absolute best constituency assistant anybody could ask for, Allison Covert.

Allison is my person. She allows me to do my job to the best of my ability. She is the Riker to my Picard, and I would ask her to rise and accept the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

[1:30 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Portland Valley.

RITCEY, MARYANN: RETIREMENT - BEST WISHES

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Maryann Ritcey.

For 25 years, Maryann owned and operated her small business in Cole Harbour. Her gift shop, Maryann's Gifts, has provided our community with one-of-a-kind Mother's Day gifts; birthday presents; furniture pieces; wonderful-smelling candles; and so much more as far as handmade items and handmade, locally-made candles.

Over the past 25 years, the presence of her store, along with her amazing personality, have continued to intertwine with residents. I have been very honoured to have seen Maryann and seen her at her best in her store.

This summer, Maryann decided it was time to retire and begin a new chapter in her life. Although the community will miss her beautiful store, I know we will still experience her enthusiasm and her ongoing efforts to give back to the community.

I kindly ask my colleagues and friends to join me in wishing Maryann all the best in her future endeavours.

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

MACKENZIE, PATSY: SENIORS' MOBILITY PROGS. - THANKS

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a program that has proven successful and is of great interest to seniors in both Victoria and Cape Breton counties. The number of seniors living with mobility issues has been growing in our rural communities, and yoga has been making a positive impact for many seniors, enabling them to continue to do the things they love.

I ask all members of this Legislature to join me in thanking Patsy MacKenzie for spreading her positive energy and passion and to help develop and sustain programs such as seniors' chair yoga throughout southern Victoria County and parts of Cape Breton County.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

LOCAL ORGANIZERS: BUILDING COM. RESILIENCE - THANKS

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize and thank local organizers who bring people together in different micro neighbourhoods across Halifax Needham to make and hear music, share food, and celebrate community.

A few weeks ago, I dropped by the Black Street party. In June, I made it to Uniacke Beautification Day. Between June and September, neighbours gathered for the Hydrostone Hall, the Creighton Street painting project, the High Street party, Mulgrave Park Days, the Bliss Street party, and no doubt countless other celebrations in the wonderful, diverse, and vibrant district I am so honoured to represent.

Building relationships with people who are not kin and knowing our neighbours contributes to our collective mental health and to community resilience. By protecting and promoting walkable neighbourhoods, including through working with the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities, the province can also play its part.

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

MACINTOSH, MARLEE: ICF CHAMPION - CONGRATS.

MS. RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a young woman who is making incredible strides in her favourite sport.

Marlee MacIntosh has been canoeing at Maskwa Aquatic Club since she was 7 years old. She excels in sprint canoeing and long distance. On September 6th, Marlee represented Canada in the Canoe Marathon World Championships in Portugal. Marlee won gold at the ICF championships at the end of August after paddling 11.8 kilometres. That day, Marlee became a world champion at age 17 years old. Marlee loves sports because of the opportunities it gives young athletes.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that this House of Assembly congratulate Marlee on her big win and her bright athletic future. Thank you, Marlee.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

TEAM SPORTS: BUILDING CHARACTER - RECOG.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, if you want your child to grow up to be a confident and well-adjusted adult, then team sports could very well be part of the solution.

Team sports provide youngsters with valuable lessons on personal values. Basically, it comes down to performing as a team, accepting decisions, and understanding that people have different abilities. Kids develop numerous healthy skills while

participating in team sports: friendship; co-operation; teamwork skills; leadership skills; respect for teammates, opponents, and officials; a sense of belonging; improved social interaction skills; greater self-esteem, self-discipline, and patience.

Research states it is certainly is beneficial for kids to be involved in team sports, as opposed to playing hours of electronic games or watching television.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

PHARMACISTS' TAKE YOUR MLA TO WORK DAY - THANKS

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, on Monday I joined the pharmacy team at the Lawtons Drugs on Primrose Street for Take Your MLA to Work Day. It was a wonderful chance to see firsthand the important work that is being done there each day.

I learned about the care that is taken with each and every customer, who often present with complex health needs resulting from poverty, and about how the staff there are performing the role of front line health navigators, as well as pharmacists and pharmacy assistants.

I learned about the generosity of the staff, how they bake at home and then hold bake sales to raise money for needs in Dartmouth North. At their last bake sale, they raised over \$800, which went to the Dartmouth High Breakfast Program, a sunscreen drive for kids in the community, and to programs at the community food centre.

I learned how the store was given a national award for community service last year. I learned that the Employee of the Year is Stanley, the giant computer that dispenses drugs in proper amounts, labels bottles, and makes life easier for everyone.

I want to thank lead pharmacist Irene Glinsky and her team for the invitation to the store and for the generous and dedicated service to the people of Dartmouth North.

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

CHARLTON, MADISON: WRESTLER OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Madison Charlton of Timberlea. Madison has the distinction of being the only female member of Ridgecliff Middle School wrestling team and has competed with this team for the past three years. She has earned an impressive 16 gold and silver awards as the Wrestler of the Year and the Exemplary Participation Award.

Madison dedicates six hours per week training with two wrestling clubs and coaches are confident she will go on to compete at both the national and international level.

Madison's love of sport also extends to soccer where she plays at a competitive level for the under-15 AA Halifax County soccer club.

I'd like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to congratulate Madison on her successes and wish her all the best as she continues to strive to make the Nova Scotia provincial team to represent the province at the 2021 Canada Games.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

GANDY, BRUCE/GANDY, ALEX: PIPING COMP. - BEST WISHES

MR. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and wish the best of luck to Dartmouth East resident Bruce Gandy and his son Alex, as they head to Scotland to compete in the Glenfiddich Piping Championship.

Bruce and Alex are making history as the first father and son to compete against each other at the championship, although I am sure it will be friendly competition. In a competition with only 10 people from across the globe, it's not hard to see that this is the best of the best.

I am proud of these talented Dartmouth residents and I wish them nothing but the best as they play in the motherland of the instrument they love so much.

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

N. SYDNEY PUBL. MEETING: COM. CONSULTATION - IMPORTANT

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, what a remarkable day in North Sydney on Sunday. Over 400 people came out to voice their concerns over the Cape Breton hospital closures. Local councillors and doctors took centre stage to listen to these concerns, of which there are many. What a thought - the novel idea of coming together, speaking and listening.

I would encourage the government to take a look at this type of format in the future. Rather than a blindsiding announcement where questions are not permitted, a plan is dictated, and then the speakers flee the island. This was a community-mined, collective atmosphere. Of course, the government wouldn't realize that because nobody showed up.

The Premier thought it was more important on Sunday to be in New Brunswick, helping his Party, rather than being in Cape Breton listening to the people of Nova Scotia. The Minister of Health and Wellness had plans that clashed with the current health care crisis, so he couldn't make it either.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier refers to the voices of Cape Bretoners as noise. Well let me tell you, he hasn't heard anything yet.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

HIPSON, BRYAN: KEJI TRIATHLETE - CONGRATS.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: The inaugural Keji Open Triathlon was recently held at Kejimikujik National Park and Yarmouth County's Bryan Hipson was first overall among 30 participants. Brian posted his fastest time ever for the Olympic distance triathlon, clocking a time of 2:10:40 with 24:03 for his swim, 1:05:42 for his bike and 37:53 for his run. Brian has now earned a berth in the world Olympic-distance triathlon championships to be held in Lausanne, Switzerland, next year.

I'd like to ask this House to join me in congratulating Yarmouth County's Brian Hipson on this impressive accomplishment and wish him all the best in the future triathlons and races.

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

SACKVILLE HEIGHTS: FAMILY FUN DAY - THANKS

MR. BRAD JOHNS: On August 10th this summer the Sackville Heights Community Centre held its Third Annual Family Fun Day in Middle Sackville. This free event welcomed about 500 community members for a fun morning of games, treats, and activities.

The tone of the day was set by bouncy castles, carnival games, snow cones, and crafts. Face painting, princesses, our local fire and police departments, and a local DJ all greatly contributed to the atmosphere of the day. A free barbecue and various snacks were enjoyed by all.

Mr. Speaker, the Family Fun Day continues to grow each year for the families of Sackville-Beaver Bank. I would like to just extend a thank you to all those organizers and volunteers who helped to make this year and the previous years a success.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

MS. CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. CHENDER: I'd like to draw the members' attention to the gallery opposite, where Wendy Lill, a former Member of Parliament and my friend and neighbour, has

joined us today with her son Sam Starr, who does all kinds of great work in the community. We're so glad that they're joining us here, and I ask the House to join me in giving them a warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

MILBURY, JEN: OUTSTANDING COACH AWARD - CONGRATS.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, each year the Nova Scotia School Athletic Federation recognizes one coach from each school who goes above and beyond to ensure that students have the opportunity to participate in sports. Last April, the NSSAF outstanding coach award for Hebbville Academy was presented to Jen Milbury at a luncheon here in Halifax at the Halifax Convention Centre.

Sports have always been a big part of Jen's life, and she strongly feels that she wouldn't have had the opportunity to play and enjoy sports had it not been for the teachers and volunteers who stepped up to coach in her rural community. Coaching the Hebbville Academy Jr. B boys soccer and softball teams, in addition to refereeing four sports, is a way that Jen feels she can give back. She says it's rewarding and that she enjoys watching players develop their skills, have fun, and create friendships. She also hopes that she inspires them to become leaders, be good sports, and enjoy a lifelong love of sports and being active.

Congratulations to Jen Milbury, a worthy recipient of the NSSAF outstanding coach award.

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

MACINNIS, SUSAN: NTL. SCIENCE FAIR - CONGRATS.

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Susan MacInnis, a 16-year-old Riverview High School student who came home from a national science fair in Ottawa with three awards.

Susan was one of four students from the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board to attend the 57th edition of the Canada-Wide Science Fair. She won a gold medal and a \$4,000 entrance scholarship to Western University, a gold medal Excellence Award from Youth Science Canada, and a Challenge Award in the Discovery category.

The Grade 10 student was recognized for a project she called "Accuracy of Eyewitness Testimony," which tested the level of confidence in identifying and describing suspects and demonstrated the number of people who could possibly be wrongfully convicted because of incorrect eyewitness testimony.

Today I congratulate Susan MacInnis on her many academic accomplishments and wish her well in whatever she decides to do. Mr. Speaker, our future is in good hands.

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

DUTT, MONIKA - PHYSICIAN: NSHA SUPPORT - LACKING

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, normally if I hear a friend's voice on the radio, I get excited. That wasn't the case this morning. I was dismayed to hear former Cape Breton doctor Monika Dutt lamenting the lack of support she received from the NSHA when she was trying to recruit another doctor to help her with her practice in Cape Breton.

According to Dr. Dutt, she had hoped to work part-time alongside another doctor who might be easing into retirement. Lord knows there are many of those doctors around the province, Mr. Speaker. But in spite of the NSHA's self-congratulatory tone when it comes to doctor recruitment, they were unable to offer her any suggestions.

Unable to find opportunities here, Dr. Dutt relocated to Ontario. Now Cape Breton is with one less family doctor. She hopes to return to Cape Breton one day, but in order to do that, she said - and I agree - the Health Authority needs to find new, more innovative ways of recruiting doctors in this province. Clearly the traditional ways just aren't working.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

BISHOP, LINDA: PAWS TO READ - THANKS

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to tell the House about a special pair of Bedford volunteers. Linda Bishop and her certified therapy dog Teddy have been volunteering with Paws to Read for three years. The Paws to Read program gives children the chance to build their confidence by reading to a dog, because it turns out that dogs are excellent listeners.

Together, Linda and Teddy have helped many young people become stronger, more confident readers through this program at the Bedford public library. Linda has a calm and warm demeanour and she understands children well so this is a perfect role for her. She also volunteers for many other organizations, too.

Linda was honoured for her volunteer work at the Bedford Volunteer Recognition Reception earlier this year and I'd like to thank her for all her efforts. She is one of those special people who help make Bedford such a special place to live.

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

[1:45 p.m.]

CAMP JORDAN: FUNDRAISING BENEFITS - CONGRATS.

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Camp Jordan Association in Jordan Falls on the major developments undertaken at this Children's Camp that was spurred on by a donation last summer from the amazing 100+ Women Who Care of Shelburne County. The donation leveraged other funding and they have been able to make some important improvements, including adding a new activity building. The camp aims to eventually make all the buildings wheelchair accessible.

It is a pleasure to congratulate camp Director Dan Peacock, staff and all the volunteers for their dedication and commitment to this historic children's summer camp, enabling current and future generations to experience the great outdoors in a fun, safe, learning environment.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

HILLIER, GORDON: 70-YR. PIN, THE LEGION - CONGRATS.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, Gordon Hillier, 92, from Tatamagouche, was still in school when war broke out. After taking advanced training he received word that he would be joining the West Novas in Halifax. For some reason that call was cancelled and by the time he received the next call the war was over. He spent two weeks training with another 150 volunteers who were asked to join the Americans and was with them when the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

When he got out of service Gordon worked at trucking. A friend who was joining the Legion convinced him to join with him in 1947. He soon became impressed by what the Legion members were accomplishing in the community. Gordon Hillier, a life member of Branch No. 64, Royal Canadian Legion in Tatamagouche, was presented with his 70-year pin in June 2018. Congratulations and thanks to Gordon for his many years of dedicated service.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount

MACINTOSH, HANNAH: INSPIRING YOUTH - BEST WISHES

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate Hannah MacIntosh, a Grade 11 student at Memorial High School. Hannah recently travelled to Ecuador as a participant of the ME to WE charity. Hannah was very busy with so much to see, learn and do.

Hannah has grown up helping others. She is a lector at her local church, helps with Sunday school, is a volunteer dance instructor, is the treasurer at the Interact Club at school, and is an honour student and an ambassador for international students at her school.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish this remarkable young lady a bright future as she continues to volunteer and help others.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

HELPING THE HELPERS: PTSD AWARENESS - RECOG.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to highlight an important opportunity for Nova Scotians who are living with post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD. Registration is now open for the 5th annual Helping the Helpers Awareness and Education Day being held in Antigonish on October 27th. This important day was started by John Garth MacDonald in 2014. John Garth is a paramedic living with PTSD and he wanted to create an event for front-line professionals and their families coping with PTSD.

The day is filled with keynote speakers, all sharing professional and personal experiences, as well as professionals providing clinical education on PTSD.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank John Garth and his wife Michelle for their commitment to helping those living with PTSD and for continuing to organize such an important event. I'd just like to pass this congratulations and thanks on.

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

MS. ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. PAON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to my colleagues in the House today, and I would ask that each member I introduce stand when I introduce them one by one. I'm very proud today and very grateful that these ladies have come all the way from Cape Breton Island in my home constituency of Cape Breton-Richmond to support me and to support people in our community who are fighting for palliative care.

I would like to introduce Linda Latimer, wife of Danny Latimer who passed away on April 12th and her daughter, Cheryl Higgins, and their friend, Stephanie Brophy, who came to support and accompany them today.

I would like to introduce Nancy Cole Day, daughter of Elizabeth Cole, who passed away on March 7th and I would like to also introduce Yvonne Samson, sister to Helen

Samson, who passed away on August 25th. I would like this House to give these ladies a round of applause and heartfelt condolences for your losses. (Applause)

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

PALLIATIVE CARE: IMPROVED ACCESS - NEEDED

MS. ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, too many Nova Scotians live their final days without the dignity and respect they deserve. Every Nova Scotian life should be valued, treated with respect, and provided with access to programs and services that help to improve quality of life. Many palliative care patients in Nova Scotia, men and women who lived, worked, and invested in our province, urgently needed our help.

Nova Scotians in their final days should be afforded the utmost respect from our government and they should be given the right to die with dignity and at peace. I urge our government to do more to support Nova Scotian families who need better access to palliative care for themselves and for their cherished loved ones.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

SPENCER, JEAN: 60-YR. PIN, CWL - CONGRATS.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to Jean Spencer for receiving the Catholic Women's League 60-year pin for longstanding service.

Throughout her many years of service to the community, Jean has dedicated herself to helping those less fortunate through involvement in multiple organizations such as the Upper Room Food Bank, receiving the Georgina Burgess Award from Feed Nova Scotia in recognition of her support. Jean Spencer is also a past recipient of the President's Volunteer Award by the Canadian Figure Skating Association for her avid involvement and effort.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Province of Nova Scotia, I would like to congratulate Jean Spencer for 60 years of dedicated community service and volunteerism to the Catholic Women's League and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

CREDIT UNION: COM. FUNDRAISING - THANKS

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, today I stand to thank Darrell Kuhn and his staff and board members of the Amherst Community Credit Union for supporting the Lillian Allbon Animal Shelter.

When the shelter held a yard sale, the credit union matched their earnings and donated more than \$1,500 to the shelter. The Lillian Allbon Animal Shelter is an independent non-profit organization which depends on donations from the public.

It is a pleasure to thank the staff and board of the Amherst Community Credit Union for their community support.

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

TRUCK CONVOY: COM. FUNDRAISING - THANKS

MS. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to acknowledge the Truck Convoy 2018. The Truck Convoy is a unique one-day event put on by the trucking industry to support Special Olympics.

On Saturday, September 23rd, Canada's largest truck convoy of 200 trucks led by 105.9 Seaside FM, from my own community, pulled out of CFB Shearwater and travelled through parts of Cole Harbour, Eastern Passage, Dartmouth, and back to Shearwater. The total raised was over \$146,000. This event started out as an event for our athletes, but quickly became just as an important event to the drivers in the convoy.

Thanks also go out to our RCMP and the Halifax Regional Police who helped make this year's convoy such a huge success.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

CROWELL, ELEANOR & JIM: CAN. 55+ GAMES MEDALLISTS - CONGRATS.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Eleanor and Jim Crowell from Bridgewater. Nova Scotia sent four teams to compete in shuffleboard at the 2018 Canada 55+ Games held in Saint John, New Brunswick last August. Eleanor and Jim earned a bronze in the Age 55+ Division where teams can be any gender.

Jim and Ellie love to play shuffleboard. They brought the sport to Bridgewater, forming the Bluenose Shuffleboard Club last Fall. They caught the fever when visiting some of Florida's snowbird communities. Shuffleboard is a fun, social, lifelong activity that everyone can play. Ellie and Jim say that the laughter and excitement created from the sport's friendly competition is infectious and it provides players with a low-impact activity that's also great exercise for the body and the brain.

I would ask the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Jim and Eleanor Crowell for their success at the Canada 55+ Games and for their leadership in developing the sport of shuffleboard on the South Shore.

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

CRANFORD, PAUL: AWARD, CAPE BRETON FIDDLE MUS. - CONGRATS.

MR. KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, on September 6th, Paul Cranford from North Shore was named this year's recipient of the Katharine McLennan Award that recognizes exceptional contributions in the areas of art, culture, and historical preservation of Cape Breton Island.

For the past 40 years, Paul kept the Cape Breton fiddle music tradition alive by preserving traditional players' sheet music for future generations of performers. Cranford, now retired, spent 34 years as a lightkeeper and used the isolation to learn to play the fiddle, research older music, and to compose his own music. During his spare time, he visited the older musicians to learn more about the island's unique fiddling style.

He has released *The Lighthouse Collection*, *The Cape Breton Scottish Collection*, *The Cape Breton Highland Collection*, *The Cape Breton Fiddlers Collection*, and *The Celtic Colours Collection*.

I ask all members of the Legislature to congratulate Paul on his Katharine McLennan Award and thank him for his many contributions to the Cape Breton fiddling community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

NEW HORIZONS BAPTIST CHURCH: RENO. - BEST WISHES

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, this weekend the congregation of the New Horizons Baptist Church, led by the Rev. Dr. Rhonda Britten, will worship for the last time in its historic sanctuary on Cornwallis Street. For many months to come, the congregation will gather in the auditorium at the Northwood Care Centre while a major renovation and expansion takes place.

Founded in 1832 by the Rev. Richard Preston, the son of a slave who came to Nova Scotia from Virginia, New Horizons Baptist Church has been an important institution and centre of community ever since.

Please join me in wishing the congregation well as it undertakes this renovation of their historic vibrant church.

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

NICHOLS, DALE: BK., *FROM PALETTE TO PALATE* - CONGRATS.

MR. GORDON WILSON: I want to congratulate the Digby Pines, Chef Dale Nichols on his new cookbook, *Culinary Artworks from the Digby Pines Kitchen*.

Chef Nichols has been a chef since 1981 and has been the head chef of the Digby Pines since 2009. The Pines, from my experience, is well known for its excellent food and its focus on using local products.

In planning the cookbook, it took Chef Nichols almost a year to narrow down the favourite recipes to a number appropriate for a cookbook. The end result is a cookbook with 150 easy-to-use recipes from appetizers to desserts. They are some of the best and most well-known dishes served at the Pines but presented in a way that home cooks can successfully make and serve. The recipes include as much as possible of the local products and include two with our Digby scallops. The cookbook is also illustrated with 50 watercolour images from recipes by artist Lynda Shalagan, a well-known artist from Halifax.

I would like to congratulate Chef Nichols on his accomplishment.

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

MEDWAY HEAD LIGHTHOUSE: OPEN TO VISITORS - CONGRATS.

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Medway Head Lighthouse Society from Port Medway, who this summer managed to open their lighthouse to visitors, thanks to dedicated fundraising and time lovingly devoted to restoring this historical lighthouse.

The fourth light at this location, it has undergone much renovation and beautification since the group assumed control in 2014. Because of the hard work and dedication of these volunteers, visitors are able to enjoy the scenic beauty of Medway Head and a display of historical photographs in the lighthouse every Wednesday and Sunday from July 1st to September 3rd.

I would like to congratulate the society on their hard work to add an attraction that is pleasing to both the community and visitors alike.

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

**LAGUNDZIJA, BENNY:
HARBOURVIEW COM. CTR. ADVOCATE - THANKS**

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Benny Lagundzija of New Harbour, Guysborough County, who has been chairman of the Harbourview Community Centre Board of Directors for its entire 11 years.

Benny has been integral in getting the centre built and, when fundraising, has been known to take on any role needed of him, including cooking at breakfast, singing karaoke tunes, taking a dip in the dunk tank, and even wading into the cold Atlantic Ocean to chase rubber duckies.

The Harbourview Community Centre plays host to many well-attended events such as dances, craft fairs, trivia nights, and just this past weekend, an old-fashioned pig roast.

I want to thank Benny for seeing the importance of these gatherings in sustaining small communities and for dedicating his tenacious advocacy through such a successful community initiative.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount with 40 seconds.

HARBOURVIEW HOSP. FDN.: MOTOR MADNESS - THANKS

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: I would like to thank the Harbourview Hospital Foundation for a very successful fourth annual Motor Madness show at the Emera Centre in Northside. The fundraiser supports the hospital foundation, which helps improve the lives of patients and visitors at two local hospitals.

There were 225 registered entries of motorcycles, antique tractors, cars, and dragsters, along with a long list of vendors with displays for the public to view. Two thousand spectators enjoyed the show.

The foundation raises money for equipment and education and to assist every department in the two hospitals.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the Harbourview Hospital Foundation for 26 years of serving the community.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much for those member statements.

[2:00 p.m.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

PREM. - NEUFELD CASE: FOIPOP DOCUMENTS - CONFIRM

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. As I am sure many of us now are aware, the government members of the Public Accounts Committee this morning have taken an unprecedented step to limit the public accountability of this government

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I would like to remind the honourable member that question period is not the place for matters that are under the jurisdiction of a committee or under consideration of the Speaker.

MS. MACFARLANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week, I asked the Premier about Ronald Neufeld and the Nova Scotia Supreme Court decision that ordered the province to turn over documents that had been denied by IAP officers.

That decision was handed down by the Supreme Court on June 18th, more than three months ago. The window for the province to appeal the decision closed more than two weeks ago, but Mr. Neufeld has not received the documents, nor has he received any word on when he might receive the documents.

My question to the Premier is: Can the Premier confirm that the documents have been sent to Mr. Neufeld or can he at least say when they will be sent?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I don't know the specifics of that. I don't know the answer to that one, but I will ask and find out where it is.

MS. MACFARLANE: This week is Right to Know Week. It is an opportunity to raise awareness of an individual's right to access government information while promoting freedom of information as essential to both democracy and good governance.

The FOIPOP Commissioner reviewed the documents in the Neufeld case and determined that Mr. Neufeld had a right to the documents. The Supreme Court of Nova Scotia agrees with the FOIPOP Commissioner. Whoever makes these decisions for government, they must seem to not understand the rules because they are definitely on the wrong side of this one.

My question to the Premier is: If it's not the FOIPOP Commissioner, can the Premier tell the House who has the final say on what information get released under a FOIPOP request?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the honourable would know that FOIPOP would enter into the department and they would follow through with that. It would not get to the political level. It would be the deputy minister, I think, was the final sign-off in individual departments. That is the process.

To your first question, I think if you redirect that first question to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, he would be able to respond to that.

MS. MACFARLANE: I will continue my question with the Premier.

The FOIPOP Commissioner disagreed with the government on the Neufeld case. The FOIPOP Commissioner disagreed with the government on the death of an inmate in 2014, Phase 3 of the Riverview Adult Residential Facility in Pictou County, registered pension plans, and the private email account of the former Minister of Health and Wellness.

These are just the cases that we are aware of, Mr. Speaker. The FOIPOP Commissioner believes the government was wrong in all four cases. However, the Premier believes the Commissioner is wrong. I believe we should just settle this right now.

My question to the Premier is: Will the Premier commit to another independent review to determine whether IAP staff are complying with FOIPOP legislation?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we don't have a FOIPOP Commissioner; we have a FOIPOP Officer. Just a clarification.

The reality is that we continue to go through the process. We now have over 80 per cent of the FOIPOPs going out. This is the highest number in the history of our province; higher than any other government has been able to achieve within 30 days.

We continue to improve the process, continue to make sure, and when the Information Officer makes recommendations, we continue to make sure as to how we implement them.

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

PREM.: SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMMING - IMPROVE

MR. GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, respectfully and without contention, I would like to ask the Premier about the difficult subject of suicide prevention. It's a subject that we stand before in Nova Scotia today in the shadow of the recent tragedies in Eskasoni.

My question to the Premier: What, in his judgment, can we do in Nova Scotia to improve suicide prevention programming in our province?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. We continue to work with those experts on evidence-based solutions on how we continue to ensure that those Nova Scotians who feel there is no way out, no path forward - that we ensure we surround them with the appropriate supports.

Very early on, we know that if we have early identification, early detection, we can address some of the issues. That's what we do in the wraparound part that we're trying to do with schools. We continue to rely on the work and support of Stan Kutcher when it comes to ensuring that we have evidence-based solutions in our communities.

I think it's important, Mr. Speaker, as we have our health care experts out in communities, that they actually continue to get in communities to understand the cultural sensitivity of some of our communities and the important part of how we provide them with a path forward in a culturally sensitive environment that helps get the best outcomes.

MR. BURRILL: I thank the Premier for his answer. The Suicide Prevention Centre speaks of there being four primary best practices in this area: means restriction, responsible media reporting, and education, but the fourth they speak of as being more important than the others, and that's easy, quick access to mental health care. For example, at our Bayers Road clinic, a person calling today is given an appointment in the Spring and now into the summer.

I want to ask the Premier: How can we continue to accept waits of so many months for people in the province who are reaching out to the mental health services of our province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member knows each and every time we continue to make sure that we improve the wait times for all of our health care services. Particularly the honourable member is referring to a situation when someone is in crisis - how do we provide them that support to ensure that we'd be getting them on the path back to healing?

It is a multi-faceted approach on how we try to deal with this stuff. The goal is working towards ensuring detection early on, but we know we now have Nova Scotians who require our support and require the system to be more responsive than it is at this moment in time. We continue to improve and try to make sure that we bring that wait time down so that we can respond to that citizen when they need it.

MR. BURRILL: Thank you. Just very recently, Dr. Simon Sherry, a psychologist, called on the province to bring forward a coordinated strategy to deal with our rising suicide rate in the province. As he spoke about this, he was adamant about how it would be

important for such a strategy to have firm timelines and dedicated funding in order to be able to achieve its purposes. We do note that in Quebec a program parallel to this sort has been brought forward and it has been achieving measurable and dramatic improvements.

So, I want to ask the Premier: When, in our province, can we hope to see a funded and comprehensive suicide prevention program in place?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Dr. Sherry, who he is referring to, did raise concerns and issues. To the honourable member through you, I want to tell him that the work is under way to do exactly just that, and the Minister of Health and Wellness will report to Nova Scotians when that is completed.

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

JUSTICE - CANNABIS SALES: ONLINE CLIENTS - PROTECT

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

For many Nova Scotians, the only way they can purchase legal cannabis is online. The very act of making a purchase online means Nova Scotians will have to give personal information such as addresses, a credit card number, a phone number. The events of last April with the FOIPOP portal created concern that this government may not be fully equipped to keep the information of online cannabis buyers safe and secure.

Will the minister guarantee today that the names, addresses, credit card and phone numbers, and other personal information of Nova Scotians who buy cannabis online will be safeguarded?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, working with the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation, we're very conscious of the circumstances that my colleague has alluded to today and we'll continue to build a platform or portal that addresses the protection of privacy of individuals' personal information.

MS. MACFARLANE: I thank the minister for his answer.

As I said though, last week, an official from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Agency indicated that any Canadian involved with the cannabis industry risks a lifetime travel ban from the United States. There have been many media reports indicating that Canadians who admit to smoking legal cannabis risk being banned from the United States for life and might have to apply for special waivers to get into the country - and I will table that actual story.

It is disturbing, Mr. Speaker, that Nova Scotia will have a database of Nova Scotians who have purchased and presumably used cannabis with all of their personal information. Will the minister explain exactly how the database will be used and guarantee that it will not be placed in the hands of the U.S. government?

MR. FUREY: As I indicated in response to the first question, we're working closely with the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation, very conscious of the circumstances that my colleague has identified. It is a priority to protect the personal information of those individuals who choose to purchase online.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, there has been no final decision made. We will absolutely respect both the desires of my colleague and the personal information of Nova Scotians.

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

LAE - UNIV. PRESIDENTS: LAVISH COMPENSATION - ADDRESS

MS. LENORE ZANN: My question is for the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. The outgoing president of Dalhousie received almost \$500,000 last year, half a million dollars. Because of this government's inaction, we can expect the new president will be handed just as much or even more. That money is coming out of public funding, Mr. Speaker, as well as tuition fees that students go deep into debt to pay.

My question for the minister: Why is he continuing to allow public funding and tuition fees to be spent on lavish compensation packages for university presidents?

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

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, as the member would know, all universities in this province are governed by a board. That board is not the government, and it's not MLAs in this House.

I wish Dr. Florizone all the success in his future. He has been an integral part of the success of this province. A couple of highlights: he was instrumental in bringing \$200-million worth of research money for ocean technology to the province. A new engineering building is being built for Dalhousie, and the course that Dalhousie is on is just remarkable. They have really stepped up their game, and they have hit it out of the park. It's a fantastic institution. I'm very proud of them, as I am of all our institutions in Nova Scotia.

MS. ZANN: Three years ago, the then-Minister of Labour and Advanced Education agreed aspects of university president compensation have gone too far. She said something else that I was happy to agree with. She said, "At a time when universities are asking

governments and students for more money it's just not acceptable for this kind of thing to go on." I will table that, Mr. Speaker. She vowed to stop it, but nothing has changed.

There is no excuse for not making this change. Alberta has done it. Alberta has put a cap on base salaries and limited perks, which will result in up to \$5.2 million in annual savings. My question for the minister is this: Will he commit to putting a limit on compensation for university executives?

MR. KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, we can sit there and limit compensation, but then we're not attracting the brightest, and we're not attracting the best. The fact is, if you want to attract the brightest and the best to deliver a great job and to actually deliver results, you have to pay for them.

The member can go on about what Alberta is doing, but all we have to do is look at their government, which added \$3 billion of debt to the Province of Nova Scotia.

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

MUN. AFFAIRS - KINGS MUNICIPAL.: FOIPOP VIOLATION - RESPOND

MR. BRAD JOHNS: My question today is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Yesterday, the FOIPOP Officer released a report on the FOIPOP practices of the Municipality of Kings. The officer found that the municipality is in violation of the Municipal Government Act.

The municipality failed to respond to information requests in the statutory 30 days. There were no authorized extensions that were given. The municipality failed to respond in writing to applicant within 30 days, and the municipality agreed to the resolution times on a number of files with the officer but failed to honour their agreements.

The officer said that the case showed that the municipal government is an inadequate tool to ensure meaningful right to access of information. My question is: Will the Minister of Municipal Affairs undertake to fix the MGA to ensure that municipal staff take advantage of training offered by the privacy officer?

[2:15 p.m.]

HON. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Municipal Affairs would expect the County of Kings or any county to follow the rules that are outlined within the MGA.

MR. JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister. Over the last number of weeks, it has become abundantly clear that this government is willing to thumb their noses at the recommendation of the FOIPOP officer in order to keep information secret. It is fair to say

that the government has set a poor example for municipalities across this province. The privacy officer has recommended that the Municipality of Kings County respond to the five outstanding requests within 10 days.

My question to the minister is: What advice is the minister going to give to the municipality - do as I say, not as I do, or just to ignore the recommendations of the privacy officer?

MR. PORTER: This minister would encourage the County of Kings and every other county, town, village, whatever they may be, Mr. Speaker, to follow the rules that are outlined in the MGA and review their best practices as to how they are doing that.

As far as the officer goes, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has been very clear in our position around that. He has addressed this and I support that 100 per cent.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

H&W - LONG-TERM CARE: PRESSURE SORES - INFO. AVAIL.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Nova Scotians were dismayed last Spring when they learned of the death of Chrissy Dunnington. As members know, Chrissy, who lived in a long-term care facility, died of a pressure sore. Unfortunately, we now know that Chrissy was not the only Nova Scotian to die in this way. We learned yesterday that 93-year-old John Ferguson also died as a result of a pressure sore. His daughter, Norma Silverstein, said her father died of neglect.

My question to the minister is: Will the minister require long-term care facilities to make the number of patients with pressure sores and the severity of those pressure sores publicly available? Families have the right to know.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I do appreciate the member raising this question. The fact is, as the member noted in his preamble, all Nova Scotians were concerned about the circumstances that were coming forward. In my role with the department, we took action to collect information that we hadn't been collecting previously in this regard. We made our first preliminary data set available back in, I believe, late June or July.

Work is ongoing, Mr. Speaker, to address and improve the situation in our long-term care facilities. I would have committed to making a date available, but at this time we're making sure that it's consistently collected and reported so that we have consistent data when we do post it publicly. Once we get that established, it will be available for all Nova Scotians to see.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, they found 152 cases of stage 3 and stage 4 pressure sores across the province. That's 152 families that are worried that their loved ones will meet the same fate as Chrissy or Mr. Ferguson. That's 152 families that cannot wait for a committee to make recommendations.

My question to the minister is: Will the minister advise the House if any of the 152 long-term care residents have died as a result of pressure sores and what actions have been taken to decrease the incidence of pressure sores in long-term care facilities?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, we've taken a number of steps since this Spring/Summer. The first step was of course collecting the data to categorize the scope of the current situation. Once we had identified that - the member cited some of that data which we had made public - we brought together some people with more experience in this area. We developed an educational plan and checklist that we had vetted by some experts. Then we rolled that out to facilities.

We had people go out and support those facilities that were reporting stage 3 and stage 4 pressure injuries. That work continued throughout the months of July and August. I'm just waiting to get the feedback from those who were out in the field conducting this.

My own anecdotal sense, Mr. Speaker, as I was meeting with facilities throughout the province, feedback was very positive of the experience.

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

H&W - HEALTH CARE: STANDARDS - APPROP.

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, here we go again. Recently, a 97-year-old woman arrived at the Northside General Hospital experiencing eye pain, about three o'clock in the afternoon. After waiting for an astounding four hours at the hospital, she had to be transferred to the Cape Breton Regional Hospital because there was no ophthalmologist on site.

Once she arrived at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital, at about 7:00 p.m., she was told again there was no ophthalmologist on site and that she would be transferred to St. Martha's in Antigonish. Arriving at St. Martha's at two o'clock in the morning, she was told there was no ophthalmologist there either and was put back into the ambulance, where she headed to Halifax and had eye surgery at seven o'clock in the morning.

My question to the minister is: Would a reasonable government consider this an appropriate level of care for Nova Scotia's most vulnerable?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as the member would know, I am not able to discuss specific cases of individuals in care and, as the member may also realize, that level of detail is not something that I am necessarily aware of on a day-to-day basis.

We do continue to work in the province to improve access to care, both at the primary care level, but also specialists.

In the last couple of weeks we have announced the addition of five additional specialist services throughout the province, as well as the expansion of our specialist residency program. Fifteen additional residents will be training and likely staying in the province to work when they are completed.

MR. ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I don't think my microphone is working because the Minister of Health and Wellness can't hear the questions I am asking. I'm asking the minister's opinion.

If it only ended there, Mr. Speaker. After having her surgery at the VG, this 97-year-old was put back into an ambulance, taken back to the Northside Guest Home, where she arrived at 1:30 a.m. Think about this. It took four hospitals close to 48 hours for this 97-year-old woman to receive the care she deserves. No wonder ambulance times are taking so long, and the Nova Scotia roads and the condition they are in with all the driving they're doing on it.

My question to the minister is: Will the minister please explain which part of this fiasco meets his standards of acceptable health care in the Province of Nova Scotia?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as I've mentioned to the member opposite, we recognize the need to improve access to care in this province. That's why we are taking the steps as I've previously outlined, to expand both primary care access to physicians and nurse practitioners.

I've mentioned numerous times here the steps that we are taking. In addition, in this case, the member is referring to specialized services. I've noted that, and we do recognize this through the input of clinicians on the front line. They identify priority areas for us to expand and add additional specialists. Those nine specialist positions have been added throughout the system, as well as the fifteen residency seats.

We recognize the need to do more and we are taking steps to do just that.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

COM. SERV. - ESIA: TRANSPORT. POLICY - CHANGES

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services.

Access to transportation is important, and I am pleased that bus passes are now available for Employment Support and Income Assistance clients who live near a bus route. However, the implementation of this program has provided more evidence of how inadequate income assistance rates are in this province.

Some ESIA recipients had been using their transportation money to cover shortfalls for what they had to spend on rent and food. Now they have bus passes, but will see reduction in their monthly cheques which are now even further from covering their cost.

Without understanding the lives of people receiving IA, the unintended consequence is that the minister has made their situation worse.

My question to the minister is: Will the minister acknowledge that this policy change has worsened the situation for many people who are already feeling desperate?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I do know that when we went out and consulted with people who are living in poverty, what they told us was that not being able to get around was very difficult for them. They couldn't get groceries, they couldn't go to work, they couldn't get to school, et cetera, so some people were getting additional money to do that. They applied. They had to have a certain number of doctor appointments or things like that so that they would be able to get their bus pass money.

Now we are giving them a bus pass which is in excess of what they would have received in terms of bus pass money. They can get out, actually, to the airport with this particular bus pass. It's not only just for those people, it is also for their spouse and for their children, and what we heard when we were at the sessions where we were, in fact, giving those out, was that it was changing lives.

MS. LEBLANC: Based on the National Nutritious Food Basket, a family of four would need to spend about \$850 a month to buy healthy food. That grocery bill would be more than the entire personal allowance that family would receive from the department.

We know that the current rates do not provide people with enough money to pay the rent or buy nutritious food. The anticipated 2 per cent to 5 per cent increase after transformation will not cut it. Mr. Speaker, will the minister commit today to an increase in income assistance rates that will ensure all families can buy nutritious food?

MS. REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for her question and I want to assure her that we have taken a number of steps to improve the situation of people who are living in poverty.

In recent months, for example, we have doubled the Poverty Reduction Credit which focuses on those people who often don't have other sources of income; for example, child benefits, et cetera. We doubled that so that those people would see an increase in their money.

We also began removing - and this just happened in August - we no longer count maintenance money towards chargeable income. Next month, next week, we have a new wage exemption coming in so, now, when people who are living on income assistance earn money, they get to keep more of it and help better their situation. (Applause)

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

H&W: KIDNEY TRANSPLANTS - LIVE DONOR WAIT-LIST

HON. ALFIE MACLOED: Mr. Speaker, my question through you is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Recently, a constituent of mine, Treena MacNevin told me a very heartbreaking story. Treena's brother is very ill and needs a kidney transplant. Treena and her family have watched as her brother's quality of life has declined. What is breaking her heart is that Treena is a perfect match with her brother. All that stands between her brother and a better quality of life is some operating room time.

My question for the minister is - and I know he can't talk about specific cases: Will the minister tell the House how long the wait-list is for live donor kidney transplants?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information on hand here, but I'm certainly happy to connect with the member. We do have many of our wait times posted online though where Nova Scotians are able to monitor. I'd have to double check to see if that specific wait parameter is part of that or not but, again, I'll reach out if it's not there to let the member know.

MR. MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I will look forward to getting that information from the minister, but I do know from conversations with the family that they've been waiting since March. The process has been put off until June, and here we are today: still nothing. Treena says that the renal failure is killing her brother. She says she's not ready to say goodbye to him especially since she has the thing that can save his life and is eager to give it to him. Now, if that doesn't describe a health care crisis, it certainly is a crisis in Treena's family. Will the minister explain why it is taking so long for live donor kidney transplants?

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I can't speak as the member noted earlier about individual cases, but certainly, if the member wanted to provide any additional details that

he has, I would certainly look into that specific situation. As far as the duration or how long the wait-lists may be, I'm not aware of the clinical parameters for preparing once a match is identified what the standards may be expected for that type of treatment.

Certainly, I'd expect that the renal program and those professionals and clinicians working that space would be well versed in that and they do endeavour to provide the best care possible to all of the patients in the program.

[2:30 p.m.]

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

PREM. - PALLIATIVE CARE: CONDITIONS - UNACCEPTABLE

MS. ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, on three separate occasions in the Spring sitting and now what will be twice in this sitting, I raised the unacceptable lack of resources and services available for patients and families facing the death of a loved one in Cape Breton-Richmond. People are passing their last days and weeks in hallways in this province. They are dying in emergency rooms which are ill-equipped to accommodate their needs and they are even passing their last days and weeks in storage closets. It is absolutely deplorable.

On April 17th, the Premier, in response to my question, stated, “. . . it is completely unacceptable that a Nova Scotian looking for end-of-life care is put in the conditions that the honourable member raised in this House.”

I would like to ask the Premier if he finds it equally unacceptable that in the five months that have passed, the only response received from the Minister of Health and Wellness is a letter dated August 29th advising the Strait Richmond Palliative Care Society to contact the NSHA with their concerns.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. There are two palliative care beds in Strait Richmond that on occasion are filled up with acute care patients. I believe that is a serious issue that we need to try to deal with, to address. As you know, there are three GPs who have committed to doing palliative care at home. We have a nurse practitioner who's part of that, doing palliative care at home as well.

I know this facility well. My family is from this particular riding. I've lost many of my own family in that facility, doing palliative care. This is an ongoing service we're continuing to make sure is available in communities across the province, and Strait Richmond is one of those.

MS. PAON: Mr. Speaker, Cape Breton-Richmond and the Strait Richmond Palliative Care Society and the families who are here today need a plan. They need an

investment. They need an answer. Again on April 17th, the Premier stated, “The honourable member would know there have been no dedicated palliative care beds in the Strait Richmond Hospital.”

We know that. That’s the problem. I tabled a plan on their behalf to change that.

The Premier continued, “I will ensure that that document arrives in the right hands. I also said to the honourable member outside of this House that I would make sure she had the appropriate meetings at the appropriate time”

Can the Premier please inform me what he plans to deliver, and when he’ll deliver on that promise? I would hope he is a man of his word.

MR. SPEAKER: I’d just like to remind the honourable member for Cape Breton-Richmond that it’s unparliamentary and against the Rules of this House to call into question the integrity of another member of this House.

The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the honourable member that the information she provided to me was delivered to the department. I also want to tell her, as we look at palliative care services across the province, that each community will be different. I also want to tell her that there are two palliative care beds in Strait Richmond that at times become part of the acute care system. We need to deal with how we address that.

At the same time, we are also hearing from many Nova Scotians who want to receive palliative care services at home. We’re working to ensure that we have those health care teams to be able to provide that service. All families, as we go through an end-of-life process with one of the people we care about and love - there are many challenges associated with that, and the system should be flexible and responsive enough to ensure that we have the appropriate kinds of services that meet the needs of that end-of-life for that particular family.

We will continue to work with the people at the Strait Richmond to ensure we can continue to enhance the work that is going on there by the good health care professionals to deal with families at end-of-life.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

FIN. & TREASURY BD.: FED. TAX CHANGES - PROV. REV.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board. I’ve spoken with many businesses in Pictou County and beyond about the

implications of the new federal tax changes that the government is set to enact. Many of these small-business owners, including doctors, are going to pay more, even with the amendments that the feds have now proposed making.

They'll be paying more, and as we know, it's hard enough to attract and retain doctors here in this province. We know entrepreneurs can have a hard time succeeding in this province, but they're all going to pay more.

The province stands to get a slice of these new tax measures. I'd like to ask if the minister can say how much additional revenue the province stands to gain from the pending tax changes.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, to the member, thank you for the question. I certainly want to acknowledge and share with all members of the House that early on in our mandate, there were questions asked about tax reform, and we made a commitment that, as we could afford it, we would be implementing tax reform that would be our taxes for our Nova Scotians. We have done that through changing the basic personal exemption. We've also done that with a tax break for small businesses. We will continue to look at that.

With respect to the revenue that may come from the corporate tax of the federal government, I cannot give the member an estimate of what that will be, but that would show up in our budget when we have that revenue in our books.

MR. HOUSTON: It would be a little windfall for the province. That's the type of windfall that in the olden days we may have been able to look at in Public Accounts but maybe no more, Mr. Speaker.

The government has a chance to send a signal to small businesses. The government has a chance to send a signal to doctors. The province has to make legislative changes to incorporate these federal changes, they can stand up to them. Manitoba is standing up to them, Saskatchewan is looking at standing up to them, and Nova Scotia should as well.

I'd like to ask the minister, has the minister asked her department to look at the prospect of opting out of these changes and if not, will the minister consider it?

MS. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, to the member and to all members of the House, whenever we can look at any tax changes that will be of benefit to Nova Scotians we recognize that the more money Nova Scotians have in their pockets, the more consumer spending there will be that drives the economy of our province. We want to make sure that we ensure that Nova Scotians have as much of the disposable income as they can possibly have. If that means looking at federal tax, corporate tax, we will do that.

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

STATUS OF WOM.: REPROD. HEALTH CARE - TIMELY ACCESS

MS. LENORE ZANN: My question is for the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act. On Monday the editorial board of the national newspaper singled out Nova Scotia's failure to provide timely access to abortion services. It turned out that the Health Authority prevents many women from receiving the procedure before their eighth week of pregnancy, when it is safest for them to do so.

Although the province approved funding for medical abortions last year, the women in the story found it easier to fly to Toronto for the procedure than get it here. Unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

My question for the minister is this: What is the minister doing to make timely access to reproductive health care in Nova Scotia a reality?

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question, and I do want to thank the woman who wrote the article and anyone who has come forward to talk about the particular situation involved with providing abortions here in Nova Scotia.

As the honourable members know, we made a number of changes earlier this year that have, in fact, increased access to abortions, but in this particular case it appears that the woman did not get the timely service which she deserved. I want to assure the honourable member that I will work with my colleague in the Department of Health and Wellness to ensure that we are able to do better.

MS. ZANN; I appreciate that answer from the minister. And speaking of the Minister of Health and Wellness, my second question is for him. In other provinces women have timely access to the health care to which they are entitled. In Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Health Authority policies prevent the staff of our abortion clinic from even using the ultrasound machine they had to fundraise to achieve. As one doctor put it, it's frustrating for us to see these systemic barriers as the reason why someone cannot access abortion.

My question is this: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Wellness has the power to change these policies, so will the minister explain why his government will not remove these barriers to abortion services in Nova Scotia?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: As I've been looking into the details surrounding this and the status and the policies, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I've been advised is that, in fact, the clinical parameters and requirements as to how these services are provided are really guidelines being established across national organizations within the clinics.

This isn't something where the department has established any kind of policy to prevent the clinical services being provided. We do know that the changes we've implemented last year have resulted in increased access. We've allowed for direct referral, something that hadn't been allowed for decades since the services allowed for medical abortions now, Mr. Speaker, are available in rural parts of the province throughout the province, which required some fee-code changes, so it took a little bit more time than we would have liked. Indeed, we've been making changes, increasing access.

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

ENVIRON. - CARTERS BEACH: PACK IN/PACK OUT - UNSUCCESSFUL

MS. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Environment. This past summer, many days saw large numbers of people visit Carters Beach because of its natural beauty. When a large number of people arrive at the same time without proper parking, washroom, and refuse facilities, it creates a problem for everyone.

Last October, I questioned the minister over his department's infrastructure plans regarding Carters Beach for the upcoming season. The department removed the garbage cans and instead erected a sign advising beach visitors to pack in and pack out. Sadly, given the picture I received, this hasn't worked, and I will table that. My question to the minister is: Can the minister please tell me if the department believes that this year's pack in and pack out was a success at Carters Beach?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member opposite. This is, of course, one of our spectacular beaches in the province. It does, however, have limitations and this again was part of the plan for this summer. It will have to be evaluated by the department, but knowing similar situations that would be comparable, it often takes some education to get the word out to those who use Carters Beach.

MS. MASLAND: I thank the minister for his response. For nearby residents, this government's inaction has led to many headaches over the last few years as residents try to retrieve their mail, get out of their driveways, and even keep their properties clean.

Many residents have had to erect signage and even block their own driveways so that they would not be blocked by a visitor's vehicle. Getting emergency vehicles to the beach has been a worry for years because traffic is blocking one side of the road and sometimes both. Finally, there is no place for a vehicle to turn around causing them to have to back out down the road which is very dangerous given the heavy foot traffic. My question to the minister is: Will the department work with the Region of Queens Municipality to address the parking concerns of my constituents?

MR. GLAVINE: I thank the member for the question. Parking is indeed one of the very serious problems in the area, having visited the beach on a number of occasions. Some people do park at the nearby Summerville Beach Provincial Park, and walk to Carters. But there is an issue, certainly, in the immediate area. I know cars were ticketed this summer, but in terms of a long-term resolve, a committee has been put in place to look at the best use in this very sensitive and ecologically important beach. A lot of advisement is about short walks on the beach and not spending the entire day there.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

E&M - OPENHYDRO CAN.: MINAS CH. TURBINE - CLEANUP

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy and Mines. OpenHydro Canada put a large turbine in the Minas Channel on July 22nd. A few days later, they declared bankruptcy and abandoned the turbine. There's no environmental monitoring and almost everything went wrong with this project.

My constituents are now concerned about who will pay for the removal of this now, unfortunately, 400-ton piece of scrap metal and are wondering why there were no performance bonds to guarantee the funds would've been there to clean up any leftover messes. My question for the minister is: Why did the minister not require a posting of a bond to deal with the cleanup and other environmental effects with the deployment of the OpenHydro turbine?

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I thank the member for the question. There actually is a bond in place in the event of removal. That's something that was negotiated when the turbine was actually put into place. We've had open conversations with all the partners since the bankruptcy. We're following the court proceedings that are taking place in Ireland - we have to respect that process - but communication is open with all of our partners and we'll wait to see the outcome of that process.

MR. LOHR: I thank the minister for the answer. Mr. Speaker, given the timing of the bankruptcy, someone in the company had to know what was going down and that the contractors installing the turbine might never get paid. Many Nova Scotians are left being owed considerable sums of money. Suppliers have not been paid. Some of my constituents are owed large sums of money. My question for the minister: What does the minister say to these hard-working Nova Scotians who are owed money, who may face bankruptcy themselves, and how will the minister act to ensure all Nova Scotian suppliers are paid?

MR. MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question and we've been very open in our discussions with the partners that they should do whatever they can to pay those vendors. Those companies in the province or we know some of them have been paid to date. We continue to send that message to them.

Most importantly for us is that we're the regulator of this project, so our primary concern was that the turbine is operating in a safe state, that it was in compliance when the issue took place. We worked very closely with the partners and continue to monitor the court process in Ireland. What we know now is that the turbine is not spinning. It is in a safe operational mode and we continue to monitor the turbine in the area within the year.

[2:45 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

H&W - PALLIATIVE CARE BEDS: LACK OF ACCESS - ADDRESS

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, this week, a woman in Cumberland North, who is 101 years old, died. She was admitted needing medical and nursing care. There were no medical beds available and she spent four days on a stretcher in a busy emergency department before being given a bed in palliative care. Her family are angry, and rightly so.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: Will the minister look at the underlying problem of a lack of access to medical and palliative care beds due to the 20 per cent or more of these beds being occupied with people awaiting long-term care to ensure this does not continue to happen to people who are 101 years of age?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, there is agreement, I think, by all members in the Legislature and, indeed I dare suggest, all Nova Scotians that that's not the type of care we strive for or expect whatever the age of the Nova Scotian in need of that care.

We have been taking steps always looking for opportunities to improve. The member referenced the individuals waiting for long-term care, other services, and alternative levels of care. We've seen improvements where the wait time, the number of people waiting in those beds has decreased as well as the amount of time that they're spending in those beds also decreasing.

So we're seeing some improvements with some of the actions we're taking in other parts of the system, but it is an integrated system. We're making a lot of changes and trying to improve the system with our partners.

MS. SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, four years ago, this same woman was taken to the same emergency room and, at that time, she spent three days on a stretcher in a busy emergency department and she told her family that she would rather die than return and have that same experience.

Our community identified a few years ago a need for a hospice in our region to ensure people like my 101-year-old friend died with dignity and respect, not spend their last days in a stretcher in a hallway in a busy emergency department.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness: Will he work with the people of Cumberland to help us build a hospice to ensure people like my friend can die with dignity, privacy, and respect?

MR. DELOREY: The notion of hospice care options is an evolving area. It's one that our government and indeed my predecessor - the former Minister of Health and Wellness, the current Minister of Community, Culture and Heritage, under his leadership - developed for the first time a hospice policy.

There is a framework in place that allows community groups and organizations to engage with the Health Authority and the department to come forward with proposals and we would evaluate those proposals as we would with any request to fit into our overall health care system.

So there is a framework in place. If the member would like more details about the framework, we could certainly get it to her and her community members.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

TIR - DARTMOUTH NORTH: LANCASTER INTERSECTION - IMPROVE

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, the people who are living in the Lancaster Ridge and Willow Ridge neighbourhoods in Dartmouth North are waiting to hear about plans to make the Lancaster intersection safer. I'm wondering if the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal could update the House on where his department is on plans to fix the intersections.

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. It's a very good question. It's an intersection that is under significant scrutiny. We are working with the HRM folks about collective solutions and we're hoping that we will have something ready to go next year.

MS. LEBLANC: Thank you very much, minister, for answering my question. I look forward to the updates.

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

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: I have a point of order I would like to mention here. Just for clarity, I know the last couple of weeks we've been speaking about FOIPOP and asking a lot of questions about FOIPOP. There has been a lot of concern about what the actual title is, and . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. This is not a point of order. This is a disagreement of facts . . . (Interruption) That's fine. You can go ahead and table it, but it's not a point of order.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, can you call Resolution No. 128.

Resolution No. 128, re Palliative Care: Patient Support - Needed - Notice given Sep. 18/18 (Ms. A. Paon)

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

MS. ALANA PAON: It's my pleasure to stand today to speak on Resolution No. 128, which I tabled in this House regarding palliative care earlier. I believe it was last week. I also want to say again a heartfelt welcome and a thank you to the families that have come here again today. The Latimer family, the Cole Day family, and the Samson family have come to give their support. They are regular everyday citizens who have been touched by deaths in the last year of one of their loved ones who have unfortunately not had the level of care that I would hope that we would strive for as a society when we see one of our loved ones in the last days of their lives.

I apologize, Mr. Speaker, if I get emotional during these next few minutes that I speak. It's a very difficult subject to speak about. It's a very difficult subject for me to even put notes down on paper about. Last Thursday would have been the one-year anniversary of my father also passing through palliative care at the Strait Richmond Hospital. There has been a lot of biting myself on the inside of my mouth in order for me not to start crying here in the last couple of weeks. Last year at this time, I would have been just starting off my first time in this House, and I appreciate the kindness that was given to me at that time after my father had passed away.

I remember so vividly the moment at St. Martha's Hospital because my father had been in and out of the hospital all summer long. He hadn't been feeling well, but as is the case with my wonderful father, he never complained. He didn't like to complain. He didn't

like to bother people. He didn't like to have to ask for something. In the middle of a 33-degree day, my dad would be saying he was absolutely fine, even though he was sitting there with about 20 layers of clothes on. My father was literally dying, and he wasn't telling anybody.

Mr. Speaker, that moment when you receive the word that your loved one is going to leave you, I was there at that moment at St. Martha's Hospital when the doctor came in and sat on the end of the bed and told my father, my brother, my mother, and I that this was it, there was no turning the situation around, and my father was going to leave us. It's the most horrible situation that a person probably has to encounter in their whole life.

I love my dad. I know that the people in the gallery today who are with us love their family members who passed through palliative care at the Strait Richmond Hospital. I assumed at that time the level of care that my family received and that we were very passionate advocates for, my brother and I are talking pieces. We don't let anything slip. We want the best for my mom. We want the best of my dad. I want the best for the people of this province. We advocated. We made sure that my father had what it is that he needed in the last days of his life. That moment when you're actually there, and you're being told that's it, you go into some sort of other silent mode. You're in shock.

What shocks me even further, having gone through this process and now listening to the stories of these beautiful families that are coming forward - this is just a small portion of them. There are many more that don't want to come forward for fear of retribution in the community, for fear that they won't be able to access the care they need when one of their loved ones might need it again, for fear they might not even be able to access a doctor any longer.

Imagine living in that fear of not being able to speak up when something is not working, when something is so wrong. No one in democracy should have that type of fear of retribution from their government and from the health care system.

It is deplorable to know that there are people within my constituency, people whom I care about, family members, people who are fiends - I have lost on Isle Madame, within just a stone's throw away from my house in Poulamon, four people this year have perished, including my father. They are all of the same generation. We have one of the highest senior populations across Nova Scotia.

We need help in palliative care services - and palliative care services doesn't just mean those last few days or those last few weeks of when a person is going to need that care, that level of dignity, that level of respect they need in order to pass on to whatever that next stage of their life is, whatever anybody in this House believes comes after, when we close our eyes for the last time.

It is unbelievable to me that we have gone backwards, as it seems in this province. I remember as a child on Isle Madame I could go to the doctor it seemed whenever we needed to. My mom would call, you'd get a doctor's appointment. I had asthma really bad, I was often ill as a child. You'd get in within a day, sometimes hours. If you needed to go to the hospital you'd get in within a day, in hours. Emergency was never an issue, it was always open.

We have gone backwards to a point where I don't recognize this province when it comes to one of the basic services that we should hold dear, not only in this province but across Canada. We fought for it, Mr. Speaker, we fought for our health care system and we have one of the best health care systems in the world - or we did. We don't have that any longer; we can't actually espouse that privilege any longer. We cannot continue in the way that things are going.

All members who are here should know that of the three women who are up in the gallery today, the three of them have all had loved ones who have had to spend days, even weeks on a stretcher in the emergency room at the Strait Richmond Hospital in what is not even room really, it's a retrofitted storage closet.

How is it that we can sit here and talk about planning, talk about all the initiatives that are going on, talk about the investments that are going on in health care and clap that individual results of what it is we are doing to make things so much better. Yet every single day, I get phone calls within my constituency telling me there is something deplorable that has happened to me when I went to call either 911 or ask for help from my loved one who is in the last stages of their lives.

I remember when I was speaking with my father about 10 or 15 minutes after the doctor had given him the unfortunate news that he was going to pass away. My brother had taken my mum out to get some air and I came back to check in on my dad and he had sort of fallen half asleep and then kind of woke up unexpectedly. He looked at me, panicked, and he said, "Alana, don't let me die in a place where there are no windows."

I can only think of these poor people who are being put in palliative care - and I don't even want to call it palliative care, being retrofitted into closets, in hallways, in emergency rooms, that they can't even see outside, they can't even see the natural light of day for the last time.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that I only have about a minute left, but you know what? I'm going to give my father the last word on this one. My father's last words to me, and I've shared this before, he told me, "Alana" - and to all of us because several of my siblings were there - "be good to one another after I am gone."

Mr. Speaker, we can do better on this. We should expect better of this. We should expect better of ourselves. Our loved ones deserve to have better health care and better end-of-life care.

[3:00 p.m.]

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

MR. GORDON WILSON: I certainly would want to start by thanking the member. It's never easy to do and, in light of the topic, she brings the passion here and we hear it in Question Period.

I think the most important message that we can get out of any conversation that we have around palliative care, as the minister noted and we all agree, is that we can move forward, and we can do better. I certainly want to take my time to reflect on this.

I had the rare privilege in 2014 of being able to sit in on the provincial Palliative Care Advisory Committee when it first started working towards implementing a palliative care strategy.

We as MLAs, I guess, get educated on an awful lot of things. My education, just to reflect on my personal note on the passing of family members in palliative care, are three major key times in my life that gave me an understanding; one that not a lot of folks had.

I lost a father, two cousins, and a grandmother in a span of four weeks at the young age of 17. At that time in my life, I guess maybe I shouldn't say I hardened, but I opened my eyes up to things that I guess others didn't.

What's interesting - I just want to read, just to put in context of what my thoughts are around palliative care - at the very back of the Provincial Palliative Care Strategy there's a quote by Leonardo da Vinci, and it says: "While I thought that I was learning how to live, I have been learning how to die."

I think that might sound harsh, it might sound very realistic, it might sound kind of hard to understand what it means, but my understanding of it is that we as a culture, we as a society have many different ways that we look at end of life.

My first recollection of end of life was a difficult one. My second one was an inspiring one and it was quite a while ago. It was in relationship to a hospice. I didn't even know they existed at the time and I ended up visiting my uncle in Florida - Florida has many hospices - and I said, wow, this is certainly nice. This is the ultimate. I began to keep my eyes open after that of what was going on in our area.

The third experience I had was one of actually having a family member, a very close family member for six months who was dying, who lived in my home, and we looked after that family member. We, as a family, looked after that family member and that experience gave my children, I believe, and gave us an understanding of another care of life that we have - another way.

Many cultures, by the way, this is the norm for them in a lot of ways. Not our culture, no, and I'm not saying it is the answer. It's not for everybody by any means.

Those are the three things I experienced. And in saying that, sitting in on the provincial Palliative Care Advisory Committee and listening to the health care providers, the Canadian Cancer Society, the average stakeholder, you can imagine who was at that table, and to listen to the input they had. Palliative care doctors from all across the province and the advice they were giving and the work that was being done, not only on building the strategy but implementing the strategy because it's an integrated strategy. We heard that earlier today in some of the responses from the minister.

That's what makes it so complicated, yet such an opportunity. I'm not going to pound on my chest and go through all the things that we have done as government. That's not what I think this conversation is about. I think this conversation is about awareness. Again, I thank the member for bringing that forward.

It's for opening our minds too. It's for looking at how we do things as a culture, as a community, as a family. And trying, as Leonardo da Vinci said, to learn how to die.

What's really important to know also is there are a lot of good things going on in our communities. I'd be remiss if I didn't stand here and represent our community. I've met with the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem several times. Those of you who have never heard of the Order of Saint Lazarus, it's a very interesting group of community-minded, wholesome thinkers who take on projects. I've been very blessed that they've taken on one in my community to start a hospice. They are well-connected people who know how government works and how business works. I am confident that with time they will be successful to bring a hospice to our community.

That these initiatives are important is a message that needs to go out to a lot of communities. These initiatives, as they have happened, I'm sure, in the Wolfville area. We've heard the members for Kings South and Kings North speak on the hospice there. That was a community-driven initiative. I commend them for doing it.

I also know there's work going on in the Strait-Richmond area. That's a credit, again, to the member for bringing these things forward.

We've seen some good things. I'll share one more experience that I had right in the time when we were turning over more responsibility to the paramedics, a huge step we made in palliative care there.

I had a constituent with a family member who was at home, going through palliative care. It was with medication and every time that patient had to be uprooted, zipped off to the hospital. I could reflect on that, again, having had somebody in my house for six months, what that means.

It was right in the middle of when that change got implemented. I can remember that constituent coming to me in tears about how much that improved the quality and ability for that person to live and to die with dignity in their home. I really want to thank the paramedics for stepping up, and the work that they do in that area.

To close, again, I'm not going to go through all the initiatives - I think we all know what they are. That's not what this is about. I think we need to open our minds to what are all the different options. I think we need as a community to try to find how we can do better as a community. I do appreciate the opportunity to stand here today and speak to the Legislature on behalf of this.

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

MS. TAMMY MARTIN: First let me offer my condolences to the constituents from the Strait Richmond who have come here today for what you had to go through. Sincerely, that is something you shouldn't have to do at such a terrible time in your life and I apologize you had to do that.

It's hard to listen to the story from my colleague to the right because it's almost verbatim to a situation we both went through at almost the same time last year. However, mine was much, if you can say, better. On election day my uncle - no, not election day, it was his birthday and he died 11 days later in palliative care. If you can say that death is a remarkable experience, he had that. In the daytime in palliative care at the regional hospital there were people coming in to volunteer and they baked every morning. They make turkeys and they cooked. It was like home. It really felt like home.

There were four of us there with him around the clock and when we were in ICU when he was hooked up to everything, terrible to look at, knowing that the end was coming, or as the member said, when you are told it is coming.

Then we went to this beautiful room that was so peaceful and so welcoming. And in Cape Breton people can appreciate this, the teapot was always on, so it felt not as bad as obviously what the member next to me went through. If you can say this in losing somebody so suddenly, we were lucky because we were in palliative care. We each had a

chaise lounge type of deal that we could take turns sleeping on, we had meals prepared for us, it was good. I can't say perfect because he died, but it was good.

So many times, I hear the stories that the member opposite said about dying in the hallways. I was a health care worker for 20 years, I hear people call me all the time, can you help us, because my mother is in the hallway at ice machine one, dying, and they have nowhere for her to go.

You know, there may be many ways, as the member opposite said about the best way to die, but palliative care is an option; it's just not an option for everybody, and that is the shame. That is the heartbreaking thing.

There are things here that I don't think we should debate. I think there are things here we shouldn't even be talking about, and palliative care is one of them. It's just one of those things that should be a right, a God-given right in this province to die with dignity and to not die in a hall room or in a hallway next to an ice machine. I think that's disgraceful.

Recently a doctor announced that she had to do an examination for a very elderly man who was presenting with pneumonia in the staff washroom. Just hear that for a second. If it was your mother or father or a grandparent and the doctor said, I'm sorry, I don't want you to be naked in the hallway, so let's go to the staff washroom. I know the Department of Health and Wellness is doing what they can. I know that the staff that are there are doing everything they can, but we just don't have enough space. We don't have enough services, and I've said this 100 times, we're spending our money in all the wrong places. I don't think anybody's life is worth saving a dollar.

At the end of the day, the experience we had compared to the member from Strait Richmond - my apologies, I always get them wrong - was completely different and if nothing else out of his death was positive, that was positive, that we got to be there and experience it in the best way possible, as opposed to such a degrading way, and with respect because he gave so much, as does everybody who has contributed to society. They give so much and at their very last days, we have nothing to give back to them. They don't even have their privacy, let alone what their families are going through, which is hard enough, but as I said, we had comfort. We had the smells of home. We had comfortable chairs. We had all of that and I can't say enough about the palliative care in this province, where it exists, because it's awesome. It really is awesome, but we just don't have enough.

We don't prioritize correctly, in my opinion, and I will say that for as long as I'm sitting in this Legislature. We do not prioritize correctly. We look at money over human life. We value progress as opposed to valuing people's lives. I think when it comes down to the end of the day, we don't nearly do what we should be doing and what we could be doing to give back to the residents of Nova Scotia. That is allow them to die in dignity.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MS. ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise today to speak to Resolution No. 128. Palliative care is an important topic, one that I know is dear to many of us here, and especially to my dear friend, the member for Cape Breton-Richmond.

When a loved one reaches the end of their life, we wish certain things for them. We wish them to die at peace with all the emotional, spiritual, and medical support they need. We want them to die with dignity and appropriate privacy. We want them to die with the ones they love surrounding them. When those things are in place, palliative care can be viewed as a gift. A process that makes the end-of-life more comforting for everyone involved.

The challenge is too often the very basic things we want for our loved ones at the end of their lives are not available to them or their families. It's a failure of our system and it's a situation that may lead to long-lasting feelings of anger, guilt, confusion, and sometimes trauma, long after a loved one has passed.

The story of Kim D'Arcy and her late husband Jack Webb shocked Nova Scotians. Back in February 2017, Jack Webb died, scared and alone in a Halifax hospital after spending hours on a gurney in the emergency room shivering with no privacy. One doctor called his care an example of "the distinct level of human suffering associated with crowded emergency departments and crowded hospitals."

After getting one test, Jack and D'Arcy heard an attendant in the recovery room yell, "By the way if he stops breathing, don't resuscitate." Imagine, Mr. Speaker, if that was someone you loved.

The questions she has about her husband's final day disturbed Kim D'Arcy's sleep and had a negative impact on her well-being. She was very brave to go to the public with a story that can only be described as a nightmare. Jack deserved better end-of-life care. All Nova Scotians do.

Jack died almost two years ago, but I'm sorry to say that not much has changed. All too often we get calls from families who are angry at the care their loved one has received near the time of their death. Recently I've shared in Question Period about a situation of an elderly woman whom I knew growing up and I'd like to share a letter, and I'll table, that I've gotten permission from the family to read. This letter was sent to myself as well as the Premier and a few other people. This family member says:

Today, Nova Scotia lost a beautiful, intelligent, poised lady. She was taken by ambulance to the Amherst Regional Hospital on the morning of September the 11th. When she was still on a stretcher in the hallway

of the emergency department on Thursday, September 13th, I contacted all of your offices by telephone. On September 14th, she was told she had had a stroke and was given the option of treatment at another facility and she opted for palliative care and was given a private room until her death just this morning.

It is beyond ironic that you call it a health care system. This woman lived an exemplary life raising a family, teaching 30 years, and was an active member of her church and society. She lived such a long life - she was 101 - because of her healthy lifestyle. In fact, I believe that thousands of Nova Scotians who live beyond 90 years of age are doing so mainly because of their healthy lifestyle choices and have never been a burden on the health care system. She always treated everyone with respect and in return was treated likewise until she needed health care. About four years ago, after spending a few days in the hallway of the emergency department, she told me that she would rather die than return to that hospital.

I'm writing to request that you immediately make changes so that all seniors are treated with the utmost dignity and respect. Your citizens who live beyond 90 years have been the backbone of your province. You are in positions because of the groundwork that was done by her and her peers. No government turns away a criminal because there is no room in a prison. How can you in good conscience leave a 101-year-old lying on a stretcher in an emergency department for four days?

I am requesting that each of you be a change agent. If you are not up for the challenge, please resign. I urge you all to stop the systemic practice of disrespecting the elderly. Surely, if you can accommodate prisoners, you can accommodate and care for your most vulnerable citizens. You can do better. You must do better.

Sincerely, [signed by this relative's family].

It makes it more difficult to share this letter with you, Mr. Speaker, because I knew this lady. She was a member of my community and I respected her greatly. Just last May, while I was campaigning, I went to where she was living and met with about 30 people about her age. And after I did my little campaign speech I asked them for their advice, and I remember distinctly - so she would have been 100 years old at the time - and she said, "I just think it's wrong for politicians to continue putting our country in debt," and I just thought I will never forget her wise words. She was 100 years old and she's seen a lot in her lifetime. I do believe she deserved better. She deserved to have privacy, dignity, and respect in her last days.

Back as a child, I made a decision to be a nurse someday. At the time of my birth, my mother was diagnosed with malignant melanoma and my only memories of her are visiting her in the hospital and, at that time as a young child, I made a decision I was going to dedicate my life to helping people like my mom. So I became a nurse and for 27 years I helped people take care of people like my mom in health care settings. Here in the Legislature, I do believe I can continue as a registered nurse to be an advocate for people like my mom and my colleagues' parents and like the woman I just shared about who need, they need support, care, dignity in their last days.

I will say to our Minister of Health and Wellness that I know our health care system is complex and I can only begin to imagine the challenges that he faces, but as a member of the Opposition, I extend my hand to work with him as I know all of my colleagues do. Health care, access to proper health care, palliative care is one of the most important, the most important things that we do as a society, taking care of those in their last days with dignity and respect. We have a responsibility. Why can we not work together for the greater good of our people? I believe that our citizens expect us to do so.

So, again, I do extend my hand to the Minister of Health and Wellness and the hand of my colleagues asking to allow us to work together to make improvements in palliative care and all aspects of our health care system.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, could you please call Bill No. 56, and adjust for 10 minutes accordingly.

Bill No. 56 - Municipal Government Act.

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

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, it's always a pleasure to rise in my place and begin debate on Bill No. 56, an Act to Amend Chapter 302 of the Revised Statutes of 1989, the Municipal Grants Act. This bill is truly just about providing financial assistance to our municipalities in the province with regards to the legalization of cannabis, which we all know that, come October 17th, will be legalized.

This bill was generated by speaking to a number of municipalities and councillors and mayors and law enforcement bodies across our province who are deeply concerned about what their job looks like after cannabis becomes legalized. We all know that municipal zoning bylaws currently do not have definitions for cannabis dispensaries, venues or locations for the consumption of cannabis for recreational use. Obviously, there were no previous bylaws in place because it was not ever permitted.

No doubt we are entering a new realm come October 17th. We all know this is coming down federally. We have no choice and whether we like it or not - we may even agree that legalization is okay and the right thing to do - but we should also agree here together in this Chamber that we put everything properly in place to ensure proper safety for all and to help municipalities reduce their financial policing costs.

In my opinion, without having everything properly in place we are going to open up Pandora's Box to a huge mess of problems. We may be debating this piece of legislation in this session, but I can guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, that in the next number of years this will not go away. We don't have the proper pieces to implement and to get it right. Of course, one of those items is being able to set aside money to assist our municipalities with the concerns they have. It is mostly around policing, but obviously there is education and health, et cetera.

Unlike other land uses, there are obviously some very unique aspects that must be taken into consideration with the legalization of cannabis. A lot of people speak about the unique aroma - in fact as I was walking over to the Legislature this afternoon, someone passed me and I knew for certain that they were either smoking marijuana right then and there or they had just smoked marijuana.

I have a number of individuals - there's actually an individual in Pictou West, a private business owner, who is opening up a location in the small village of Scotsburn. For the most part, people are very welcoming and accepting of this establishment to grow cannabis, but of course it's close to a lot of homes and they are worried about the aroma. They are happy there is going to be job creation in such a small village and community. But we know that it's one thing to be bypassing someone and perhaps smell cannabis, but it's a whole other world when you are living next to a building that is actually housing and producing the product. The aroma is constantly there and it's much stronger, too, in the state of growing then actually when you are smoking it.

We know that cannabis does have the potential for negative impacts on workers, on neighbours, on residents, and on businesses. However, these impacts can be mitigated through proper regulations. Unfortunately, we have a bill that was passed last session that doesn't have all the proper regulations. This bill that I have introduced will look after one of those items of great concern that has been voiced by our municipalities - restriction on the permitted locations for consumption can ensure that public health and safety is a priority and is taken into consideration.

What the Liberal Government has failed to do is involve or consult municipalities extensively. There has been no meaningful consultation with the municipalities, nor the taxpayers of Nova Scotia. There has been an expression stated that we've gone and they've spoken to over 200-and-some individuals across the province, but really that is not consulting taxpayers and consulting individual municipalities on their own because, as we all know, different constituencies have different needs and they definitely should be able to express their concerns each individually. Municipalities play a colossal role in supporting the implementation of federal and provincial legislation, and my opinion is that we have really missed the opportunity to engage them and we will never get them back.

[3:30 p.m.]

Municipalities do need to be prepared, through their municipal bylaws for health and safety inspectors and police, to take on the steps to properly enforce with regard to zoning and density bylaws, building standards, personal cultivation, smoking restrictions, and more importantly, what we know we are going to have is a lot of public complaints. I am already getting public complaints because a lot of people thought that it was actually legalized back in July, so the complaints actually have been starting.

We have nothing in place for that. More importantly, as many of my colleagues speak about this, they are concerned about safety, of course, for our youth. Unless you can enforce properly, you will always have a black market.

I am very concerned about the opening opportunity for hash oils to be promoted more. I think we are going to see a lot more of that in the coming months.

We also know that with municipalities, the smell, as I spoke of a moment ago, but I have also heard the concern around fire. There is a big concern around homes being blown up and fires starting. We know that a lot of fires are actually started by cigarette smoking, cannabis smoking, already. It's a great concern to them.

We should be looking at this bill that I presented as an opportunity to build a relationship and a bond with our municipalities and get out ahead and be prepared. Time is limited, though, as we all know.

We all know that the federal government wants to legalize it, but they have given no interest at this point in helping the provinces to set bylaws, education to our youth or to our parents, teachers, educators of all kinds. They want to normalize it, but they do not want to assist at all in helping us.

The Trudeau Government has actually set aside \$260 million to help in policing costs over five years. I ask, what are we getting out of that \$260 million? No one seems to

know. We have not discussed it yet, it has not been put out through the Minister of Justice. What exactly are we getting of that amount of money to help with policing?

HRM stated at Law Amendments Committee last Spring that there has been no discussion with them, and they want to know what funding will be made available to them to offset the costs of legalized cannabis. Obviously, their increased costs will, for some municipalities, increase taxes or perhaps if they are not already - because we know so much has been downloaded onto municipalities as it is. It will just continue to make many municipalities go further into the red. It's just a given. It's a no-brainer.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to extend my sincere wish that everyone would give this bill some consideration.

Municipalities truly are struggling in this province. I know the County of Pictou is, and I know that by talking to my local law enforcement people, my councillors, the mayors, they are concerned that they are not going to have the proper amount of money to police this product that will be legalized soon.

With those words, I will take my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: I guess I am pleased to stand and speak to Bill No. 56. My sons would be shocked to know that their mother is talking about cannabis, being that I haven't always been onboard with cannabis and I have had very strong opinions as a parent. So please, if you know one - I know they're all busy working right now and they are not watching Legislative TV, so no one tell them that they can watch the rerun later this evening because I would not live this down.

Anyway, I did take on the task of responding to this, and I thank the member for Pictou West for bringing this forward. This is the second time, I believe March 2nd you presented it in the last sitting. It's something you are passionate about or concerned about, and you brought it forward. Thank you for bringing your concerns and the concerns of others because that's what we're here for.

Mr. Speaker, October 17th is soon here, and many Nova Scotians are watching, some with anticipation while others are watching with caution. The member for Pictou West, I think you said "new ground." We're walking on new ground, and none of us really knows how this is going to roll out.

We have followed some jurisdictions in the United States, in particular. I must say, I have had the privilege of attending some meetings which included governors from various states and jurisdictions. The one thing they did tell us was, go slowly; go very slowly with

your legislation and your regulations. Really think things out because you can't pull back. That was a really strong message.

We're also thinking about - we're comparing ourselves - we're under a million people here in Nova Scotia. Our tax base is limited here in Nova Scotia. We're talking about jurisdictions that have a lot more income, a lot more money, a lot more users of cannabis. It may be profitable for many other jurisdictions. We don't know. This may cost our province money. We do have to be very cautious as a province and as people who make the decisions for the province and for the taxpayers.

With this impending legislation, municipalities and police forces have expressed their concern about the costs and have asked the province about revenue sharing and cost sharing, or both. Ontario is providing \$40 million over two years to its municipalities, and if excise tax revenue is more than \$100 million, the province will give 50 per cent of the surplus to municipalities. Quebec is providing \$60 million over two years. This is cost coverage; this isn't revenue sharing.

To date, no other province has announced a plan to cover the municipal costs. I think they're moving slowly and cautiously because they don't know what is coming ahead for them. It's a very complex and evolving issue, and it will be evolving, for sure. This is new for all of us at all levels of government.

We know that this legislation was made by the feds and passed down to us as a province to regulate, and we are passing it down to municipalities to look after enforcement. Many unknowns remain, Mr. Speaker, including the full implementation, the cost, and what's coming from the federal government. We know there will be costs for policing, public safety, health promotion, education, regulation, and inspection - and other areas of provincial responsibility that we will find out about as we progress and it evolves.

With several items still under negotiation with the federal government, it is hard to put a firm number on the cost of this ongoing file. We will continue to maintain an open dialogue with our province's municipalities and police agencies. Following the guidelines of the Municipal Government Act, the Department of Justice notified municipalities that cannabis legalization could impact them, and one of the ways we know is in law enforcement.

The federal government introduced Bill C-45, the Cannabis Act, and Bill C-46, an Act to amend the Criminal Code for drug-impaired driving provisions on April 13, 2017. The provinces were given a number of responsibilities under these Acts such as the establishment of a wholesale and retail system, setting a minimum age, making rules on public consumption, personal cultivation, and enforcement, to name a few. In May, the cannabis senior officials participated in working sessions on cannabis with municipalities. In October 2017, the province consulted on several issues including legal age, retail modelling, public consumption, and drug-impaired driving, and there were four sessions

held with municipalities with 41 municipalities represented. So I know the member for Pictou West thought there may not have been some consultation but there is ongoing consultation with the federation.

The Department of Justice and the Department of Municipal Affairs sit on a working group with representations from the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities and the Association of Municipal Administrators Nova Scotia. This group meets every month, or as required, and is meant to keep municipalities informed as to the progress of the legislation and regulations. Also, the federation sent a letter last December regarding the costs and what was expected and what would be happening and, currently, we haven't been able to commit money because we know the federal government announced \$81 million over the next five years for law enforcement around drug-impaired driving. But we don't know what other enforcement issues there are going to be and at what cost.

The Department of Justice is currently in negotiations with the federal government on this funding and police agencies have been supporting those negotiations through information sharing and I'm sure many of you have heard they're even having to train their police dogs. My cousin is a dog handler for the RCMP and he's also a trainer and they're having to either train the dogs to not pick up the cannabis and react to cannabis or retire the dogs. So, it's making an adjustment there in their enforcement and we know that police dogs do play an important role in enforcement of drugs.

So, I'd like to say, Mr. Speaker, that there has been plenty of, well, a fair amount of consultation and it is ongoing. There is \$81 million being committed by the federal government, but we still don't know what our costs are. We know that in Nova Scotia we are leaders among combatting drug-impaired driving and that is a concern for me. We have more police officers, per capita, trained as drug recognition experts, and I know the member said she smelled cannabis on her way over to the House. I have a feeling they're going to have to evict a lot of tenants in my building because I sometimes think I could get high walking from the elevator to my apartment. But this training is going to be ongoing. Our goal is to have every front-line police officer trained here in Nova Scotia and be able to do the standard field testing.

We know municipalities are responsible for all the enforcement. We know also that dispensaries are illegal and, come October 17th, dispensaries will still be illegal and NSLC will be the only authorized seller of recreational cannabis in Nova Scotia. The consumption of cannabis we know causes impairment. We need to be very careful of that and enforce it. There will be exceptions for medical cannabis and, as I said, many . . .

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

The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, it's my honour to rise and speak briefly to Bill No. 56. I would like to start by saying that this bill recognizes two important facts. First of all, I'll speak for some time about the fact that it recognizes that municipalities across this province need more support from the province. Municipalities basically have only one revenue tool, property tax, and it is a very limited and not very versatile revenue tool. It's a blunt tax. It's not progressive. It doesn't allow us to achieve very many policy goals with that one tool, and of course, in Nova Scotia we know that it's probably time to revisit the tax cap in a non-partisan, municipal-provincial co-operative fashion. This government has shown no leadership on that front, so the municipalities are stuck. They're stuck.

[3:45 p.m.]

The province, in contrast, has many more revenue tools at its disposal, ones that can be fine-tuned to be progressive and not undermine policy goals. That's why the province provides payments to municipalities, to make sure that Nova Scotians aren't penalized for where they live, that they get relatively equal service. At least, that's the goal. We know that it doesn't work perfectly. The amount of money that the province provides municipalities has not increased in years. We can see the results. Rural regions are suffering. It's not sustainable, it's not fair, and it's not good for our provincial economy.

At the same time, our province still collects money from municipalities. It collects some of their property tax revenue in order to pay for things like education and correctional facilities - things that long ago moved from being municipal responsibilities to being provincial responsibilities. Most other provinces have stopped collecting revenue from municipalities to pay for those things, but Nova Scotia continues. Again, a big discussion, a big area that is really past due for examination and proposal and debate and reform - but not something that this government has shown much ability to lead us on.

This underfunding of municipalities is something that the NDP recognizes. That's why we've called for major stimulus funding for the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, and it's why we've made commitments in our Party's platform to things like core transit funding, investment in addressing homelessness and inadequate housing, and more funding for community organizations. These are all things that would improve lives across the province and, in direct and indirect ways, lessen the financial burden on municipalities and support them to do the work that they do closer to community. Pushing for proper funding and support for municipalities is something to which the NDP is deeply committed.

The other fact that this bill recognizes is that the Liberals have dragged their feet. When the federal Liberals announced cannabis legalization, the provincial government did not properly prepare for both the risks and the opportunities involved in that significant change in our policy environment. The government said it was focused on public health and safety, but its decision to co-locate seems like a decision based on cost savings, not public health. The limited number of locations that have been announced as retail locations

for cannabis also seem to be related to cost-saving goals rather than to eliminating the black market, for example.

We know that the NSLC will be importing all of the cannabis it will sell this year, and it's unclear if there's a path forward toward replacing that import supply with local production, which could create some real economic multipliers in our economy, especially in our rural economy. This is an area where New Brunswick is ahead of Nova Scotia.

Medicinal users also have many questions about their rights and about how they will continue to access the medicinal supply of cannabis upon which they rely under this new legal regime.

Renters could be in a situation where cannabis consumption is legal for everyone else but not for them because they have no legal place, or no legal guarantee of a place, to consume cannabis.

There are questions. There are areas where more work could have been and still needs to be done to address all the questions related to how legalization of cannabis will roll out in this province. Much of that work does indeed involve working with municipalities.

However, ultimately this bill misses the mark on cannabis legalization and policing. It continues the approach my colleagues in the Official Opposition have taken throughout this conversation of seeing this policy change and this policy debate through a law-and-order lens. It appears they wish we could continue to criminalize cannabis use.

One of the main points of legalization is to actually reduce the amount of police resources taken up by policing a practice that is widely enjoyed by Canadians. It's the law catching up with the facts on the ground.

The point is that the criminalized regime - treating the use and the possession of cannabis as a crime - was not effective. It was expensive, and marginalized people were disproportionately harmed through it.

We already spend and have spent a lot of public money on policing drugs. In fact, I wouldn't envy the accountant the exercise of determining whether five years from now will municipal police forces have saved more money or spent more money as a result? I expect they will have saved money, but I wouldn't want to undertake the exercise, and certainly change does involve some expense, simply because you are adapting to the new situation.

Some federal stats that are indicative of how much money we have spent through policing and prosecuting possession of cannabis: in 1999 it was estimated that Canadian

criminal courts heard 34,000 drug cases, which involved more than 400,000 court appearances. I can think of many ways I would rather have spent those public dollars.

Again, slightly old statistics, but Correctional Services Canada said at the time they had spent an estimated \$169 million annually to address illicit drugs through incarceration, substance abuse programs, treatment programs, and security measures.

With legalization there may be different costs, there may be costs of a slightly different sort as we move to regulating legalized cannabis, but there have been costs for years. There have been costs to police and there have been harmful costs on marginalized communities, impacts that have often led to increased and escalating involvement in the justice system of marginalized people.

We know that here in Nova Scotia, African Nova Scotians and other people of African descent are three times more likely to be stopped by police in street checks. Guess what happens sometimes when you get stopped randomly by the police? Sometimes they find that you are in possession of cannabis. Strangely or, in fact, not strangely at all, quite predictably, in Ontario some studies were done on this and they found that Black people were arrested for minor cannabis possession at three times the rate of white people in Ontario.

I would rather be talking right now about what we can do as a province to actually redress some of the injustice that has been visited on people through the criminalization of cannabis over many years, and I look forward to seeing how the province may move forward with that. While this bill recognizes that municipalities need more support and that the Liberal Government has failed to properly prepare for legalization, I think this bill misses the mark in many important respects.

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

MR. BRAD JOHNS: It's a pleasure for me to stand up today to be able to speak to this bill, Bill No. 56, not just because it's an initiative of our PC Caucus, but as a former municipal councillor and former Chair of the Halifax Regional Police Commission, it's something that I've taken particular interest in looking into over the last year or so in discussions.

As a former councillor, I certainly recognize the frustration that municipal units across this province are feeling. As the former speaker, the member for Halifax Needham was saying, I think there is a lot of downloading of costs that goes to the municipalities and this just seems to be a further downloading of responsibilities that are going to have financial impacts to municipalities across this province.

From that perspective, I guess I don't agree with the member for Halifax Needham because I think there will be additional costs to the policing. I do support the bill that's in front of us.

I want to say, from the start, I actually find it somewhat truly ironic that before cannabis was legal, we had some costs that we had to worry about in prosecutions and things like that. But it almost seems like now that it's legal, there is a whole other set of costing and responsibilities we have to look at. I find that somewhat ironic. I think it's uncertain to be able to say for sure what the particular and precise impacts of legalized marijuana are going to have on policing and municipalities. But I do feel, from the police I've talked with and our caucus have met with, I do believe that policing units across the municipality are saying there is going to be an increased cost.

Our caucus actually met with the superintendent for the Halifax Regional Police, Mr. James Perrin, and he took the time to come in and meet with us so we could talk about cannabis legalization, and to see what some of the views and concerns are that he has and that his department, the Halifax Regional Police, has with the legalization.

We did do some research on it and I think one of the problems we are going to be seeing is that although cannabis will be legalized, there certainly are going to be additional costs now to fight the black-market enforcement. As a previous speaker mentioned here today, we're going to have impaired driving charges and trying to deal with education around impaired driving. Also, now what we're seeing from municipal units is creating bylaws and how to deal with public pot smoking.

Madam Speaker, since the decision government has made is that cannabis will only be sold in Nova Scotia liquor stores, I think we do have to recognize that currently there are a number of establishments across the municipality, as well as across this province, which will be illegal marijuana businesses and dispensaries relatively soon. I think there are those additional costs of police going to have to deal with going in, shutting those down and the additional court costs through taking them through the courts and prosecuting the owners.

In addition to that is also the equipment that's going to be needed. In regard to impaired driving, over the last 25 years, 10 years, we've been fighting against drinking and driving and now, all of a sudden, we're also going to have to deal with impairment due to cannabis consumption. Of course, in some cases, you'll have consumption of both of those.

I do think policing costs and policing responsibilities across this province when dealing with that are going to increase significantly. We do know that the equipment that is going to be required - the machines to test for impairment of cannabis - will cost approximately \$5,000 each. Most municipal units will need at least a minimum of two of those; one to use and a spare to have.

With some of our more rural municipalities across this province, that's an additional \$10,000 they have to equate into their yearly operating budgets. In addition to that, there's also the training that's required in order both to operate the machines, and also to become a recognized expert, who is qualified to detect and certified to perform the standardized field sobriety tests.

Municipal units and police forces across the province are going to have to deal with these as well. Then, when an officer is out training, you do have to backfill that, so there are some minor costs there, too. It's all these minor costs that will certainly add up and this is what we're hearing from police forces across the province.

[4:00 p.m.]

Police are going to have the additional responsibilities of citations for public use, court appearances, public safety, health and promotion, education, regulation, inspections – so there's some significant things that municipalities are going to have to face. I found it also somewhat interesting that a couple of municipal units have suggested that they feel the money that is coming federally will probably not be sufficient to actually be able to meet the requirements they need in training and new equipment.

Not to mention the safety of our first responders, whether that be police, fire, or EMS. In most cases, policing and fire across this province are a municipal responsibility. Not just police forces are going to have to be trained in how to deal with this, but also firefighters across our province as well. Being first responders, sometimes when there is an incident, whether it's a public disturbance or something else, they're the first ones on site. Additionally, they're also exposed to increased threat that could come as well.

I do want to mention as well that I'm very disappointed in the fact that this seems to be a patch-work. The government has really left the municipalities to decide how they are going to deal with this independently. Although some may say that municipalities should be given discretion in this case, I would say that I totally do not agree with that. We saw this both through smoking as well as pesticides when legislation came through in those. Governments of those days left those decisions up to individual municipal units. Municipalities invested time and money and commitments into creating that and then the province came along and created a province-wide legislation and made the municipal ones moot. Unfortunately, I'm concerned that this is going to be a similar case here.

I'm also very concerned in regard to enforcement and municipal units. We do see how HRM is tweaking their bylaw, hiring new bylaw officers. By having this patch-work across the province, I could drive from here to Enfield, Truro, down the Annapolis Valley, each municipal unit seems to be creating their own bylaws with their own set of enforcement rules and stuff. I think that's an unjustified cost to those municipalities, Madam Speaker. I think that if the province had come out and created legislation that all municipal units fell under, then that would have been a cost savings to those municipalities, but that didn't happen. I'm going to predict now that the same thing is going to happen

down the road that happened with the smoking and the pesticide bylaw. We'll be back here in another couple of years and the legislation will go province-wide.

I also wanted to say we did meet today with representatives from the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities, and they expressed the same things. It was somewhat ironic that one member said to me that they really don't know what the costs are going to be for enforcement of cannabis legislation. The stance that they're taking right now is to do nothing at all and certainly that's not where we would've wanted municipalities to go in this. There's so much uncertainty given the costs

MADAM SPEAKER: Order. Time is allotted.

The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Madam Speaker, seeming that we're a little ahead of ourselves, if we could do rounds of 12 minutes so that the folks upstairs can make the adjustments for 12 minutes each.

Madam Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 61.

Bill No. 61 - Protecting Children on the Internet Act

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MR. ALLAN MACMASTER: Madam Speaker, at the Beyond Borders Canada Media Awards and Symposium in Winnipeg in 2015, my eyes were opened to the reality of sexual exploitation of children on the Internet. I was there to see Bob Martin and Dale Sutherland receive a national media award for being the faces of childhood sexual abuse survivors. The symposium talked about child pornography, how abusers access children, prostitution, and how many young people are trapped in it against their will. It talked about how pornography is desensitizing a whole generation to very sensitive issues. This is exploitation.

This bill we are discussing today is a product of that experience I had in Winnipeg. One of the strongest messages that came out of the symposium was that if you have personal relationships with children, implement a safe Internet strategy. Co-manage their devices from an early age and talk to your Internet service provider about options for limiting the delivery of pornography into your home. The message was that pornography is having an impact on our society and it is critical for parents to have an Internet plan at home for the kids. That means talking to their children about these things and it means monitoring the activity and the usage limits children have of the Internet to protect them.

Members in the Legislature - and I know this is an Opposition bill but if members vote for this bill they are voting to help people who want to keep Internet pornography out

of their homes and to block it in areas where children have access to free, public, wireless Internet. We can make an impact and it won't cost a cent.

For the duration of this speech, I ask that you put aside your personal views on pornography. Consider its impact on youth and how we can protect them from it. Consider young people may not have the knowledge, the maturity, or the understanding to process what they are seeing. I want to highlight that this bill is not about banning pornography, but I want members to consider its impact on youth and how we can protect youth from it.

Pornography is powerful. Watching it has consequences especially for youth. In many cases, they're seeing women being used and abused all the while playing on natural sexual interests. Boys and girls are taught to disrespect women and, then, they are left to their own devices to determine if they choose to act these things out in their own lives. The average age to begin to see pornography is 11 years old. We have controls in place for tobacco, for alcohol, for gambling but not for pornography.

Neuroscience studies have proven that the brain reacts to pornography much in the same way as it would react to a drug. Both teach the brain to crave them, with dopamine levels spiking on stimulus. In both cases, people can become addicted and we know how addictions affect families, not just the person who is addicted but also the relationship they have with their families. In many cases, addictions destroy relationships and cause pain for those suffering with the addiction and also for their family

I must stress that pornography does not have to become an addiction to cause mental health problems and I want members to listen to this. The person watching it may not have the mental health issue but they may be causing mental health issues for other people around them - perhaps the people they're interacting with. Neuroscience studies have shown that the reward area of the brain can actually shrink from porn use or drug use or anything else that causes that kind of stimulus, and I would say that is probably why there is such extreme pornography out there. So, children are seeing that.

If we do not allow pornography to be displayed on bus ads, television screens, and bars or shopping malls because we consider it inappropriate for some viewers, why do we allow it to be so accessible on smartphones, as one example.

So, what are the results? Mental health issues, depression, anxiety, a lack of empathy for others. What does this lead to? Bullying. We talk about bullying a lot in the Legislature. Consider the mental health issues of eleven-year-old boys or girls watching pornography, digesting a steady diet of it, and seeing what they think sex is about, or should be about. Now imagine, in a few years' time, them going off to college or university and thinking it is normal. Madam Speaker, it is not normal.

Consider the mental health impacts of rape. Consider the mental health impacts of everything else that is going on that young people are seeing in pornography, and maybe

acting out themselves in a few short years. We in this Legislature, not so long ago, were looking at laws to punish the man who defiled Rehtaeh Parsons, yet what have we done to protect those young men from thinking that what they did was normal and acceptable? They were making and distributing pornography, and Madam Speaker, I don't think they even realized it.

But it's not just teenagers. We saw a high-profile case with the Dalhousie School of Dentistry. It was about the desensitization to the degradation of women. I'm sure members will remember that.

These are two local and real examples that gathered national headlines, and I believe they're examples of how pornography is changing the world we live in. Its ease of access is changing the world we live in. I don't have proof, but looking at the age of the men involved, and the statistics on porn consumption - some of these men may have been influenced by things they've seen. Only they know.

What else does this lead to, Madam Speaker? Violence against women. Now, I know it's more than just women who are appearing in these pornographic images and videos, but *Time Magazine* has recently reported that 90 per cent of behaviour in popular pornography contains physical aggression toward women.

We had the support of the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services Association on this bill. Lucille Harper, who is the executive director, offered a quote. I would ask members to hear this quote: "Every day we hear accounts of acts of sexualized violence that are perpetrated against women and youth - many of which are attempts to replicate what has been portrayed in pornography. Limiting the exposure of children to pornography will both support the development of healthy relationships and contribute to reducing sexualized violence." Madam Speaker, I will table that.

Some people in the Legislature here may remember a speech I gave in Fall 2014 honouring survivors of sexual abuse. I spoke about abuse that happened in the 1970s in the Strait Area between men and boys. That speech identified seven men who received a standing ovation in this Legislature. Two of them appeared in person in the Speaker's Gallery. Those survivors who are no longer with us, those who the pain was too much for, were also acknowledged. Everyone in this House gave them a standing ovation for their bravery.

I think that was one thing that we did positively in this province for people who have suffered sexual abuse and violence. We as an institution, the province, stood up and applauded them for their bravery and recognized that what was done to them was wrong, was not asked for, and was not their fault. No matter what happened in the justice system, it mattered that those survivors came forward with a message of hope for others - others suffering in silence.

Sexual abuse has a history of being hidden. The secret is the power the abuser holds over the abused person. Today, with this bill, we are trying to protect children from the damage and exploitation of them seeing pornography on the Internet. I would suggest that it is kind of like a secret too. Everyone knows it happens, but few say anything. We could stop it if we acknowledged that it exists and if we wanted to stop it, yet it floats out there because no one will take responsibility. That includes Internet service providers. Parents have a hard time talking with their children about it, and I think many of them hope their children do not see it until they're old enough to deal with it.

Governments - and Madam Speaker, I'm not pointing the finger at any political Party - have done nothing to protect young people from pornography - nothing proactive, although we have responded here in the Legislature with things like CyberSCAN and the bullying discussions, especially around the late Rehtaeh Parsons. We've had mental health debates and we've had sexual assault on university campus debates. Those are all reactive. This is something proactive.

[4:15 p.m.]

Just like with sexual abuse, this Legislature needs to pay attention to the impact of pornography on young minds. We cannot treat it like a secret and then forget about it. We have to talk about it, as uncomfortable as it may be, and we have to do something about it. That is what this bill does, and we can start to do something about it today. This is not about banning pornography. It is about something positive, putting measures in place to protect young people from seeing it.

Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada also supports this legislation. Nicole Merrick, who is the president, is supportive. She even went as far as saying that she hopes that every province and territory across Canada follows the example of this bill. She says, "Technology often outpaces the law's ability to deal with significant issues - in this case the harm to children through exposure to harmful and pornographic images. This proposed legislation represents a significant step in protecting children from these harmful images by setting a safeguard which prioritizes the safety of children as the standard, while allowing Internet users full rights to adjust those settings." They are part of a global network of 82 organizations in 75 countries dedicated to ending child sex abuse, child sexual imagery, and the exploitation of children through travel and tourism.

To close, all the measures proposed in this legislation have been done successfully in the United Kingdom. Internet service providers have responded positively.

I think we should tear down the political barriers. I think it is time to do something here in this Legislature. I think we should get together as three political Parties to make this happen. Let us show leadership and be proactive about something that matters. Pass this bill to limit the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet and make a real difference for the mental health and well-being of young Nova Scotians.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MR. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: It's my honour to stand here today to talk on this bill and speak about this very important subject. I applaud the member for bringing this forward, and the dangers that do come along with pornography and our youth being exposed to pornography.

A lot of times, for me personally anyway, I think your opinion on this changes once you have children. I think you start to look at the world a little bit differently. I will say that having three children, one five-year-old, one three-and-a-half-year-old, and one one-and-a-half-year-old, I can tell you that it is a lot different than when I was young.

Being 43 years old, when I first was old enough to make some of my own decisions, there was none of this technology. I remember the very first cellphone was a big giant brick phone, and it didn't have Internet access or anything like that. I remember when the Internet first came out.

Children nowadays are learning quicker, especially when it comes to technology. I'll give you a good example. In my house, we limit the screen time our children have. We actually don't have cable. What we do is at nighttime, we allow our children to have usually about an hour of screen time before they go to bed. It's interesting to watch a five-year-old or a three-and-a-half-year-old pick up a tablet and how easily they can navigate through these different programs.

I'll give you a good example. We installed Netflix, and now what's happening is, our children don't want to watch Netflix anymore. They want to watch YouTube, and they watch these YouTube channels, which I always found was a little bit creepy, but I guess they're child-friendly. We went through it. We screened it and all this stuff. It's people playing with the toys that they actually love and creating these different - I guess TV shows is what you would call them.

These YouTube channels are getting millions and millions and millions of views. They influence our children. We do have to be very, very careful about how our children interact and how they use the Internet now.

The reason I bring up my children using the Internet is because - I appreciate the bill. I don't know if this is the entire solution. I know that coming from an IT background myself - I was educated as a computer programmer and I did that for years and years and years - there's always a way around. And whether it's virtual networks, whether it's fake IP addresses, and limiting. So part of this - what I'm trying to wrap my head around is how do we work with the Internet providers or how do we work with these providers and at the same time be able to block all this content out through the Internet provider?

I would argue that there are a lot of different programs out there, a lot of free services and free apps that allow you - and they have been for a long time, there have been programs like this for a long time that allow you to limit what your children watch. I think that's all part of the solution. I do think, especially when it comes to technology, there are five-year-olds and ten-year-olds out there now who are a lot further along than I am and, as I said, my educational background is in this stuff, so it is scary what our children can be exposed to.

I think a big part of this is education. I look at the online bling, I mean - I guess it makes me sound old but the whole world has changed where bling was completely different when we were younger. It was mostly face to face and there are different consequences for that.

What you are seeing now is the cyberbullying, and part of the cyberbullying is the intimate images that are being spread. It's very disturbing to know that when you talk to youth how young they are when these intimate images start to become part of their life. The pressure they receive in, not high school, not junior high, but elementary school, from their own peers and from older kids and adults, to partake in this. I do know that the RCMP has what they call the ICE Unit that deals directly with this that are constantly monitoring the Internet, and they're monitoring different sites to help protect our children.

We did pass the Cyberbullying Act, which first came from the previous government. Obviously, there were some issues with it that were pulled out in court. We took the bill and made some modifications to it and then sent it forward.

I guess what I'm trying to say is that it's a very difficult subject to deal with. It is very multi-levelled. We could ban the practice from these Internet providers but you know when you are on your cellphone and you're not using your WiFi and you are surfing on a cellphone, you are in Halifax, you are down in New Ross or you are down in Clare-Digby, or some other place and you are on a different network, it becomes exponentially more difficult when you have these mobile units that are travelling from place to place.

There are programs like geofencing and other programs such as that, that could potentially help. What I will say is that I think the issues have changed from when we were children and I think a huge part of this is education, including that, including these very difficult - and the member was absolutely correct that these discussions, these topics are extremely difficult to have, especially when you're having them with children at such a young age now.

I remember my first, I guess "birds and the bees" conversation I ever had, I was a teenager and that's when we had that. When I was in junior high school we had sex education. Now what we're seeing is that this has to be done at a younger age, so it's very difficult to have that conversation with a five-year-old, but I can assure you that myself and my partner, Rena, we've had these conversations with our children because they are

using YouTube and they are gaming online. There are moments, no matter how perfect a parent you are, there are moments where your children could potentially be exposed to some of this stuff that's going on online.

I look at it as a societal issue, that we are raising our children now in this generation where everything is at the tip of their fingers. I think we need to understand the technology, we need to educate our children, we need to have those tough conversations, but we need to incorporate that into our education system. We need to incorporate these conversations, these tough conversations, into our sexual education in our schools, and we need to start doing it at a younger age.

I know some people don't like that. I think it does make some people uncomfortable. But this is the reality of the world we live in. There are predators and the people who are predators, it does make it easier for them to hide behind the computer screen. It makes it easier for them to pretend they are a youth when they are playing a video game online and things like that.

The Internet, for all its marvels and everything it has done to bring our world closer together and to connect our communities and to connect business, also has allowed people who could potentially prey on our children and prey on our youth and adults, is also giving them easier access to those individuals.

We need to have these tough conversations. We need to make sure that no matter what Party you are in, no matter what belief you have, no matter what religion you are part of, these conversations start at home, they start with the leaders in your community, and us as MLAs. Maybe this is part of it. Maybe this is part of having discussions, holding "town halls" with parents, with our educators, and with our community leaders.

We like to come up with solutions in the Legislature; that is part of our job. Over the last five or six months, myself and a young lady who is working out of my office, Mary Frances, came up with kind of a fun idea. At first, we thought it would be kind of a fun idea, to engage youth in our community on very difficult questions.

We reached out to parents and said we are looking for five to six youth, all different ages, different backgrounds, different cultures, and we want to give them the same question separately. They would respond to us with their answers, and then we would post it online with their permission.

At first it was just kind of a fun thing, but we really got into some very difficult topics with the blessing of their parents, obviously, and their guardians. But what we found is a solution that came from the youth, the youth who understand the issues that they're facing are much more likely to succeed.

I would say that while this is a fantastic idea, I think what could happen is public consultation from all Parties to reach out to youth, to reach out to the advocacy groups out there, and try to figure out how we protect our children. But at the same time we also don't shame them in their sexuality. We allow them to be free and make their own choices, and let them know that consensual sex between adults is not a bad thing and that you should be proud of your body and you shouldn't be shamed by how you look or how you feel toward people of the same sex or opposite sex.

I think the conversation is more of a holistic conversation about how we treat each other online, how we treat each other in person and, at the same time, just the conversation about sex in general.

I want to thank you for allowing me this time to have this discussion and as a parent of three young children, I do think it is an extremely important bill and an extremely important conversation.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

MS. SUSAN LEBLANC: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this Bill No. 61.

I agree with both of my colleagues that the world is a very scary place, especially when you have children. The Internet is even scarier. I find myself, as my children grow, at once wanting to expose them to the amazing thing that is life and our human experience and, at the same time, holding them like this and grabbing them and not letting them go anywhere across the street. The idea of letting my kid bike around the block still terrifies me. I just can't handle it.

So when I think about the things that I've seen on the Internet, it is very scary and I think we should all worry about how to protect our children from images and ideas that can be harmful to them, especially as the member for Inverness mentioned, at the wrong age or without their proper context.

[4:30 p.m.]

I think it's very important and I also think that as parents and as people we each have a different approach to how we handle these things. Everyone has a different parenting strategy. We all read different parenting books. We talk to different advice givers and we have a different definition of what is appropriate. By my definition, there is a lot of content on the Internet that would not fall within the definition of pornography, but is certainly not family-friendly and that I would not want my children to see and that I think can cause serious harm to the mental health of young kids and youth. It might not be pornography, but I'm thinking about things like the comments, the hateful, hateful comments and threats

that are spewed at women, for instance, who stand up for what they believe in and express their opinions.

I'm thinking about the racism and intolerance that we are seeing in video form, or in word form, that is being put out on the Internet by all sorts of far-right groups with certain ideologies that I find abhorrent and terrifying. Or, to bring it back a little bit closer to home, I actually find silly YouTube videos with a couple of the dudes having a couple, cracking a couple of pops, and talking about the girls and about boys being boys. I actually find that super offensive and I don't want my daughter watching that. So that stuff is equally scary to me as pornography and the other types of exploitative content that is on the Internet.

I want to protect my children from harmful words and images. I want to make sure that they're safe online with rules and boundaries, and I know that those boundaries will change as they get older. I also want to encourage my children to think critically and to be smart about what they're watching and to ask questions about what they're watching, and God help me if I never answer a question about something like that. I want to be the kind of parent that says great question, let's talk about that, because I really think that's where we're going to protect our children most. If we can't do it, then we find someone else who can talk to them - a human being, not a screen, that can be a sounding board for the questions and feelings that you might have when they see content that they don't understand or can't get their heads around.

I do think it is also about supervision, obviously. I think about, like the member for Halifax Atlantic was talking about his family watching the Internet or TV screen time. We have similar things, but I also steer my children away from PJ Masks because it's so terribly written, but slightly offensive, thank you. Also, when we watch PAW Patrol and, my goodness, Skye doesn't get to do much in PAW Patrol and why is that and let's have a conversation about that. But I do try to talk, and I do try to sit with my children while they're watching. It doesn't always happen. It's a really good time to get dishes done, honestly, but it is important that we're having those discussions with children.

I want my children to be able to ask questions about what is appropriate and why. Why is it inappropriate and about who can say things and get away with it and why is that? How can the President of the United States talk about grabbing women in certain places and that seems to be okay for certain populations, but other things we can't mention? I want to talk to my children about consent, because part of the stuff that the member for Inverness was talking about is this idea that children watch pornography and they come to think that that is normal or okay. Let's have a conversation about consent, and let's have that conversation when kids are six years old and four years old and little brothers are hitting or touching their older sisters and it's not okay. Let's have that conversation - well, let's start it then. That's what I'm talking about.

I actually don't think that this bill does enough to address the serious issue of sexual exploitation of children on the Internet, and I will explain why I say that. I do agree that avoiding early exposure to pornography is certainly helpful, but the bill doesn't actually address concerns about luring and human trafficking, which are very scary aspects of the Internet.

We know there are certain factors that make people vulnerable to human trafficking and other forms of sexual exploitation. Those risk factors need to be addressed in our society, in this House, and the way that we are making laws at all levels of government - factors like poverty. People who live in poverty are vulnerable. They may be more likely to take risks to try to improve their financial situation and their social and economic situation. Factors like racism and the legacy of colonization - traffickers will target people who are marginalized due to racism and colonialism, and they capitalize on their vulnerabilities.

Gender inequality. Women are seen as less than men, are paid less for equal work, have fewer rights, have less access to health, education, and property, and are expected to be submissive to men. When we see these YouTube videos about the fellows just having a couple of beers and talking about women's breasts, it's all part of the same game. It's all part of this societal acceptance of the way women are treated at many levels; it's not just in pornography.

We have to look at addictions and mental health issues that also create greater vulnerability for sexual exploitation. Yes, I agree we need to address the concerns about the risks to our children and what we can do to protect them. I agree with the comments that have been made in that realm. But I also think we can do this by addressing poverty, by addressing racism, the legacy of colonization, gender inequality, addictions, and mental health.

I think while this bill is important, we must actually look at the bigger picture and put our money where our mouths are and fix these issues in our province and in our country, so we can truly have a place where children can grow up safely and have opportunities to be the perfect people that they are, as I mentioned yesterday. That's all I'll say for that.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

MR. JOHN LOHR: Madam Speaker, I am honoured to stand and say a few words about Bill No. 61. I do want to acknowledge my colleague, the member for Inverness for bringing this forward and thank him for bringing this bill forward. I think it's an important bill and I do want to address the comments a little bit from my colleagues, the members for Halifax Atlantic and Dartmouth North.

I think of this as a gatekeeper bill. You think about if you lived on a busy street and you could put a gate in front of your house to protect your children from running out into the street, would you do it? You might well do it.

As my colleague, the member for Halifax Atlantic said, you can never build a gate that someone can't get over. There's always the possibility of someone, a child, getting through that gate, but nevertheless, the gate will serve its purpose a good bit of the time.

I don't think the argument that there are other ways around it, while true, is necessarily good enough. The idea that we need to educate our children about the dangers of the road or the dangers of Internet pornography, I totally agree with that. But that doesn't mean that having a gatekeeper or having a gate on your property, if you lived on a busy street, wouldn't be worthwhile to you. You would still need to educate your children about the road and about the street, so there's a lot to do there.

Likewise, the comments from my colleague, the member for Dartmouth North, I thank her for her comments too. Yes, there are a lot of terrible ills in the world, so this is a very narrow bill dealing with pornography and children and there's a lot of things that it doesn't address, but it's doable. To have a bill that addresses all those other social ills, I would love to see that bill come forward and we could do it all at once, but this is a doable bill. It has been done in the U.K., a nation of 60 million people.

It's not the be-all and end-all. It won't end Internet porn; it probably won't end children's exposure to Internet porn, but it will do good and it will keep some children from Internet porn. One of my goals here in the Legislature is even simply to do small amounts of good. I think a small improvement is an improvement nevertheless. If we look at all the big problems - yes, this isn't addressing all of them, but this is a small solution to a huge problem that is doable and has been done. It has been implemented in the United Kingdom and can be done.

This bill will simply ask Internet providers to create an opt-in clause on explicit Internet porn rather than simply have it be available there. Adults will still have access to it if they so choose to do so. The child stumbling around the Internet, or just looking, is not going to come upon it accidentally or unintentionally.

I remember years ago - this is probably very old information - apparently in the early days of the Internet, one porn site was the Whitehouse. So, if a child Googled the White House, and might innocently be doing that for a school project, that went to a porn site simply because the White House hadn't captured that domain name. I don't think we're in that realm anymore, but it's incredibly accessible to children through smart phones and through all of the different ways that the Internet can be accessed. While this bill does not do all the things that the member for Dartmouth North has suggested need to be done - and I totally agree - this bill does good. This bill does not cost us, in the Legislature, anything

and will protect and prevent some children - not all, but some - from having access to sexually explicit material.

There's a lot of information about the harm of this material, and I do want to talk briefly about that. I will table this note after I'm done talking though it. Child and adolescent exposure to sexually explicit material is a form of child abuse and can lead to child-on-child abuse or sibling abuse. It intensifies attitudes among boys and young men that are supportive of sexual coercion and increases their likelihood of perpetuating an assault. It leads to lower degrees of social integration, increases conduct problems, higher levels of delinquent behaviour, higher incidence of depressive symptoms, and decreased emotional bonding with caregivers.

In Canada, we protect children's exposure to sexually explicit material on traditional forms of media, recognizing the harmful effects it has on behavioural development. However, nothing has been done to protect children from sexually explicit imagery online, the majority of which is violent and degrading. More disturbing is that producers of this sexually explicit material target children just as rigorously as they target any other commercial market, making the material easily accessible. Within seconds, a child with a mobile device or a computer can view violent and degrading sexually explicit material.

The violence in much of this material, maybe all of it, is scenes which are not simulated. They are real, showing real slapping, spitting, punching, choking, and degrading abuse. Children have no way of knowing what they're viewing is not simulated and is not normal behaviour. It has profound effects on our children. The rates of children viewing this are very, very high. It's just simply so readily available, as you all know.

Now this is in 2009 - I can imagine almost 10 years later that the statistics are a lot higher, but this was a survey of 29,000 individuals at North American universities - 51 per cent of male students and 32 per cent of female students first viewed sexually explicit material before their teenage years.

If we can provide a means of slowing that down, simply doing a little bit of good, I believe that is worth doing. I believe that it's something that is within our grasp to do. It has been done in the United Kingdom, a very advanced Western nation. Their Internet providers have accepted this, simply created a requirement that an adult opt in to have this material there.

[4:45 p.m.]

As I said, as with any gate system ever made, there's always a way over or around or under the gate. Nevertheless, it will still keep a good majority of young people out - not all. But it will do good. I believe that it's our goal, and I believe that it's the goal of each member here in this Legislature, to do good here. This is a good that we can do.

I would suggest if this Legislature wanted to adopt this, it would have a little bit like a domino effect across the nation, that this would catch the attention of people in other jurisdictions, in other provinces and territories and that we could see this spread right across Canada. We have it within our grasp to do this.

It would not cost our province any money to see it done. I will table that document. There's more that I could talk about in that document.

The violence and the sexually explicit material has a profound effect on young people. This has been studied. As my colleague said, it's incredibly addictive material. It changes the brain. It changes attitudes towards women. It has been shown. It has been demonstrated to make young men more receptive to violence towards women. This is just sort of typical behaviour. No wonder we have the problems that we have with young people with their cellphones when there's so much of this material so readily available to them that they start to believe that this is normal behaviour.

I just want to quote a couple of things. A 2012 analysis of over 70 academic studies on violent sexual material: ". . . the risk of harm that is evident in the literature has led researchers to investigate adolescent exposure to online pornography in an effort to elucidate these relationships . . . consistent findings have emerged linking adolescent use of pornography that depicts violence with increased degrees of sexually aggressive behavior."

We're living in a society where we see increased levels of sexually aggressive behaviour by adolescents. As my colleague discussed, we've seen these in our own province. It has led to us trying to create cyberbullying laws and all that stuff. It's incredibly difficult to get that law just right.

This is a way of not solving the problem, of not making it go away, but simply doing good, simply preventing some young people from being exposed to this material. We won't prevent them all, but it is doing good. I believe that it is the interest of every member of this Legislature to see good done.

I applaud my colleague for bringing it forward. I could go on about the harms of it. But I simply want to reiterate that it's a gatekeeper-type bill. It will prevent some young people from the harm of the Internet. It will increase the age at which they are exposed to it instead of being exposed to it at such young ages. I would like to speak in favour of this bill. I think it would be auspicious for this Legislature to adopt this bill.

I have 56 seconds left? Rather than talk it out, I just want to say finally to reiterate, to recap, if the United Kingdom can do it, we can do it. I say let's do it.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: That concludes Opposition business for today, so I'll turn it back over to the Government House Leader to call business for tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow, Thursday, September 27th, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Following the daily routine and QP, business will include third reading of Bill Nos. 55, 58, and 63, as well as Committee of the Whole House on Bills for Bill Nos. 27, 29, 32, 38, 42, 44, 45 and 48.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to adjourn to rise again tomorrow, Thursday, September 27th 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 and a reminder that the topic of late debate as submitted by the honourable member for Argyle-Barrington is:

“Therefore, be it resolved that all members of the Legislature condemn the Liberal Government for their disregard for democracy, transparency and the rules of the Legislature with regard to the behaviour of the Liberal members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.”

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)

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

GOV'T (N.S.) - STANDING COMM. ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS: RULES OF THE LEGISLATURE - DISREGARDED

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say it's my pleasure to stand and talk to this topic, but I think it's my honour to stand here and defend the Rules and Procedures of this House of Assembly when it comes to this matter.

This morning, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to Right to Know Week, the members of the Public Accounts Committee orchestrated what I feel to be an unprecedented, anti-democratic, sneaky and shameful manoeuvre to (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member the word sneaky is unparliamentary. I would ask him to retract that.

The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: I will retract the word sneaky.

This manoeuvre to shield their colleagues in Executive Council from scrutiny, from criticism and from accountability. They did so at the expense of people who have the right to know.

Government members used their majority in the Standing Committee on Public Accounts to change the committee's mandate and rules. That sounds boring for those of us who have rule books or, actually, don't have rule books and House of Commons Procedure and Practice books in front of us.

But it's not boring. It limits the ability of Public Accounts to question government on its spending to only when the Auditor General decides it has material impact on the province. Right or wrong. Wise policy or no. "Who cares?" is what the Liberals seem to think. They already know that these things are not what the Auditor General reviews.

Mr. Speaker, I'm certain the member for Clare-Digby was just doing what he was told. Maybe he was working on his own. I guess we'll find out soon enough.

I don't believe he went into that committee meeting knowingly to break Rule 60(2)(b).

Let me just open up the book. We had this really great little book that has all of our rules in it. I will read Rule 60. I should have had it opened to the page but I did not. Poor me, as I go all the way back here. There's 58, 60(2)(b).

So 60(1), "At the commencement of the first Session of each Assembly, a Special Committee, consisting of five Members, . . ." I remember we put everybody on it. Then the Functions of Standing Committees (2) For greater certainty, (b), "the Public Accounts Committee is established for the purpose of reviewing the public accounts, the annual report or other report of the Auditor General and any other financial measures respecting the public funds of the Province."

Then of course those rules go on to basically talk about the other standing committees of the House and basically what their mandates are.

But I don't think he realized he was breaking a whole bunch of rules, including Rule No. 85, and I'll read Rule 85: "No Rule adopted by the House shall be dispensed with,

unless by consent of at least two thirds of the Members present,” which means in this House.

Yet, he did. Making it sound like a great plan. Trying to be efficient in the House of Assembly or in the committee. Some may say, what’s a few broken rules between friends. Well, I think it’s a big deal.

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts is mandated to look at government spending, the cornerstone of accountability to voters and to taxpayers. I think members of all Parties will admit that when you’re in government, some Wednesdays when Public Accounts is sitting, are uncomfortable. Sometimes they’re embarrassing. Sometimes they’re pretty good because they are topics the government wants to talk about. Well, Mr. Speaker, I guess that’s just them’s the breaks.

Every government before this one has sucked it up and taken their lumps at Public Accounts Committee, but not this government. The Right to Know is politically damaging, it seems. I guess we should have seen it coming. The Premier has been more and more angry and increasingly impatient with criticisms from the committee.

When the Auditor General himself dared to do his job, the Premier took a swipe at him last November. I remind everybody, he belittled the AG and said that if he wants to do public policy, there will be 51 ridings for him to run in.

There are actually 51 MLAs, not just Liberal MLAs. And since the Rules of this House are so fundamental, it takes two-thirds of all of us - I repeat, all of us - to change them. That’s what the Liberals didn’t think they could do in the House, so they tried to do it in committee.

So, as I mentioned, Public Accounts hasn’t always been easy for government. It’s a committee where Opposition questions and uncovers truth behind government’s attempt to jack up senior Pharmacare rates. Remember that one? It’s the committee that unveiled how unprepared this government was for pre-Primary. It’s the committee that delved into the *Bluenose* boondoggle, just to name a few.

It’s not just a committee that uncovers big-ticket items. It’s not always about headlines. It’s about right or wrong; wise spending or not. Very often it is the committee that keeps governments complying with rules and standards, and we know that this government doesn’t like scrutiny. It doesn’t like and often won’t comply with the recommendations of the Privacy Commissioner.

Here’s the thing. If this government wanted to change the mandate of the Public Accounts Committee, there is a legitimate way to do it, but it would have been hard. They would have had to make sure they could win the vote here in the House by constantly

counting heads to ensure they can carry the vote with two-thirds present and try to avoid, of course, the pesky bells. So, they decided to try breaking a couple of rules.

It's arrogant, Mr. Speaker. It assumes that Opposition members don't know or don't understand the rules, and it just simply is not right.

I said in my speech kicking off today that it is the tyranny of the majority. The actions of the Liberal members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts significantly restricts government's accountability, and worse, it shows a stunning disrespect for the electorate, our taxpayers.

Very often we wonder why people don't vote. We wonder why Nova Scotians are so cynical about their government. Well, we need not wonder any longer. It's because of spectacles like the one in Public Accounts this morning. It's a government that kinda, sorta, promised to be the most open and transparent in the country.

We've come a long way and in the wrong direction since then. You know, as they say, sunlight is the best disinfectant, and that's what this government needs to clean up because they have allowed a lot of rot to grow in the shadows.

I implore this government to either change its ways or call this week what it really is under this Liberal Government; it's No Right to Know Week, and that, Mr. Speaker, is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, again, the point of privilege from today underlines a number of rules that we feel were broken during that committee meeting. What I find the more difficult about what transpired this morning, and not to speak too much of the subcommittee meeting because, of course, it was in camera. But in last week's meeting we talked about having a new way, a new way to collaborate and work together when it comes to the agenda setting, the agenda of Public Accounts.

I think it is one that we and the NDP took seriously, of course, suggesting a number of topics that we found important. And also trying to find a way for it to match up with the recommendations and the reports coming from the Auditor General.

I can say, Mr. Speaker, I thought we were coming to a compromise, but lo and behold, when we got to the full committee, which I am allowed to talk about in the House, it was the motion to accept these issues that were shot down by the majority of the government, shot down after we thought we had a decent discussion in the previous committee. Then the motion that the member for Digby-Clare brought forward again, knowing full well, they then had the majority to pass it which was to simply call the Auditor General's Reports that he brought forward and no other opportunity for Opposition to suggest topics on the floor of the Public Accounts Committee.

[5:00 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, it stinks. It's something that should be brought back and I hope, of course, to hear from your report tomorrow or the next couple of days. Shame on the government on this one.

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

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, it was interesting to listen intently to the Opposition member's comments and I must say there were a few points he had there that I do have to agree with and I will touch on those. I want to start off by noting one thing I think is probably the most important thing. This is probably one of the single, most important committees that we have in government and it is very clearly governed by a mandate and I'd like to read that mandate.

Rule 62B of the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly sets out the official mandate of the Public Accounts Committee which states: "the Public Accounts Committee is established for the purpose of reviewing the public accounts, the annual report or other report of the Auditor General and any other financial matters respecting the public funds of the Province." That's a pretty direct and clear statement.

So, for me, I just want to reflect on my experience since I started with government. I've had the privilege again and I say it is a privilege. They say backbenchers are - we had the member for Queens-Shelburne used to always have a different name for us but I think it's a unique experience that we have in government as backbenchers to sit on a number of committees.

I've had the privilege I think that very few have had - I sit on every single committee in this Legislature. That includes the House of Assembly Management Commission, that includes Veterans Affairs, that includes Human Resources - I can name them all off. I've chaired a few of them. About two years ago, I had the limited experience of sitting in occasionally as a replacement on Public Accounts Committee. Then I got the privilege to be appointed as vice-chairman and it's been I think an extremely rewarding experience.

I'll have to say I have a lot of respect for the chairman. I have a lot of respect for the other members that sit there - the members for Sackville-Cobequid and Halifax Needham and all my colleagues. I have colleagues that have been sitting on Public Accounts Committee on this side since coming to government. I have colleagues sitting on this side that were members of other governments that sat on Public Accounts Committee.

So when I first came on to Public Accounts Committee and really got involved on a regular basis as vice-chairman, I started looking for information on what are the rules that govern this. I do that with almost everything that I follow and I think the chairman will note that I am a little bit of a stickler for procedure. I really am one that feels that when you

come into a meeting, you should have an agenda and you should know what that agenda is so you can be best prepared to speak on it.

I prepared myself by going through a document to start with and that document is the Legislative Committees Office committee reference. In there, that's where I found that mandate and there are a lot of other things that are in there. They're supposed to direct us on how we carry out the business of these committees. I was a little bit dismayed and I started forming some thoughts on what understanding I should have of how my role on this committee would be. I started to get some ideas that let's get more formal with agendas and we did that and it was a good thing. Clerks started providing us with a list of things that we were going to talk about.

We brought forward some ideas on how we could better close in the operation of Public Accounts. The Auditor General would come in and do a report, present it, then there would be this one-week news cycle and it would sort of get lost, and we shortened that. I think that was a good initiative that we brought in, so we could have real-time conversations instead of it being lost in the media.

I did also have the opportunity just recently to attend the national conference with my colleague from Halifax Needham. I think really what I'll say from that is that it solidified a lot of my understanding and thoughts on Public Accounts.

All of a sudden, we prorogued government. To be honest with you, I really couldn't jump all over prorogue also, but we all started asking questions about what that was about and got an understanding what that meant. That sparked some other conversations within myself and my members on Public Accounts. Obviously, we were criticized that we didn't move forward. Well, I saw it as an opportunity and that's how I addressed it in Public Accounts. I was very open and clear with that - here's an opportunity we have, folks. I read the mandate of this. I spelled out what I felt and several other people felt, several other provinces felt, and I said, let's try and build something better here.

Now we were achieving some of the highest compliance with recommendations, so Public Accounts was working well, but one of the things that really touched it off for me was a letter of September 4th from the AG. I'll briefly read from that letter. This letter states, this is from the AG to committee members:

I do continue to strongly believe that it is important that audit organizations come before you to answer your questions, including discussions of actions taken or a plan to address weaknesses.

He further goes on to say:

I am concerned that only half of our audits in the past five calendar years have been called to the committee for further examination - I

would actually say it is worse than that - and I respectfully encourage you to call audit organizations in for all our audit reports.

This is from the AG. This is the independent person who has been trusted to independently ask the questions of government that we should be doing. So, why aren't we? That's the question we're here today.

So I brought forward the motion, after lengthy discussion in subcommittee, and I don't think we're privy to talk about what we said in there and I'm not going to do that. But I want to note that when we came out of subcommittee we had one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight different items that in subcommittee - for those of you who don't realize, I am the minority - and now I have to come out of there and - unfortunately or fortunately, unfortunately it is in this case - vote against.

Of those eight, if we had followed the motion that I made, get this - seven of them, folks, would have been on the agenda. And they are now on the agenda. The old way we used to work, we would have voted those down. That's not the right way to do things. The Auditor General has asked us to do a better job and that's what I'm going to do. (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Clare-Digby has the floor.

MR. GORDON WILSON: The Auditor General has asked us to do something, which I think in some eyes might be seen as exposing government more. If you had asked me a year and a half or two years ago that I would have been able to suggest this, I would have said you are crazy. So, here we are today, looking at a 100 per cent compliance rate on having his voice here in the House.

This does not exclude us from dealing with other topics. The House of Assembly always has the ability to bring, and work towards bringing things to, Public Accounts. It is always something that we should be cognizant of. Out of 27 topics, we had five of them from the AG that came forward. Now we're going to have 100 per cent and I think that's a big step forward.

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

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I approach this topic as I've approached the last 15 years of dealing with political issues that come up in the House. I believe that I'm a reasonable person. I do approach issues with a lot of passion at times, but I believe I approach them in a reasonable manner.

I've had the very fortunate opportunity to be in this Chamber for well over 15 years and I think eight of those 15 years have been on the Public Accounts Committee. I've been

a government member, and in the governing Party dealing with the agenda of Public Accounts Committee, and I know it's not easy. I know it can be frustrating and I know it can be challenging, but that does not mean that you take an approach that is unreasonable when you look at the mandate of the committee. I truly believe the approach that the member opposite and the Liberal members of the committee have taken is unreasonable.

The member mentioned about the mandate and I want to expand on the mandate of the Public Accounts Committee, Mr. Speaker. I would agree with what the member had initially talked about - the Auditor General's Report and making sure that they come forward, but also under the mandate of the committee:

“ . . . within the framework of its Order of Reference from the Legislative Assembly, the Public Accounts of the Province or the Auditor General's report, to hold the government accountable for its spending of taxpayers' money and for its stewardship over public assets. To fulfil its functions and meet its responsibilities, the Committee will undertake to review, examine and evaluate the financial and administrative activities of government departments, agencies, crown corporations, and any person or institution receiving financial assistance from the government, cited in the Public Accounts or the Report of the Auditor General.”

The Auditor General's office does not, I believe, have the finance, the capability and the ability to oversee every single one of those identities I just mentioned - all the Crown corporations, all the departments, all those institutions that receive government funding. It's impossible. We'd never be able to audit all those identities, that's why we only see some departments audited once every five or six years. With the mandate of the committee, it allows for the members of the committee and the caucuses of the committee to call in a Crown corporation, for example and question their work. That's in the rules of the committee and it's in the mandate of the committee.

Since the House was prorogued over the last month, I've worked with my colleague from Halifax Needham. We've been genuine in trying to address some of the concerns that the Auditor General has brought up in a letter that he sent to members of the committee - the letter that he sent to myself and the two other House Leaders of the House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker. We see that in the topics that were brought forward to the full committee today.

Topics like the Fall financial reports of the Auditor General, the personal information breach related to the FOIPOP website, executive expenses at the IWK which we agreed to hold off until the Auditor General's report was tabled; maintenance enforcement which is Chapter No. 3 of the May 29th, 2018 report; the corrections facility which was Chapter No. 2 of the May 29th report of the Auditor General; funding for home care, which was Chapter No. 3 of the November 22nd, 2017 report and Chapter No. 1 of

grants and grants programs. The only one that I see here that wasn't kind of specific to the Auditor General, which the Liberal members voted down, was training for the Public Accounts Committee. They voted against a topic that we would have had training for the Public Accounts Committee, Mr. Speaker.

It's frustrating, as a member of that committee, to see the approach of the government being anything but unreasonable, Mr. Speaker. I'll table that agenda so people can look at it and realize was it a reasonable attempt, I think, on behalf of both the Opposition Parties to try to address some of the concerns the AG had, and the motion that was brought forward was all agenda items for the PAC be set through the Auditor General Reports, beginning with May 29, 2018 Performance Report. Future agenda sequences for scheduling to follow the order of chapters for each subsequent report tabled by the Auditor General, with appropriate department witnesses. PAC subcommittee meets on a future date to discuss developing a plan to implement a follow-up strategy for reports or recommendations.

That motion alone will not allow the Public Accounts Committee to really fulfill its mandate, in my opinion. It doesn't give the ability for Government members or Opposition members to call agencies, for example, that might be having issues with financial issues or the ability to provide services for Nova Scotians. That's what I believe Nova Scotians would expect from us. So, it is not a reasonable approach, I have to say, Mr. Speaker, to have that motion forward and really the legs being cut out from the Opposition Party that work hard on that committee.

We both acknowledge there needs to be work done to maybe make it more efficient to address the concerns of the Auditor General. I have a good relationship with the Auditor General and I know his office. He and his office are frustrated sometimes when things don't come before the committee right after those audits are done.

Mr. Speaker, it's the mandate of the committee and the members itself that drive the committee. We follow a mandate, but it's the elected officials who decide how we move forward to address concerns of the finances of the province and the administrative activity of government agencies, Crown corporations, and any persons or institutions that get funding from the government. There's a huge amount that lies on the Public Accounts responsibility plate, if I may say, that isn't directly with the Auditor General.

Yes, the Auditor General is important, his reports are important. When you are Government you kind of fear them a little bit, Mr. Speaker, especially when you are a government that may have just lost Government and the audits deal with when you were in Government. I went through that, I understand that. The first couple of years after 2013, most of the audits dealt with the past NDP Government's records, but that was part of my role as a member of the committee to deal with that and those topics still came forward.

What I hope comes out of this is I know there's a decision from yourself later on a point of privilege that my colleague, the member for Argyle-Barrington, brought forward today but I would hope that the government looks at this and says okay, let's be reasonable. I truly believe that there's an effort in the works or an effort with the Opposition Party to try to address some of the concerns the Auditor General had about calling those witnesses that he would hope and those departments. And it reflects in the topics that we brought forward today for a vote. It reflects that, Mr. Speaker.

Including the training, the member for Halifax Needham just returned, as did the member for Clare-Digby from the national convention around Public Accounts and she has really good ideas. Over the last couple of weeks there has been some agreement that we'll hopefully streamline some of the meetings and some of the audits and the presentation of the audits so that we address some of the issues the Auditor General feels we need to address as a committee.

Again, I hope that the Government takes this back and realizes that they need to be reasonable. This is the only committee - how many standing committees do we have in the House? Eight or nine committees. Every single one of them is chaired by the governing Party, every single one of them. They all have a majority from the governing Party, Mr. Speaker, but the Public Accounts Committee is the only committee that is chaired by an Opposition member - the only committee - and there's a reason for that. It's so that we can hold the Government to account. It's so that we can, at times, bring forward witnesses who will make the Government uneasy.

That's part of being Government. I've been there. It's part of it. I've said this before: I know the members of that committee will have a different perspective when they're on the Opposition benches. They won't be in Government forever. I can honestly predict that, and I can't predict much. They will have an opportunity to be on the Opposition benches - some of them will - and they'll realize that when you're dealing with Public Accounts, you need to be reasonable.

The motion that was made in the committee today was not reasonable, and hopefully they'll take this back and look at it and say, let's do the right thing and make sure that the committee does what it's supposed to do under the mandate. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The time allotted for late debate has expired.

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

[The House rose at 5:21 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 260**

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 Murray Lunn is a long-time resident of Conrod Settlement and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Murray Lunn has been a member of the Station 23 District Volunteer Fire Department for 20 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Murray Lunn for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Station 23 District Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 261

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 Zack Cramm is a resident of Porters Lake and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Zack Cramm has been a member of the Station 23 District Volunteer Fire Department for five years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Zack Cramm for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Station 23 District Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 262

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 Alan Duschene is a long-time resident of East Chezzetcook and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Alan Duschene has been a member of the Station 23 District Volunteer Fire Department for 40 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Alan Duschene for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Station 23 District Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 263

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 Dave Ingram is a long-time resident of Musquodoboit Harbour and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Dave Ingram has been a member of the Station 24 District Volunteer Fire Department for 10 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Dave Ingram for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Station 24 District Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 264

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 Alan Ramsey is a resident of Eastern Shore and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Alan Ramsey has been a member of the Station 24 District Volunteer Fire Department for five years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Alan Ramsey for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Station 24 District Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 265

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 Clint Marks is a long-time resident of Ostrea Lake and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Clint Marks has been a member of the Station 24 District Volunteer Fire Department for 5 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Clint Marks for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Station 24 District Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 266

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 Liam Landy is a resident of Eastern Shore and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Liam Landy has been a member of the Station 26 District Volunteer Fire Department for 5 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Liam Landy for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Station 26 District Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 267

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 Amanda Brady is a long-time resident of Head of Jeddore and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in her community; and

Whereas Amanda Brady has been a member of the Station 26 District Volunteer Fire Department for 10 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Amanda Brady for giving her time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Station 26 District Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 268

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 Duncan Richards is a long-time resident of Oyster Pond and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Duncan Richards has been a member of the Station 26 District Volunteer Fire Department for 40 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Duncan Richards for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Station 26 District Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 269

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 James Richardson is a long-time resident of East Jeddore and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas James Richardson has been a member of the Station 26 District Volunteer Fire Department for 40 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking James Richardson for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Station 26 District Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 270

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 Edger Kerr is a long-time resident of Clam Bay and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Edger Kerr has been a member of the Station 26 District Volunteer Fire Department for 40 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Edger Kerr for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Station 26 District Volunteer Fire Department.

RESOLUTION NO. 271

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 Boyd Chapman is a resident of Lawrencetown and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Boyd Chapman has been a member of the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments for five years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Boyd Chapman for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments.

RESOLUTION NO. 272

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 Adam Gillian is a long-time resident of Lawrencetown and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Adam Gillian has been a member of the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments for five years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Adam Gillian for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments.

RESOLUTION NO. 273

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 Justin Wamboldt is a resident of Mineville and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Justin Wamboldt has been a member of the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments for five years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Justin Wamboldt for giving his and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments.

RESOLUTION NO. 274

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 Gary Martin has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Gary Martin has been a member of the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments for 10 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Gary Martin for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments.

RESOLUTION NO. 275

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 Blair Manning is a resident of Lawrencetown and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Blair Manning has been a member of the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments for 15 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Blair Manning for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments.

RESOLUTION NO. 276

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 Chris Estabrooks has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Chris Estabrooks has been a member of the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments for 30 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Chris Estabrooks for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments.

RESOLUTION NO. 277

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 Scott Young is a long-time resident of Lawrencetown and has been an active volunteer for many initiatives in his community; and

Whereas Scott Young has been a member of the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments for 40 years, answering the call of duty 24/7;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Scott Young for giving his time and talents for the safety of the area residents who are served by the Stations 19 and 20 Volunteer Fire Departments.

RESOLUTION NO. 278

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 East Preston United Baptist Church Ladies Auxiliary was formed on September 8, 1918; and

Whereas the first executive consisted of Isabel Diggs, Maggie Williams, Sarah Jane Clayton, Annie Thomas, and Nancy Colley, along with 24 members; and

Whereas the East Preston Ladies Auxiliary continues to work diligently to support people in time of illness, provide youth with an educational scholarship, and help smaller churches outside their community with Christian work;

Therefore be it resolved that members of this House recognize and congratulate the East Preston Church Ladies Auxiliary as they celebrate 100 years on Sunday, September 30th.