



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

**DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS**

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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**Second Session**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2019**

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House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2019**

**Sixty-third General Assembly**

**Second Session**

**1:00 P.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy

**DEPUTY SPEAKERS**

Suzanne Lohnes-Croft, Brendan Maguire

THE SPEAKER: Order, please.

Before we begin the daily routine, as with the tradition on Budget Day in this House, with the consent of the House we will commence with the motion for Resolution No. 712, respecting the estimates under Orders of the Day. This means the daily routine will be delayed until after the response to the Budget Speech is adjourned, and Question Period will begin one hour after the start of the daily routine.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, with your permission I would like to do a few introductions before we begin.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

KAREN CASEY: Thank you. In the Speaker's Gallery we have some folks here today who have agreed to be part of our budget presentation and to allow their names to be used in the budget. They have come here to show their support. I want to acknowledge those people - perhaps we could hold our applause until they've all been introduced and then there will be no interruption during the speech.

Cynthia Dorrington, board chair for the chamber of commerce; Sharon Prest, owner of the Foundation for Learning; Christal Wicks from the Department of Internal Services; Lianne Turner, executive director from Yarmouth Tri-County Women's Centre; Dr. Kevin Orrell, senior medical director; Mark LeCouter, senior director with CBRM; and Paula Bond, Cassandra Dorrington, and Darryl MacPhee who are also joining us. They will be mentioned in the speech.

There is one more person - not in the speech but in my heart - my son, Kevin.  
(Applause)

**[ORDERS OF THE DAY]**

**[GOVERNMENT BUSINESS]**

**[GOVERNMENT MOTIONS]**

[Res. No. 712, re Estimates - CW on Supply: Referred - notice given Feb. 28/19 - (Hon. Karen Casey)]

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

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the notice of motion given by me on February 28, 2019, and the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly, I have the honour, by command, to present a message from His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Nova Scotia, relating to the Estimates of Sums required for the service of the province for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2020, which is:

"I hereby transmit Estimates of Sums required for the Public Service of the Province for the year ending March 31, 2020, and in accordance with the Constitution Act of 1867, recommend them, together with the Budget Address by the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board and any resolutions or bills necessary or advisable to approve the Estimates and implement the budget measures to the House of Assembly.

Signed,

**Arthur J. LeBlanc**

Lieutenant Governor"

Mr. Speaker, at this time I wish to:

(1) table the message from His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor of the province transmitting the Estimates for the consideration of this House;

(2) table the Estimate Books;

(3) table the Government Business Plan;

(4) table the Crown Corporation Business Plans;

(5) table the Estimate and Crown Corporation Business Plans resolutions;

(6) deliver my Budget Speech; and

(7) move that the Estimates of Sums required for the Province of Nova Scotia for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2020, being Supply, to be granted to Her Majesty and the Crown Corporation Business Plans be referred to the Committee of the Whole on Supply.

THE SPEAKER: The Estimates are tabled.

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

[1:15 p.m.]

### **Introduction**

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

It is a privilege to rise in the House today to deliver this government's 2019-20 budget, our fourth consecutive balanced budget. This position creates a strong foundation upon which to build, to move our province forward, and to benefit all Nova Scotians.

Throughout my remarks today you will hear three themes:

1. this budget continues to deliver on our plan to strengthen the financial health of the province, by balancing our budget;

2. a balanced budget allows us to invest in new and existing programs and services for Nova Scotians; and

3. a balanced budget creates the right conditions to encourage investments by the private sector and foster strong economic growth.



These are the priorities of our government, and they reflect what we hear from Nova Scotians.

During the pre-budget consultation period, we appreciated that many individuals and organizations responded with their views on the province's finances and their interest in our investments in public services.

One organization we hear from regularly is the Halifax Chamber of Commerce. The chamber has expressed a strong interest in maintaining our fiscal health and in creating an environment conducive to private sector growth including competitive taxation, immigration attraction, and workforce training and diversity.

Today, again, I would like to acknowledge this input by welcoming Cynthia Dorrington, Chair of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce. A successful businesswoman in her own right, Cynthia is also the first African Nova Scotian to lead the chamber's board. Welcome, Cynthia, and thank you for your efforts. (Applause)

The foundation of any budget is its economic assumptions. A panel of experts, including economists from the major national banks in Toronto and universities here in our province, reviewed our economic assumptions, and they concluded that our assumptions were reasonable. The Auditor General raised no matters of concern with regard to our economic assumptions and revenue estimates. I am confident that our assumptions for this budget are sound.

Our plan projects a positive position of \$33.6 million for this fiscal year and remains balanced throughout the four-year fiscal plan.

When we formed government in 2013, the province was facing a deficit of \$676.9 million. We understand the limitations that deficit budgets and financial burden impose on governments and on future generations. Deficit budgets limit innovation in programs and services and limit investing in infrastructure. Deficit budgets limit our ability to manage the costs of unexpected events such as wildfires, storms, or frost damage to our crops.

On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, balanced budgets strengthen our reputation and give businesses the confidence to invest. For these reasons, we committed to a plan of carefully managing provincial spending.

In September 2018, Nova Scotia received our highest-ever credit rating by Standard and Poor's, putting us among the top four provinces in Canada. They noted that Nova Scotia is expected to fiscally out-perform most Canadian provinces over the next two years.

Moody's, another credit rating agency, affirmed Nova Scotia's Aa2 rating and stable outlook in August, saying: "... the governance and management of the province has

demonstrated a higher level of internal control and planning relative to past practices and relative to some Canadian peers.”

Our 2019-20 capital plan provides for new investments in health care facilities, schools, roads, and other infrastructure.

A key measure of fiscal health is the ratio of net debt to GDP. It reflects the ability of the province to pay its debts. The One Nova Scotia Commission set a goal for the province to reach 30 per cent net debt to GDP ratio by 2024. We are trending in the right direction and moving toward that goal. We have reduced our ratio from 38.2 per cent in March 2014 to 35 per cent last year, and now project it to fall to 33.8 per cent by the end of 2019-20.

Other indicators are contributing to a positive outlook for the province:

- our population has reached its highest level in the history of the province;
- for the third year in a row, more youth are moving to Nova Scotia than leaving;
- a record number of immigrants have settled in Nova Scotia;
- more international students are choosing to study here and stay here after graduation;
- exports continue to increase with Nova Scotia seafood reaching an all-time high in 2018, with a value of more than \$2 billion;
- there are now more full-time jobs than at any point in our history; and
- unemployment figures show the lowest annual average since 1976, with the rate for February 2019 measured at 6.4 per cent. That was the eighth consecutive month our unemployment rate has dropped.

This positive outlook builds confidence in our province.

Balanced budgets allow us to invest in new and existing programs and services for Nova Scotians - they give the province capacity to invest in major infrastructure projects. The first priority is improving access to health care.

### **Improving Access to Health Care**

Nova Scotians expect us to work together to deliver the health care they deserve. Our province is changing and so are the health care needs of Nova Scotians. Sustainable, effective change takes time, and we are striving for continuous improvement.

Creating a more modern, collaborative, and evidence-based future for health care means investing in the next generation of health care service delivery. It means making investments to improve access to primary health care, to improve mental health services and supports, and to reduce wait times for critical services.

The ongoing development of primary health care teams continues. The Nova Scotia Health Authority is leading these efforts.

These teams make it easier for Nova Scotians to see a doctor or other primary care clinician when they need it. An additional \$10 million will be invested this year to further develop collaborative teams.

This work is being supported by our investments in training more health care providers and in doctor recruitment.

We created a new Nurse Practitioner Education Incentive and are adding 25 more seats at Dalhousie University over two years. This will help ensure we have new and experienced nurse practitioners in our communities.

This year, we will also see the 10 family practice residency seats we announced last year open at Dalhousie University Medical School.

During the past year, our government has worked with Doctors Nova Scotia to develop new incentives for doctors to take on more patients.

In addition to family doctors, our province needs to ensure we train and attract high-demand medical specialists such as anesthesiologists and critical care doctors. Our budget provides \$2.9 million to open 15 new residency spaces for specialty medical positions at Dalhousie University Medical School. This continues to create a greater pool of doctors delivering care to Nova Scotians.

Recruiting internationally trained doctors is another important part of the recruitment strategy. The new physician immigration stream created last year has helped us recruit 25 doctors to date.

The Practice Ready Assessment Program, a new program designed to assess internationally trained doctors, began in February 2019. With the support from the

province, the College of Physicians and Surgeons is now screening candidates into the first group.

Since April 2018, 125 new doctors have started working in communities across the province - 57 family doctors and 68 specialists.

Statistics Canada reports that 87 per cent of Nova Scotians are attached to a primary care provider - a family doctor or nurse practitioner - ranking the province fourth highest in the country in patient attachment. But, Mr. Speaker, we recognize we need to do more.

Our sustained recruitment activity is critical as we, like other jurisdictions, continue to face doctors choosing to retire, practise elsewhere, and/or practise differently.

That is why we are excited about and most appreciative of the communities that are getting involved in doctor recruitment. We know that doctors consider many factors when making a decision about where to practise. They are often choosing a way of life for themselves and their families.

NOW Lunenburg County is one such example. This community organization is working closely with residents, with local doctors, and with local businesses to show potential recruits what kind of lifestyle is possible in their area.

Tina Hennigar, NOW's coordinator said: "We strongly believe groups like ours need to be equal partners in the recruiting work. We know our communities, and we know how to connect newcomers in ways that result in successfully landing in a new place."

Our government not only appreciates the efforts of community groups like this, but we are also supporting those efforts with \$200,000 in funding in this budget. We look forward to working with them on how to best allocate this funding.

As orthopaedic wait times come down, the quality of life for more Nova Scotians improves. Our commitment to improving access to orthopaedic services continues with a \$2.2 million additional investment in this budget.

Over the past three years, we have invested an additional \$39 million, steadily increasing the number of orthopaedic surgeries performed in this province. There were 3,933 surgeries completed in 2017-18.

Not only have these investments helped us hire more surgeons, they also support a central booking process that makes better use of operating rooms across the province and by pre-habilitation services that help patients prepare for a successful surgery.

Having access to mental health services and supports is paramount to many Nova Scotians who have a family member, a friend, a neighbour, or they themselves who may be struggling.

This budget builds on the continued growth in funding for mental health and addictions services over the past number of years. Compared with the \$261 million spent in 2013-14, this budget now provides \$295 million, which includes \$11.7 million from the bi-lateral agreement we negotiated with the federal government.

We will support the expansion of the adolescent outreach program, originally called CaperBase, announced in February. Government is investing close to \$1 million each year for 11 new mental health and addictions staff who will support junior high and senior high school students. This expansion is in line with Dr. Stan Kutcher's report on improving youth mental health.

SchoolsPlus brings mental health and other community support services into our schools in support of young people and their families. The 2019-20 budget invests an additional \$1 million to complete the province-wide expansion of SchoolsPlus.

Government has provided funding to the Association of Atlantic Universities to implement online mental health tools for university and community college students. HealthyMindsNS will continue to give students 24-7 access to online peer support and professional telephone counselling and can help connect students to mental health care right on campus.

A legacy of this government is our commitment to taking a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve health care infrastructure.

As health care needs change, we must adapt to ensure the buildings and services are coordinated and meeting the needs of people today and for the future. Our government is making an historic investment in health care infrastructure in this province. This year's capital plan includes \$157 million to move forward on two significant projects.

[1:30 p.m.]

The QEII New Generation project is the largest health care project in Nova Scotia's history. From new and renovated operating rooms, to relocated cancer care services, to the construction of a new community outpatient centre, and more, this project will transform how some of the province's most specialized health services are delivered.

This year, the master plan will continue to take shape, preparing for the eventual closure of the aging Centennial and Victoria Buildings in Halifax.

We are also excited to embark on the revitalization of health care services in Cape Breton Regional Municipality. This is responding to both the community's changing health care needs and the fact that health care infrastructure is aging and needs to be replaced.

Dr. Kevin Orrell is the senior medical director for the CBRM Healthcare Redevelopment Project. He says that being part of this project is an opportunity to redesign the health system now and leave a legacy for future generations.

Dr. Orrell, who is here today and joined by the project's senior director Mark LeCouter, says this about the redevelopment project in his home region: "The people of Cape Breton will have more consistent healthcare delivery with expanded specialized services, more long-term care beds, and new community health centres that offer the services people need on a daily basis. Newer, more modern facilities will help with recruiting and retaining doctors. Redesigning the health system in this region is long overdue, and the redevelopment project will modernize healthcare delivery now and for the future."

As the province's second-largest acute care hospital, a regional referral and emergency trauma centre, and an important teaching hospital, the Cape Breton Regional Hospital will undergo significant redevelopment and expansion. New emergency and critical care departments will be built, as well as a new centre for cancer care that will be more than double the size of the existing centre.

Emergency health services will expand at both the Cape Breton Regional Hospital and the Glace Bay Hospital. They will also perform more surgeries and take more in-patients for the region.

As well, a new community-based paramedic program for the region will see paramedics supporting the timely discharge of patients to reduce unnecessary hospital stays and trips to the emergency department. This is patient-centred care at its best.

New community health centres will be built in North Sydney and New Waterford, replacing aging buildings that can no longer be upgraded to meet the health care needs of these communities. These new centres will offer day clinics, blood collection and X-ray services, primary health care, and mental health and addictions services.

With an aging population comes a greater demand for home care and long-term care services.

To date, our investments in helping Nova Scotians stay longer in their own homes has grown from \$212 million in 2013 to \$283 million today. We know that is the wish of many, and we continue to assist them in doing that.

Eventually, however, Nova Scotians may need the support provided in a long-term care setting, and we will invest in this area over the coming years.

As part of the CBRM infrastructure project, we will open 120 new long-term care beds, with 60-bed modern facilities in both North Sydney and New Waterford. We also look forward to moving ahead with adding long-term care beds in Mahone Bay and Meteghan, as part of the planned replacement of existing facilities in those communities.

With an investment of \$5 million over 2018-19 and 2019-20, we will begin to implement the findings of the Expert Panel on Long Term Care, released in January. This includes a focus on wound care and service coordination and on staffing complements.

In 2017, an estimated 2,800 people died of cancer in Nova Scotia, and 6,200 new cases were diagnosed. That is why modernizing and updating cancer care facilities is a key feature in both the QEII and the Cape Breton projects.

Our overall investments in health and wellness have steadily grown as we continue to respond to increased demands in the system. This year, the department's budget is \$4.6 billion, an increase of 18.6 per cent, or a \$728 million increase, since 2013.

### **Investing in Education and Preparing Youth for the Workforce**

Our children, of all ages, rely on all of us for their safety and well-being, and to help them prepare for their future. Research shows the significant impact early childhood experiences have.

We are expanding child care services across the province and making it more affordable for parents. The province is investing \$67 million this year, which includes federal funding. Mr. Speaker, that means more support for hundreds more children in child care settings, and, for the first time, families will be eligible for a subsidy for part-day programs.

In September 2017, government launched the first pre-Primary program for four-year-olds. This is a free, play-based program that provides all children an opportunity, regardless of their socio-economic situation. It provides parents with an option, and it has been well received across the province. Currently, more than 3,000 four-year-olds and their families are accessing the program in 185 pre-Primary classes.

With an additional \$10.2 million this year, the rollout will continue. By September 2020, we anticipate that every four-year-old in Nova Scotia will have access to a free pre-Primary early learning opportunity.

Early childhood educators are at the heart of quality child care. To expand services in both child care centres and in pre-Primary classroom settings, we are dependent on a

well-trained workforce. Working together with the Nova Scotia Community College, we have invested \$1.5 million over three years to create 135 new seats, and together with private colleges, we will graduate up to 162 early childhood educators this year.

The diversity of our communities will be better reflected in this workforce. In fact, in the Spring of 2019, up to 20 Mi'kmaq early childhood educators will be able to participate in a program that incorporates their language and their culture while they work.

We continue to offer bursaries to Nova Scotians from Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, Acadian and Francophone, and immigrant communities who wish to become early childhood educators. Successful applicants can receive up to \$5,500 each year for two years to help cover costs of tuition, fees, and course materials.

We are leading the Nova Scotia public school system through a significant period of reform, with a focus on achievement, inclusion, and skill development to help our students be better prepared for the future. Fifteen million dollars for inclusive education supports last year has meant more on-the-ground resources working directly with students.

This investment funded an additional 191 positions: education assistants, parent navigators, autism and behavioral support specialists, school psychologists, and speech language pathologists.

Inclusive education continues to be a priority for our government. In 2019-20, an additional \$15 million will be available to address and implement more recommendations from the Commission for Inclusive Education.

More resources in our schools make a positive difference for our students. For example, program planning specialists provide additional support for students with complex needs, helping them spend more of their days in the classroom, participating and learning alongside their peers.

Over the past two years, we implemented recommendations from the Council to Improve Classroom Conditions, making class sizes smaller by hiring more teachers. Some of the most valuable contributions have been those of parents who know and understand their children's needs best. These changes will continue to have a positive impact on students going forward.

The province will also invest \$1.4 million to complete the reinstatement of the Reading Recovery program across the province by September 2019.

Since 2013, government has increased the education budget by nearly 30 per cent and added 926 new teaching positions and 381 non-teaching, student support positions. A total of 1,307 new staff are now working directly with our students.



Connecting our youth to the future workforce is a responsibility and a priority for our government. We are spending \$2 million this year on a new pilot project called the Technology Advantage Program, which brings together elements of high school, college, and the IT sector. The province is partnering with NSCC and IBM to offer a unique career-ready program. Graduates of the program will be ready to qualify for jobs with either IBM or other employers in the technology sector.

As students move from high school to post-secondary education, many will need financial support. Our investments in student assistance are making higher learning more accessible and more affordable for Nova Scotian students.

Our government has created a path to encourage young graduates to pursue their post-secondary education right here in Nova Scotia. We are doing this by increasing the student assistance non-repayable grant, establishing a minimum income level of \$25,000 before graduates have to begin making loan payments, and expanding the loan forgiveness program to support more of our graduates.

Ten universities and a world-class community college with campuses across the province offer quality programs that respond to the needs of industry and lead to long-term, well-paying jobs. This provides graduates with ready access to the training and education needed for a changing world.

The Graduate to Opportunity program has been in place for four years. Since its launch in 2015, the program has funded close to 800 full-time positions with 500 different employers.

This year, we are providing a new funding program for municipalities to create employment in their communities, particularly for youth. With this \$500,000 investment, more Nova Scotians can gain valuable work experience while working on community-focused projects.

Our vision for Nova Scotia includes all of our citizens having the opportunity for success. That means we need to continue to improve diversity in our workplaces. Employment rates for under-represented groups, including Mi'kmaq and Indigenous Peoples and African Nova Scotians, are well below our provincial average, and this is something we want to help change.

We enhanced the Graduate to Opportunity and Innovate to Opportunity programs with a 10 per cent added incentive to hire individuals from under-represented communities. More than 150 graduates have been hired with the support of the diversity bonus to date.

This year, the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency will increase its START program grant to employers who hire apprentices from under-represented groups, bringing the total amount available from \$25,000 to \$30,000 over the term of their apprenticeship.

The Connector program is expanding to regions across the province to help more recent graduates and new residents make meaningful connections to employers and find jobs in their fields.

With increased funding over the past two years, government supported over 500 research internships through the Mitacs Accelerate program in areas like ocean technology, ICT, agri-food, and seafood.

Government is a large employer, and we are taking our own advice. From November 2015 to 2018, the province hired more than 2,300 younger workers and close to half of them were hired into permanent positions.

Last year, we offered work experiences to youth supported by the Department of Community Services. Christal Wicks took part in the Inspiring Success program, working with the Department of Internal Services. She said, and I quote:

“This experience has opened a world of opportunities that did not seem possible before - opportunities that are not only important for my future, but for my children’s future as well. I am proud to be a public servant because I am now able to have a positive impact on the processes that have been put in place to protect and grow our communities.”

I would like to thank Christal for coming to the House today and wish her the best of luck for the future. (Applause)

### **Creating the Conditions for Economic Growth**

We want a Nova Scotia with more people, more prosperity, and better social well-being. That means making the most of our strengths and creating an environment where local businesses can start and grow.

It starts with having enough well-educated and skilled people to meet the labour demands. Our work with post-secondary institutions and our apprenticeship programs will help meet that need. So too, will our work to attract more skilled immigrants.

We are making historic gains on the immigration front. In 2018, we welcomed 5,970 newcomers to Nova Scotia. These new Canadians are joining communities, starting families, opening businesses, and filling labour gaps. They are staying and building their futures here. In fact, our immigrant retention rate has almost doubled in the last 15 years, and now stands at 71 per cent - the highest in our region.

Province-wide high-speed internet is vital for today’s digital world. Yet we know many people around this province lack access to the speeds, reliability, and bandwidth to

fully participate. With its new provincial mandate, Develop Nova Scotia is managing a plan to deliver better access to high-speed internet to underserved communities across the province.

This multi-year initiative will draw on the federal government's investments and other private and public funding sources, including the \$193 million from the Nova Scotia Internet Funding Trust. Government established the fund last year using one-time revenue earned from offshore projects.

It is one of the largest per capita investments in internet access of any province in Canada. A request for qualifications has just closed and a broader call for bids will follow this spring. Develop Nova Scotia expects to see projects begin in some communities in 2019.

Government is investing in the places where new ideas can flourish and turn into business ventures, like Volta in Halifax, Momentum in Sydney, Mashup Lab in Bridgewater, and Ignite Labs in Yarmouth.

We supported the construction and programming at the Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship, or COVE, in Dartmouth, and are providing ongoing funding for sandboxes, innovation accelerators, startup competitions and mentoring programs, helping young companies get their ideas ready for market.

Government has also worked to increase the venture capital available in the region. Nova Scotia's technology startups have seen an increase in venture capital over the last few years, which includes \$30 million in provincial investment for early stage companies.

Government will continue to build an environment where local, innovation-driven, high-growth businesses can start and grow. This year, we will increase funding for incubators and accelerators by \$500,000, for a total of \$1.5 million.

We continue to see strong relationships forming between government, the private sector, and our universities and community college system. This demonstrates that we have an all-in approach to capitalizing on our regional strengths and sectors, and that we are using all of our competitive advantages to move forward.

Small and medium-sized companies are connecting with experts and researchers at post-secondary institutions through the Productivity and Innovation Voucher program, delivered by NSBI.

Research Nova Scotia will formally take shape this year and will build on the work of the \$45 million Research Nova Scotia Trust, which to date has funded 53 projects across a range of sectors. Research Nova Scotia will fund research that benefits Nova Scotian citizens, and help our researchers attract more funding and hire more young people.

Nova Scotia Community College plays a very important role in unlocking the economic potential in communities throughout Nova Scotia. With 13 campuses, NSCC is modernizing its facilities and delivering training programs that address the workforce needs of businesses in their communities and throughout the province.

Export growth in new and traditional sectors is paramount for our ability to grow our economy. We are investing an additional \$850,000 this year to enable NSBI to expand and enhance many of its export development programs in direct support to business.

Government is pursuing trade opportunities that benefit Nova Scotia businesses. We are diversifying our trading partners and continually investing in our relationships in the United States, the Asia-Pacific region, and Europe.

We also believe in private-sector-led growth in our province. The Innovation Equity Corporate Tax Credit will allow companies to make direct equity investments in other small and medium Nova Scotia businesses.

We are also encouraging individual Nova Scotians to invest in Nova Scotia enterprises. A new Innovation Equity Tax Credit was launched in January. The tax credit will incent investments in approved companies of up to \$250,000.

In addition, we are creating another opportunity for investment - the creation of a Venture Capital Tax Credit - which encourages individuals and companies to invest in managed funds that support new and growing businesses.

In line with changes the federal government announced in November, we are providing \$60 million for an accelerated capital cost allowance. This tax benefit will help Nova Scotia businesses - including small businesses across the province - by allowing them to write off their capital investments more quickly.

Nova Scotia remains Canada's seafood export leader with more than \$2 billion in exports. The province's seafood exports have more than doubled since 2012 when they stood at \$922 million.

We will ensure our fisheries sector remains prosperous and sustainable for generations with project funding available from the Atlantic Fisheries Fund. Our provincial investment will total nearly \$38 million over the life of the program. With Nova Scotia's Seafood Brand program, we will continue to build on our export success by marketing and delivering premium quality seafood products around the world.

We are also making investments to help farmers and producers innovate, grow, and prosper. The Small Farm Acceleration program is an example of how one of our cost-shared programs with the federal government can help the new generation of farmers grow into commercial status. This program is available to all categories of agri-food producers,

including grape growers who see the enormous growth potential in our wine industry. From 2010 to 2017, the area of land under cultivation for grapes almost doubled, and the value of our grape output more than tripled.

We are adding \$1.7 million to implement recommendations from Professor Lahey's Forest Practices Review. This will help us shift internal and industry practices toward ecological forestry, including more silviculture on Crown land.

Nova Scotia's mining industry is also important to the province's rural economy. The Mineral Resources Development Fund will reach \$1.5 million this year, following through on a commitment we made to attract investment and move more projects closer to production.

Tourism touches every corner of our province. It creates opportunities for entrepreneurs, creates year-round and seasonal jobs, and contributes to the province's worldwide reputation as a positive place to visit and do business. This year, we will see progress on projects that will revitalize our province's most visited and cherished tourism icons: Peggy's Cove, the Halifax Waterfront, the Cabot Trail, the Bay of Fundy, Annapolis Royal, and the Lunenburg Waterfront.

In the year ahead, we will continue to invest in the creative sector, seeking opportunities to export our cultural products to markets around the world. We will embark on trade missions to explore business and export opportunities for Nova Scotia's talented artists, musicians, writers, and crafts producers. Also this year, with \$1.5 million in funding, the Culture Innovation Fund will support more projects that use creativity and our diverse culture to address complex social issues through art, culture, heritage, and sport.

We are also investing in infrastructure projects that help connect more people and businesses to opportunities. The 100-Series Highways are the backbone of the provincial road network, playing a key role in business, tourism, and our everyday travel.

Our multi-year plan to twin and upgrade large sections of Highway Nos. 101, 103, and 104, and to construct a new four-lane Sackville-Bedford-Burnside Connector is well in hand. These projects will improve road safety, create jobs and local economic activity, and make it easier for people and products to move across the province.

Our work to reduce government red tape, modernize services, and improve our regulatory systems for business is unmatched across the country. Government has surpassed its regulatory burden target of \$25 million by more than \$9 million. This means Nova Scotia businesses will save about \$34 million each year.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business recently gave Nova Scotia an A grade for its red tape reduction work, up from A-minus last year and a D grade in 2015. While we have achieved our target, our focus and work will continue.

Firms across the province are investing in their operations and solidifying their future here in Nova Scotia.

Owners of the Rodd Hotels are investing almost \$7 million to renovate their Colony Harbour Inn and Grand Hotel in Yarmouth, pointing to the ferry service as the reason for that undertaking.

We launched the new Innovation Rebate Program last spring to encourage businesses to invest in their own operations here at home. Many are in rural Nova Scotia, employing hundreds of Nova Scotians.

With the assistance of an innovation rebate program, we can note the following:

- A.F. Theriault and Son Ltd. will spend nearly \$6.7 million to upgrade its Digby County operation.
- Michelin is advancing a \$12 million project to expand its Pictou County site.
- The Springhill-based company Surette Battery is investing \$4.8 million in new technology and equipment to increase its productivity.
- Canadian Maritime Engineering Limited is investing \$3.2 million in new infrastructure and equipment at its North Sydney operation.
- John Ross & Sons Ltd. is expanding its Halifax business with \$4.5 million to install a wire and cable recycling plant. This family-based business has facilities in both Truro and Goodwood.

With an additional \$5 million this year, the Innovation Rebate Program will double so that it can help even more Nova Scotia businesses.

A recent survey of leading manufacturers in the Annapolis Valley shows a strong demand for full-time jobs to support projected growth over the next five years in that area.

This is evidence that the efforts of government and the hard work of Nova Scotians to create the conditions for companies to start, invest, and grow have been effective. Growth in our economy provides government with the means to invest in our people and in our communities.

### **Supporting Our People and Our Communities**

We have an ambitious goal - for Nova Scotia to become an accessible province by 2030. Nova Scotia will become a more equitable and barrier-free province - a province

where everyone has equal opportunity to work and succeed, and to contribute to their communities.

Achieving this goal will take hard work and co-operation. Government is committed to doing our part.

We are investing \$1 million again this year in both ACCESS-Ability grant programs for community buildings and for businesses.

Foundation for Learning is a local business in the Colchester-East Hants area, providing education programs to children with learning disabilities. Owner Sharon Prest received a grant to support the purchase of tablets for her clinical rooms. With these assistive devices, Sharon and her team were able to access several online teaching sites to help improve learning opportunities for their clients.

Sharon is here today, and she tells us that students are excited to be able to access learning tools online and employees are pleased to be able to track their students' learning.

She said, and I quote: "Being able to bring technology into our clinical sessions with the use of the tablets we received through the Business ACCESS-Ability Grant has opened new doors for our students. There are several online sites that we use on a regular basis, as well as having the students use the tablets as a writing tool."

Government is increasing funding for programs that support adults and children with disabilities by \$14.2 million.

The Disability Support Program provides services to some of the most vulnerable Nova Scotians. This year, an additional \$6.6 million is being invested to reflect the increasing costs for these vital services, and \$5.1 million more for new residential placements for children and youth with disabilities and complex needs.

We will also increase funding for the Flex In-Home Support program by \$2.5 million to support more people with disabilities who live at home. A total budget of \$32.6 million ensures this program grows to meet the specific needs of individuals with disabilities who live at home with their families.

The efforts of Nova Scotians, supported by government, are shaping the blueprint for future poverty-reduction efforts.

Poverty is not only about income. It is a complex social problem that affects individuals and families in many ways. This is why government is working with communities across Nova Scotia to address this problem.

This year, \$5 million of our \$20 million commitment will be available to community organizations to help address poverty-related challenges.

One aspect of this work is the Building Vibrant Communities grant program. This program has funded more than 100 projects at the community level so far.

As an example, one of the recipients of a Building Vibrant Communities grant - Yarmouth's Tri County Women's Centre - launched a project that allows homeowners in the area to get small repair and maintenance jobs done. Working with the CHOICE Housing Coalition, the women's centre used the grant to partner with a local carpenter and help homeowners cover labour costs.

This is an inspiring example of a community rallying together to identify a real need, and then helping their own. I would like to thank Lianne Turner, the centre's executive director, who has come from Yarmouth today to join us.

In recent years, several changes have been implemented to allow Nova Scotians with low incomes achieve greater income security. We have:

- increased the allowable asset levels for both single individuals and families;
- doubled the Poverty Reduction Credit for individuals and couples without children;
- introduced a Personal Items Allowance worth \$101 per month to support people temporarily living in homeless shelters and transition houses, to help buy essential items, including those for personal hygiene;
- exempted child maintenance payments from income assistance calculations;
- implemented a new and progressive wage exemption to help people receiving income assistance keep more of the money they earn; and
- worked with the Halifax Regional Municipality to provide free bus passes to residents who receive income assistance, as well as their spouses.

This year, we will build on this work by:

- introducing a Standard Household Rate in January, so that people receiving income assistance will get the maximum amount they are eligible for, as well as a rate increase; and



- extending the child maintenance exemption to clients of both Housing Nova Scotia and the Disability Support Program, so they no longer have their child maintenance payments calculated as income.
- We will continue to invest in affordable housing initiatives so more Nova Scotians will be able to find a good home at a price they can afford:
- Another \$3 million will be invested this year as part of a three-year plan to create 1,500 new rent supplements and reduce the public housing wait-list by 30 per cent.
- The Down Payment Assistance pilot program for first-time homebuyers will be established as a permanent initiative. To date, this program has helped with the purchase of about 300 homes.
- We will spend another \$7.2 million more in major repairs to existing public housing buildings to ensure safe and affordable housing will be available now and into the future.
- Four-hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars will help the Cape Breton Community Housing Association manage a new emergency shelter in Sydney.

We know more than 25,000 Nova Scotians earn a minimum wage. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, they will see an increase of 55 cents per hour. They will also see an estimated 55 cent per hour increase in each of the next two years. These increases will help these workers better support their families and give predictability to employers for the next three years.

Another serious issue in our communities is domestic violence. It affects many Nova Scotians and, as evidence shows, women are the primary victims. These threats to women's safety can affect their health, their social well-being, their economic well-being, and that of their children and families.

This past year, we began our work with community organizations and groups to build a provincial plan to break the harmful cycle of domestic violence. The initiative is called Standing Together, and we will invest \$3 million this year to continue this important work.

One project receiving both provincial and federal funding will see Mi'kmaw and African Nova Scotian organizations developing new supports for victims and their families.

Government stands with Nova Scotians who are committed to helping prevent sexual violence from happening in this province. Our investments to help prevent sexual violence and in support of those who survive will continue.

Government is expanding Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, or SANE, services to Cumberland and Colchester counties this year. Victims throughout Nova Scotia who need treatment and support will continue to receive immediate medical attention in emergency departments, and all victims and health care providers will continue to have 24/7 access to SANE services by phone or in person.

We will also continue to provide Sexual Violence Prevention Innovation Grants that support community groups, including youth and marginalized groups reaching out to their peers to raise awareness and promote a better understanding of consent.

Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence: A Nova Scotia Resource was created as part of the province's Sexual Violence Strategy. It provides free online training and resources for Nova Scotians to learn more about sexual violence and how to support someone who has survived it. New modules are being developed now and will be rolled out this year.

Government will also provide \$470,000 in dedicated funding to support the work of the Provincial Sexual Violence Prevention Committee. This committee is working with universities and NSCC to implement recommendations that will make a positive difference on post-secondary campuses across the province.

Last year, government launched a five-year action plan to get Nova Scotians moving more and sitting less. With \$2.5 million allocated this year, Let's Get Moving Nova Scotia will help create a more active, inclusive, and healthier population across the province.

To conclude, in 2014, the One Nova Scotia report highlighted the province's economic and demographic challenges. It was a call to action to leverage Nova Scotia's assets, opportunities, and human capital to build a much more positive future.

This was a call to leaders in business and labour, to leaders in municipal, provincial, and federal governments, and to leaders in First Nations, post-secondary institutions, the volunteer sector, and our communities.

It was a call to work together with a common plan, and that is what we have done. Government has stood shoulder to shoulder with the private sector and with our communities, as we move closer to the new Nova Scotia economy envisioned five years ago.

For our part, government has worked to improve our fiscal health and to create the conditions for fostering innovation and economic growth.

Our approach has been working. Our population is at an all-time high. Our provincial finances are on a stable footing. Our private sector is innovating and exporting. Our people are learning and working.

To return to the themes of this Budget Address, we will continue to improve the fiscal health of the province. We will continue to invest in the programs, services, and infrastructure that Nova Scotians have told us they need and deserve. We will continue to create the conditions that give the private sector confidence in this province, so they are both willing and excited to invest in new and existing businesses.

Together with our partners, government has created and continues to create a strong and proud Nova Scotia. (Applause)

[2:15 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for her Budget Address. She and I have a special relationship - years ago, she appointed me as her Finance Critic when we were in Opposition together. So I feel conflicted standing up here - I don't know if I can do this. But I have to be professional and I have to bring a balanced perspective to what we've heard today.

Everything sounds so perfect. I know I was here in the parking lot last night and I was seeing some of the government members going back to their cars; I can only presume they had just had a briefing on the budget themselves and were probably feeling pretty good about it. Now it's my job to make them feel not so good about it.

A balanced budget can be good, Mr. Speaker, but I think the question that has to be asked is this: Is this government getting the results we need for our money, the way they are spending it? They say everything is getting better, but is it? What about transparency? We will be doing our best, in response to this budget and in the upcoming Budget Estimates debates that will be happening here and across the hall, to inject some transparency into what we've heard today.

I must mention a couple of things. I think about the Public Accounts Committee that has been significantly restricted from its ability to go over things like the provincial budget, in the months ahead. That was a decision made by this government and by the members on the committee, represented on that committee by the government, and I think it's an unfortunate one. This government says they are transparent, but their actions do not welcome transparency.

I think of another example: the Deloitte Report on P3 construction for the new QEII development. A huge expenditure of provincial taxpayer dollars will soon happen with this

project, and a report was commissioned by Deloitte to review what would be the best way to go about that expenditure, to build that infrastructure. The government refuses to release the report. It's too important not to be released.

We know, Mr. Speaker, when we look back years ago - it's 20 years ago now - that the Liberal government at that time was trying to build schools in the province. They chose to build them out of the P3 model but failed to properly evaluate at that time if it was a good deal for the taxpayers of the province, the people of the province. We don't want the same thing to happen with the QEII redevelopment so, I say, release that report. Be transparent. Make sure the government has the confidence of the people that they will undergo this massive expenditure, properly, and in a way that's going to bring value for Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, what will people say about this budget? A few moments ago we were across the hall and the media were asking some questions. One of the questions to the minister commented that there seems to be more discussion of what has gone on in the past three years than what is going on this year. What I think that suggests is that there is a bit of a lack of vision here. What I also think it suggests, overall with this budget, is that the government is failing to understand there are things happening out there that it is not addressing. Health care is at the forefront of that.

I think of another thing I was reading. If we look at the province from a big picture perspective, I know One Nova Scotia was mentioned by the minister and I know there is a website that tracks progress. I'm not going to get into a lot of detail today, but in the budget we see the government acknowledging some of the shortcomings, some of the areas where there is no progress or limited progress being made, and I see them throwing out bits of money. We see it in the Budget Highlights document, but I don't think it's really acknowledging the issues that are out there. I think we can hear a lot of good news and good points coming from the government today, but what is it actually achieving? That's what we can't lose sight of.

One of the biggest things concerning people in the province today is the future of Northern Pulp - not a word of it mentioned in the budget. If Northern Pulp were to close, what would be the impact on the net debt-to-GDP ratio? The government is continuing to add to the debt - not with the operating part of this budget, but they are continuing to add some debt on the balance sheet of the province. They always point back to the net debt-to-GDP ratio as the saving grace. In other words, it's okay to keep adding to the debt as long as we continue to have a prosperous economy.

But what does it say about the vision of the government when they ignore the issue of what's happening at Northern Pulp right now and the possibility of that mill closing? What is the size of the impact on that province? Mr. Speaker, I would say to you that it is massive. I would say to you that, if it does happen, it needs to be in these budget projections,

not only for the sake of the people involved directly but for the people of the entire province.

You know, we asked a question today: How big is Northern Pulp relative to the provincial economy? We heard that all manufacturing in the province is about 7.6 per cent of GDP. Well, that would suggest Northern Pulp could be around 2.5 per cent of GDP. While that number may seem small, we know that to balance a budget, you're getting down well under 1 per cent, and if you start looking at personal income taxes that people who are working in the forestry sector are paying and corporate taxes that are being paid, those numbers are going to be affected in the budget. There's no money in the budget estimated for the Northern Pulp effluent treatment plant.

There is recognition by government that government is liable for that. Where is the effluent going to go? It can't go into Boat Harbour, not after 2020. So where is it going to go? The mill cannot do anything. You can't flick the on switch without a destination for the effluent. I guess we could take by the budget, by looking at it, that this government expects there is a place for the effluent to go, because they are not projecting any downfall in the economy with the possible closure of Northern Pulp.

There are also no Estimates in this budget for the years of 2020 to 2030, during which the government years ago had promised Northern Pulp they could continue to use Boat Harbour. The government could be liable for 10 years of lost profits, whatever that is. This is a significant thing on the minds of many people that is not addressed in this budget, and it has ramifications in the bigger picture.

I want to remind people that it was not so long ago that the HST was increased in the province. There was a 2 per cent increase in the HST levy, but actually it worked out to be a 25 per cent increase. It was 2 per cent and 8 per cent. That's bringing in almost another \$400 million of extra sales tax each year. That is extra money this government has that previous governments not so long ago did not have. I want to make that point.

Again, sticking with the bigger picture, if we look in the short-term future of government, we know there is going to be a significant turnover over the next number of years, with many retirements happening in the civil service, upward of 25 per cent. This is an opportunity to ensure services are responding to the needs of the public, and it begs the question: Are people going to be in the right positions to serve the public?

I think about pensions. There is nothing about the Public Service pensions that remain well under their solvency thresholds for the security of those paying into those plans and for those who are drawing from them.

So, Mr. Speaker, what will people say about this budget? I think what they're going to say is that nothing has really changed. Yes, there are some good things in the budget, but expect more of the same. I think, particularly, health care is the number one issue today.

It's in the news every day. There are personal stories every day and I'm not seeing anything in this budget that is going to change that. That's over 40 per cent of the budget.

I want to make another mention as well - maybe this is a bit of history but I don't want us to forget it - about the capital plan that was just introduced a couple of weeks ago and the QEII redevelopment that is a major portion of that plan. It was not so long ago that the issue of health transfer payments was being discussed in this province. For a number of years, we've been getting health transfer payments of almost 6 per cent, Mr. Speaker. At the time, the Trudeau Government in Ottawa was saying, isn't it awful that there could be a change in that.

Little did we know that once they were elected, they would move towards tying health transfer payments to the GDP of the country, which is a lot more prudent than we would know Mr. Trudeau to be. The net result for us was that our health transfer payment, which is a significant component of our revenues for the budget, have gone from annual 6 per cent increases to about 2 per cent per year increases.

The point I want to raise to this government and this Premier is: Were they fighting to try to keep more health transfer payment money? When other provinces were willing to challenge the federal government and stand up to them, Nova Scotia was busy stepping off to the side, turning their backs on the other provincial premiers, and signing a deal with Ottawa for less money.

When we look at something like the QEII and we think about the fact that the federal government does not put federal infrastructure dollars into hospitals - it pays for our health care through these transfer dollars - I think there is an opportunity where the Premier sealed his fate on that. Instead of putting the interests of our people in this province ahead, he put his political interests ahead with the Liberal Party. I think because of the size of that expenditure, it's something that has to be mentioned.

I want to move on to health. I want to say something positive about the mental health funding increase in the budget - it's good to see that. We know how important that issue is and how many people it affects and how many families it affects with loved ones. Mr. Speaker, we were looking at the budget number for mental health, and we believe that mental health should constitute its own department in government. Did you know that if it did, it would be the seventh largest department in the provincial government? I think it needs to have that consideration. It needs to have that focus and I think that is an opportunity that, hopefully, someday will be recognized in a future government.

I think of the opening question that my colleague, the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, asked the Premier in his first Question Period after becoming Leader. The question was: Mr. Premier, do you take responsibility for health care? The answer was essentially no. There was no yes, I am the leader of the province; yes, I am going to take

responsibility for health care. The answer was not that, which leaves us with the conclusion that it was no. The Premier does not believe he's responsible for health care.

The evidence is everywhere that health care is in crisis and if the leader of the province does not accept that, and does not accept responsibility for that, how can that crisis be fixed? I think probably the single biggest failure of this government has been health care. They made a significant decision to move towards a single health authority. They took on management of the system and they failed. The evidence is everywhere.

[2:30 p.m.]

One of the questions I asked today in aiming to be positive was: Are people healthier? There's a smattering of dollars spent on wellness in the budget. But I don't think there's enough. That recognizes that the government doesn't have a vision for a healthier population in Nova Scotia. That's a shame, Mr. Speaker, because the public deserves to have a chance to be in healthier, more, better wellness. The public deserves that.

I also want to point to something positive, which is the idea of a national Pharmacare plan; something that was announced in the federal budget. That is something that we are looking towards with the hope that it will bring cost savings to the province, so that maybe some of those Department of Health and Wellness dollars can be saved and directed to other areas. We know there's nothing in the budget about that, but we know it's still in the planning stages.

There are stories that touch us. I think of the woman who needed the lung transplant. We know that you can't get a lung transplant in Nova Scotia. You have to travel to where they can provide you a lung transplant, which is in Toronto for anybody in this province. Mr. Speaker, I was thinking about her today. While it's not in the budget, I understand that there are going to be some measures reflected soon to support people who have to go for lung transplants. I hope that's the case, because I know there has been really no change in the monthly amount given to people who go up to Toronto, leave their homes and their mortgage payments and their jobs behind. They get \$1,500 a month to live somewhere close to the hospital in Toronto because they need to be there in a hurry if a lung becomes available. I'm hopeful that the amount will be increased and will be more meaningful.

We look at excise tax on cannabis. The federal government, the other day, decided no, they're not going to remove the excise tax on medical cannabis. It's certainly a revenue source for this province; 75 per cent of that excise tax comes to the province. I guess the question has to be asked: If this is a medication prescribed by a physician, should it be taxed with an excise tax? Many people feel that that is wrong, Mr. Speaker.

I want to get into some other issues here. I don't want to forget anything.

I want to get into doctors, Mr. Speaker. Who can forget the government's commitment, before they formed government in the province, saying that there would be a doctor for every Nova Scotian? Yet thousands of Nova Scotians, tens of thousands, quite possibly upwards of 100,000 Nova Scotians do not have a family doctor. Could we trust this government's numbers with their lack of interest in transparency?

Mr. Speaker, I would advise them not to wind me up today. (Laughter)

In all seriousness, when we talk about doctors, we understand there's almost 2,700 doctors in the province, but not all of them are working full time. There's a couple of hundred vacancies, roughly, according to the most recent figures. About half of those are GPs, and about half of them are specialists.

There's no increase, really, in this budget for doctors. We see an increase in the line item of about 1.1 per cent. That would scarcely cover inflation, so there's no real change. It begs the question: Does this government want more doctors?

I know the Minister of Health and Wellness always gets up and says, yes, we've got more doctors, we hired a couple the other day. But he fails to include in his statements how many left. The budget is not telling us and not answering the call for the possibly 100,000 Nova Scotians who want and need a family doctor. How can we stand here in good conscience and pat the government on the back if something so basic is being ignored?

The other point I want to mention, the government will say that it is - and this is good news - that Dalhousie Medical School is going to be opening up 15 new residency spaces for specialty medicine, and 10 new for family medicine practice. Yes, that's good, Mr. Speaker, but how many international medical graduates do we know, many of them Nova Scotians, who have gone outside of the province, earned their education, they're smart people - how many international medical graduates are essentially being blocked from doing their practicums in this province, and resettling here and helping us to solve our shortage of physicians?

That is a shame, Mr. Speaker. That is something that needs to be mentioned. You know, I asked a doctor about this. I said, maybe Dalhousie, maybe they just want high standards for us. Who could argue with wanting to have doctors that are the best and the brightest? The kind of people who, if you come in with a problem, are going to exhaust all avenues of thought to make a diagnosis and get it right. I know when I asked that physician, he told me that some of these schools are great schools - he knows because he's seeing some of the doctors that they're graduating.

I can think of a mutual friend the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and I have, who is practising in Yarmouth, who is an excellent doctor. He's an international medical graduate and I have known him since I was probably about six or seven years old, and I can tell you what a wonderful communicator he is. He has a



wonderful way with people and I know he would be a wonderful doctor. I'm not surprised to hear of another doctor expressing what a good doctor he is, and he is an international medical graduate, Mr. Speaker, who struggled to settle back in this province.

I can think of another from Whycomagh who helped my own father out. One day he wasn't feeling well and his doctor wasn't available that day, so we went down, and I was very impressed, Mr. Speaker, so these are quality people. A budget that is not allocating more money for more doctors tells me the government doesn't understand, or at least doesn't accept the problem, that there is a shortage of doctors out there.

I want to talk about nurses because we know doctors are important, but nurses are a key part of the medical system. We see in the budget, 130 new nurses. Well, Mr. Speaker, that may be good. I asked; What kind of nurses? You know, there's going to be 48 nurse practitioners, and maybe those nurse practitioners take some of the load off the general practitioners around the province. We understand there's going to be 48 of them. I asked: How many patients could a nurse practitioner handle? They said, about 800 relative to a typical GP of 1,300 patients. That would be about 61.5 per cent. So, every nurse practitioner can fill about 60 per cent of a GP, so that would be the equivalent of about 30 doctors there, through their medical licence what they are able to address, with people who come to see them.

That means if there's 130 new nurses and 48 of them will be nurse practitioners, that leaves 82 other registered nurses. Mr. Speaker, that can be a good thing until we look at what it means for the system. Just the other day nurses were essentially told, forget about your vacations this summer. Why would the government, through the Health Authority, send a message like that out there if there was not a nursing shortage? I can tell you, if you're told that you can't have a vacation - now we take these things for granted - many people in Nova Scotia are entitled to their vacation benefit. Many employers recognize the value of vacations, I even think for nurses.

I've heard personal accounts of nurses, many of them are women. They may be a bridesmaid in a wedding, and it might seem like a small thing, but in the course of a year, if you were standing in a wedding for a good friend of yours and you're not allowed to have a day off? An employer as big as the provincial government and the Department of Health and Wellness can't allow you to have a day off so that you can attend what may be one of the most important days to you in your year?

To me, that shows an employer that doesn't care. That shows an employer that doesn't understand that to have a happy and healthy workplace - one that is as important as looking after people who are sick - that's an employer that doesn't care or understand that the people working in it need to be supported and need to be given something as basic as some vacation time and some time to have a life outside of work. That is a failure, Mr. Speaker.

What is it going to do for the workplace for nurses? If they continue to feel strained at work without any release valves for that strain, what is it going to say about the profession and how people stay in the profession and about the future supply of nurses? I think that is a failure.

Let's look at some of the conditions that nurses are working in. I think about bedsores. What put a face on nursing homes any more than bedsores? How sad it is that there are people out there suffering or who have had to suffer with bedsores. I can tell you, it caught the attention of everybody.

Really, the answer to bedsores is that you need more nurses or continuing care assistants in the hospitals. How do you stop bedsores? You have to turn people's bodies so that the body isn't resting on the same spot to create the pressure sore. It's not complicated.

Now, the government did make an announcement the other day that hopefully will help. They're investing in lifts and mattresses to make it easier. That's important, and that's good. Our Health and Wellness Critic has raised that as an idea for investment, so that's good, but we are not seeing anything in the budget to address staffing shortages in nursing homes.

We talked about nursing vacation time and the strain that that places on them. A lot of these nursing homes don't have full staff complements when people come to work. What does that mean? Some nights you might have one continuing care assistant who needs to look after thirty residents. They may be sleeping, but they still need care. During the daytime there is often one continuing care assistant for every eight residents. Most residents need two people to turn them.

So if you are there for an eight-hour shift and you have eight people, you can see them each for an hour - but wait a minute, you need two people to turn somebody, so you have to run off to somebody else's section, to their patients, and help them with their patients.

We think about the residents. Years ago, people entered a nursing home, and if I may say, their health condition was better. People entering the nursing home system now, their health conditions are very grave. Often, they have more than one comorbidity. They are dealing with a lot, and because they are dealing with a lot, the people who are helping to care for them are dealing with a lot.

I think about these residents. They often can't walk or go to the bathroom or feed themselves. I think it's the government's job to ensure that there are enough staff on for a shift, and I don't think they are doing it.

Again, does the Premier take responsibility for health care? Does the government feel that health care is in a crisis? Bedsores told us that health care was in a crisis.

[2:45 p.m.]

There is a higher rate of sick days for staff in these institutions, and it's probably because of the conditions they're facing when they are coming in to work their shift. Some people would say, they should be showing up for work. I would tell you that is a failure of management - a failure of management. I want to point back to the government because, ultimately, the government is responsible. Nobody else is accountable to the public any more than this government is. That is the government's problem, and that is the government's problem they should be trying to solve in this budget.

Mr. Speaker, we look at nursing homes and the situations that some of them face. I think this is a failure to care for our mums and our dads and our grandparents, many of them who are the least able to advocate for themselves. I know people who have gone into these homes, I'm thinking about a couple, one had an injury, his health went downhill quickly, another had dementia and it came on very quickly. I can tell you in no time at all they were in the nursing home needing significant care. I'm sorry to say they've both passed on, but it just goes to highlight the gravity of the conditions that people are in. They need help and they need a government that cares to ensure that the people helping them have help.

When we think about nursing homes, there are no new nursing home beds this year. I know that's a question we're all asking. That is clear evidence to me that the government fails to understand the problem with health care. Ambulances are backed up because the people they're trying to drop off are already clogging the emergency room beds because the beds in the acute care sector are clogged with people waiting to get into a nursing home and the nursing home beds are all full. The government presents us a budget that says there's going to be no new nursing home beds. Is that a solution? Not a chance. We know there are some beds projected for the future - in CBRM, 74 new beds; Mahone Bay, 35 new beds; and Villa Acadienne, in Meteghan, 10 beds - but they're not coming this year.

How is the Health Authority - I want to say again, this is not the Health Authority, this is the government - how is the government dealing with this? Just last week we heard them chastise nursing homes for sending their clients to the emergency room. How condescending, when you consider that it essentially suggested that nurses were sending people to the ER and that was inappropriate. Let's consider for a moment for a nurse in a nursing home to make a diagnosis, they don't have the equipment. Think if someone were to fall in a nursing home, does a nurse pick the person up off the ground and say, there, there, that's just a bruise? They don't have an X-ray to determine if they've broken a hip or a leg bone.

If a nurse decides that's just a bruise, they're putting their licence on the line but, more importantly, that person could be suffering with a broken bone. The reason they're sending them to the ER is because they're concerned about them. They don't have the equipment to make the diagnosis and often you need a specialist to make a diagnosis and

that's why they're being sent to the ER. I hope this government hasn't sent a message to nurses in nursing homes, please don't send us anybody, deal with it yourself. If they have, the people who are suffering are going to be the people who are living in the nursing homes. That is a shame.

I also want to say that some of the care plans of these people dictate that they want to be sent to a hospital if something happens to them. That's written right into the care plan and that's not an option, they have to be taken to the emergency room. Again, I think when the government comes out and says we have no new nursing homes in this budget and, by the way, stop sending your clients to the emergency room, that is a failure by this government to understand what's going on in health care.

That's why I spend a lot of time on health care today - and I know the time is moving on, but I do want to mention a couple of other things.

I think about tourism in the province. We look at the tourism budget and it's the same this year. But I want to factor into that, Mr. Speaker, the money that's being spent on the ferry. If we look at money that's being spent to bring visitors to the province, it's a total of about \$41 to \$42 million a year. You know, we had 2.4 million people come to the province last year; 50,000 came by way of the ferry. Yet, of the total tourism dollars that we're spending, 46 per cent of the total tourism dollars are being spent on the ferry.

We have to ensure that we're bringing people through the province but if the government is going to be spending money, they should be asking themselves these questions and they should be coming back to Nova Scotians with plans that are doing the best they can for people. To just blindly say, some people in the House don't support the ferry, that to me does a disservice to the concerns that are being raised.

So, once again, out of 46 per cent of the tourism dollars are being spent . . .  
(Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please, the honourable member for Inverness has the floor.

ALLAN MACMASTER: I'll be very genuine, if there's such a word. I'll be very genuine, in response to that I might be disingenuous.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is the government is spending 46 per cent of the tourism dollars to bring in 50,000 visitors and the other 54 per cent is going to bring in the other 2.3 and a half million visitors. So, that's math. It's accurate. It's accurate as of today, according to the government's own officials.

So, is the government interested in politics or are they interested in bringing people to the province? We see people in the budget that are investing in tourism in that area and that's great, but what about the people that are investing in tourism all over the province.

I think about education, and I want to say something positive for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development here. It's kind of ironic that that was my next point.

You know, I see one of the big issues that we have championed in this Legislature is what's happening in the classroom. We're concerned about students who have learning difficulties, who have to wait months to get assessed and to get their help, so that the years don't go by and they find themselves advanced through the education system until it's to the point of it being too late. And they didn't get the help they needed, when they did need it. So, we're seeing the government invest \$15 million more dollars. We hope this will help. But I did ask the question today. How many children do they think this will help? No estimate could be provided.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to close with this one story. There's some new money for public housing, \$7.2 million for public housing units and about \$1 million for this year for rent supplements for where they usually partner with private individuals to build affordable housing.

I know there are three projects in my own constituency right now that have been turned down. I hope it's not for anything I've said today, but I want to be serious because this money matters. It's one thing for the government to pat itself on the back for saying, look what we're doing for affordable housing. But I bring you back to the question I asked at the start of my remarks: Is the money being spent in such a way that it's making a difference?

I want to tell you a story about a constituent of mine in Inverness, a single mom who last fall said, "I have a place to stay for the winter." But we know, Mr. Speaker, with Airbnb, many housing units are being taken off the market; people are renting them in the summertime and making more money renting them to visitors. It has removed a lot of housing from the affordable housing marketplace. So, this individual spent the winter hoping that Housing would find her a place to stay in Inverness. Do you know why? It's because she has employment in Inverness. She found a job; she's working. That small business needs her. To keep going that business needs people to work. They have somebody who is a good worker.

Her daughter is going to school, Mr. Speaker. She has friends at school. Unfortunately, just the other day, I learned she has been told there is no housing for her in Inverness. The closest option was Port Hawkesbury, which is an hour away. Not very nice.

For a system that is supposed to work for people and for somebody like this, who has found employment and for her daughter who is going to school, to be told their lives are going to be turned upside down because in six months no affordable housing could be found for them in their community, I think that's a shame, Mr. Speaker. I think it's a sign

that while the government can say they are spending money on helping people, they are failing to deliver the results.

Mr. Speaker, it's not about how much money is being spent. It is about how it is being spent, how effectively, and what is the result. I don't believe this government is getting the job done, particularly with health care because I don't think they recognize what is happening in health care. I think they are ignoring it.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will adjourn debate.

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

The motion is carried.

We'll now move on to the daily routine.

#### **PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

#### **PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

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

**Bill No. 103 - Justices of the Peace Act.**

**Bill No. 105 - Judicature Act.**

**Bill No. 106 - Coastal Protection Act.**

**Bill No. 109 - Pension Benefits Act.**

**Bill No. 112 - Education Act.**

**Bill No. 116 - Biodiversity Act.**

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

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

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

THE SPEAKER: As Speaker of the House of Assembly and pursuant to Subsection 18(4) of the Auditor General Act, I am pleased to table the Report of the Auditor General to the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, entitled, Follow-up of 2015 and 2016 Recommendations.

The report is tabled.

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS****GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

**RESOLUTION NO. 848**

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

Whereas March 27<sup>th</sup> marks World Theatre Day on which we recognize the power of theatre and a bridge-builder for mutual international understanding and peace; and

Whereas in Nova Scotia, theatre plays a valuable and important role in our arts community and has a tremendous impact on our overall culture and heritage; and

Whereas theatre is not only important from a cultural aspect but also brings economic opportunities to our communities across Nova Scotia and Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize March 27<sup>th</sup> as World Theatre Day and the important role theatre plays in communities across Nova Scotia.

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

THE 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.

[3:00 p.m.]

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

RANDY DELOREY: Joining us here today in the East Gallery are Debbi Tobin, the executive director of the Epilepsy Association of Nova Scotia; Linda Rideout, the Purple Day coordinator for Nova Scotia; and I believe Cindy MacLeod may also be here with us too.

I would ask that all members join me in giving them the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 849**

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

Whereas epilepsy is a common neurological condition that affects 50 million people across the world; and

Whereas groups like the Epilepsy Association of Nova Scotia are working hard to support people living with epilepsy through education, programs, and advocacy; and

Whereas March 26<sup>th</sup> is Purple Day, a day to wear purple to increase awareness of epilepsy;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature show their support for people living with epilepsy by wearing purple.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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



The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

**RESOLUTION NO. 850**

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

Whereas through the hard work of industry, Nova Scotia remains Canada's seafood export leader with more than \$2 billion in exports - 29 per cent of Canada's total seafood exports; and

Whereas our industry members once again displayed their level of commitment to reaching to new levels of success by participating in North America's largest seafood show, the Boston Seafood Expo, held March 17<sup>th</sup> to March 19<sup>th</sup>, with a total of 60 Nova Scotia companies including seafood processors, buyers, service providers, harvesters, and logistics companies participating in the show to help promote their businesses and sales - 19 Nova Scotia companies participated as exhibitors; and

Whereas the industry's strong participation at the seafood show speaks to a level of dedication that this industry has in growing the value of our seafood exports for the benefit of the economies of our coastal communities and rural communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in thanking our seafood industry members for their hard work and continued commitment to growing Nova Scotia's seafood industry and to the jobs and economic activities it creates in Nova Scotia.

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

THE 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 African Nova Scotian Affairs.

**RESOLUTION NO. 851**

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

Whereas March 21<sup>st</sup> was the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, with the theme: Mitigating and countering rising nationalist populism and extreme supremacist ideologies; and

Whereas the day commemorated the 69 lives lost in the year 1960 after South African police opened fire on unarmed Black South Africans who were peacefully protesting the apartheid pass laws in Sharpeville, South Africa; and

Whereas our government is committed to addressing systemic racism and discrimination, and supports individuals from all cultures and races striving for full inclusion in all aspects of society;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing March 21, 2019, as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and stand up against racial prejudice and intolerant attitudes which impact millions of people around the world.

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

THE 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 Lands and Forestry.

**RESOLUTION NO. 852**

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

Whereas the United Nations proclaimed March 21<sup>st</sup> as the International Day of Forests to celebrate the importance of all types of forests; and

Whereas the theme for 2019, Forests and Education, is helping our children become aware of the benefits of trees and forests and the need to manage them sustainably; and

Whereas the sustained health of our forests and related biodiversity is vital to our economy, culture, traditions, history, and to our future;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly celebrate March 21<sup>st</sup> as International Day of Forests and recognize the opportunities to teach our children about the importance of healthy forests.

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

THE 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. 122 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 211 of the Acts of 1904. An Act to Incorporate the Pine Grove Cemetery Company, Lower Stewiacke, Colchester County. (Larry Harrison)**

**Bill No. 123 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 31 of the Acts of 1996. The Sales Tax Act. (Claudia Chender)**

**Bill No. 124 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 25 of the Acts of 1998. The Real Estate Appraisers Act, and the Election by Widow Regulations. (Lenore Zann)**

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

Just before we move on to the next item, for those keeping track, Question Period will start at 3:56 p.m.

#### **NOTICES OF MOTION**

#### **STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**PURPLE DAY: EPILEPSY AWARENESS - DONATE**

KARLA MACFARLANE: I see many of us in the Chamber today are wearing purple, and I chose to wear the purple ribbon today to promote and recognize March 26, 2019, as Purple Day.

Purple Day began in 2008 with one woman. She struggled with epilepsy and wanted to dispel myths and have people come together to realize they are not alone in their struggle. Now Purple Day has become an international day of recognition. Our local chapter, the Epilepsy Association of Nova Scotia, works diligently to spread awareness.

Epilepsy affects over 50 million people globally with half the cases not having a discernable cause. Epilepsy is not a disease; it is a disorder. At this time, there is no cure; however, there are ways to manage it. I hope that all members of the House of Assembly take time out today to donate to this wonderful cause.

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

**WOLFE, LISA: RETIREMENT - CONGRATS.**

HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Lisa Wolfe on her retirement as director of the Ross Farm Museum. Lisa's tenure with Ross Farm began in 2000 and she has played a leading role in the museum's growth over the years.

For the past 19 years, Lisa has led this internationally acclaimed, locally managed provincial museum that celebrates the rich agricultural and woodlot culture and heritage of rural Nova Scotia. Lisa recently guided the creation of Ross Farm Learning Centre. This important new community asset extends Ross Farm's ability to share the core values of our rural heritage skills. Lisa has also served on the Chester-St. Margaret's Tourism Support Network, lending her expertise and experience to other members as we create true year-round rural destinations and experiences for Nova Scotians and visitors.

I invite the members of the Assembly to congratulate Lisa on her successful years with Ross Farm Museum and to wish her well in her retirement.

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

**SHAW, RON: RETIREMENT - CONGRATS.**

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to bring recognition to CTV's Ron Shaw. Ron has recently retired after 45 years of service of broadcasting news. After studying broadcast journalism at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario, Ron held various

positions around Canada before settling in the Maritimes. Ron has retired from CTV but not from life and plans on following other endeavours.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in thanking Ron Shaw for his exceptional broadcasting service over the past 45 years. His dedication and hard work have not gone unnoticed. We look forward to what the future will bring for him.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE: ECON. LIFE - TRANSFORM**

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, relocalizing economies and circular economies - these are terms that capture the transformation of our economic life that will be essential to avert the worst of catastrophic climate change. Investing in food security, local food procurement, import replacement, community-owned energy generation, active transportation, and public transportation - these are some of the items that might appear in such a forward-looking budget.

I don't have an electronic copy of the Budget Address, so I can't do a word search, but neither my ears nor my eyes picked up the term "climate change" in the Budget Address. There are many issues with this budget, and I look forward to parsing and debating them all. But today, keeping with my resolution to talk about climate change in this House, I want to mention just that one.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

### **BRINE, R.J.: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, on March 23<sup>rd</sup> tragedy struck the Brine family. In the early hours of March 23<sup>rd</sup> a car accident took the lives of three people in Eastern Passage. My heart goes out to all the families impacted, especially the Brines. April and Andrew lost their son RJ that night. RJ was a loving father of one-year-old son Jaxson, brother to six siblings, and a loving son.

My heart goes out to his son Jaxson, his parents April and Andrew, and all his friends, brothers, and sisters. May he rest in peace.

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

### **ESKASONI JR. EAGLES: OPENING SEASON - CONGRATS.**

KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, the Eskasoni Junior Eagles have just completed their expansion season in what is now the 12-team Nova Scotia Junior Hockey League. The

Eagles were granted their franchise rights at a league meeting in Pictou in February 2018 and never looked back.

The club finished their inaugural season with a record of eight wins, 23 losses, and one overtime loss under head coach Matthew Gould, and assistant coach and GM Levi Denny. They were led by players such as Thomas Noel Simon, Jacob Denny, Ryan Lettice, and Brody Dawson.

The team executive includes president Leroy Denny, vice-president Dion Denny, treasurer John T. Johnson, secretary Alyssia Jeddore, statistician Richard Stevens, and director of hockey operations Chuck Gould. They may not have made the playoffs in their opening season but with a dedicated team of players and executive members, there's not a doubt in my mind that they will be competing for a Nova Scotia junior championship in the not-too-distant future.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**NEW GERMANY SCHOOLS' FREE STORE: COM. INITIATIVE - RECOG.**

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the staff and students of New Germany Elementary and Rural High Schools who have come together to support community members in need. Families are able to access donated non-perishable food items, personal hygiene products, and gently used clothing free of charge through essential lockers set up in both schools. In the high school there is a dedicated space, which is known as the Free Store. This space allows for users of the store to enter through a separate entrance to improve confidentiality. Families and students are able to access the store and take what they need.

[3:15 p.m.]

On February 15<sup>th</sup>, the principal for New Germany Rural High School, Jennifer McMullen, gave me a tour of the Free Store. I was able to learn more about this incredible initiative and give a donation as well.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask you and all members of this House of Assembly to please join me in recognizing both New Germany Elementary and regional high schools on their efforts to help families in their communities.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**ROOTS FOR YOUTH: COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, Pictou County Roots for Youth recently enjoyed their annual Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser walk to assist and raise funds for their

valuable facilities. The event was held on February 23<sup>rd</sup> in New Glasgow. It is organized by the staff and board members of the Roots House.

Each year over 300 walkers collect pledges and set off to walk up to 10 kilometres, all for the purpose of raising money and awareness of youth homelessness. The annual event is a fun, feel-good, family-oriented event that allows the facility to keep their doors open for at-risk youth in the area.

The event raised approximately \$46,000 last year. Their 2019 goal is to raise \$50,000. On behalf of all members of this Legislature, I extend my congratulations to all organizers of this event.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**ROSENGARTEN, VIOLET: ART EXHIBITION - CONGRATS.**

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Violet Rosengarten, a resident of Dartmouth North, on the opening of her new art exhibition. Titled *Violet Rosengarten's Spring Collection: Foliage & Flowers, Islands, Lakes & Sea*, the collection features many plein air paintings of landscapes throughout Nova Scotia that are layered with acrylics, oil stick, and oils, a combination that creates textured paintings that are beautiful and abstract.

When creating these works, Violet paints quickly in order to capture the movement of a landscape: clouds, trees and shifting tides. She describes the process as thrilling and exhilarating, and this is captured in her work.

Violet Rosengarten began her artistic career as a textile artist. After graduating from Concordia with a BFA, she turned to painting. She has worked as an artist and also as a public school teacher. She's a passionate environmentalist and a very talented painter.

I ask the House to join me in congratulating her on her new collection.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a second introduction for someone who has already been introduced by the Minister of Health and Wellness.

Debbi Tobin is a constituent of mine. She is here for Purple Day for epilepsy, and I have a member's statement for her.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

**TOBIN, DEBBI: COM. SERV. - COMMEND**

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, on Purple Day for epilepsy, I would like to introduce you to a woman who has been a lifetime advocate for those living with disability, in my riding and beyond. Debbi Tobin serves as executive director of the Epilepsy Association of Nova Scotia and volunteers over 15 hours per week. She facilitates and prepares for the annual members' Christmas Dinner, summer picnic, and Purple Day Gala.

Debbi has also volunteered for CNIB, Scouts Canada, East Novability, West Bay Road and District Volunteer Fire Department, and Island Community Justice. Debbi has also acted as the director of Inverness-Richmond Society for Persons with Disabilities and as the manager for the Naomi Society for Victims of Violence. She also plans to do some volunteer work for the Unicorn Theatre soon.

Mr. Speaker, would this House of Assembly join me in applauding Ms. Tobin for always giving back to her community and advocating for those without a voice.

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

**SKINNER, SHAYLA: WINNING BASKET, CHAMP. GAME - CONGRATS.**

BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rise today to acknowledge Shayla Skinner. On February 9, 2019, during a Metro Basketball playoff, the Grade 8 Sackville Heights Junior High student scored the winning basket in a championship game against the Cole Harbour Rockets.

Mr. Speaker, Shayla has been playing for the U14 Girls division for the past two years. The 13-year-old forward for the Sackville Storm had only six seconds left in the game, and with her team down by two points, she made a three-point shot to win, just beating the buzzer.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish Shayla and all the members of her team congratulations and great success in the future.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

**DALTON, SYLVIA: CUST. SERV. OF THE YR. AWARD - CONGRATS.**

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, the Yarmouth and Area Chamber of Commerce celebrated our local business community at its 2018 Business Awards. The Customer Service of the Year Award was won by Sylvia Dalton.



Sylvia is a master aesthetician at Polished & Wrapped in Yarmouth, where she has a large and loyal clientele and offers a full slate of spa services, including facials, oxygen bar, and aromatherapy, to name a few.

I ask this House to join me in congratulating Yarmouth's Sylvia Dalton on winning the Yarmouth and Area Chamber of Commerce Customer Service of the Year Award and wish her continued success.

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

**MARTELL, BROOKE/MARTELL, J.T. - COMPETITORS:  
CDN. DART NTLS. - BEST WISHES**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate two young dart shooters from Gabarus Lake who recently participated in the Nova Scotia Youth Dart Provincials, held in Bedford.

J.T. Martell captured the Nova Scotia senior boys provincial title, while his sister Brooke Martell finished second in the junior girls division. J.T. and Brooke are the son and daughter of Arthur and Beth Martell of Gabarus Lake. J.T. and Brooke will represent Nova Scotia at the Canadian Dart Nationals in May in Saskatoon.

I stand today to acknowledge J.T. and Brooke and wish them the very best in Saskatoon as they go forward in their endeavours. Once again, I'm very proud to congratulate my neighbours, J.T. and Brooke Martell.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

**THAI IVORY CUISINE: THAI SELECT AWARD - CONGRATS.**

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Thai Ivory Cuisine in Bedford on being the first Thai restaurant in Nova Scotia to receive the Thai Select award.

The Thai government set up the Thai Select program to encourage high quality in restaurants that serve Thai food. Thai Select restaurants are classified by the use of Thai ingredients, cooking method, and the authenticity of flavours. The designation lets patrons know that they will experience an authentic Thai cuisine. Currently, more than 1,000 restaurants around the world have received the certification. In Canada, roughly 100 have been so designated.

I'd like to congratulate the owners and staff of Thai Ivory Cuisine in Bedford on their certification in 2018. I can attest to my fellow members that the food there is indeed delicious.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**THERIAU, BEN - MULTI-MEDALLIST: SPEC. OLYMPICS WORLDS - RECOG.**

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, on March 6<sup>th</sup>, I rose to wish Ben Theriau success as he headed to Abu Dhabi for the 2019 Special Olympics World Summer Games, and success he found.

One of only six Nova Scotian athletes on Team Canada, Ben came home wearing three medals: fifth place in a personal best in the 200 metre, seventh place in the 100 metre, and fifth place in the 4 x 400-metre relay. It goes without saying that all of Queens County is absolutely beaming with pride for Ben. He has certainly shown us all that great results come from sheer hard work and determination.

I would invite all members of this House to join me in congratulating Ben on his performance. Ben, thank you for being a true ambassador for Nova Scotia and for Canada on the world athletic stage.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston-Dartmouth.

**SIMMONDS, ROSS: CONNECTING BUS. AND CLIENTS - RECOG.**

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Mr. Ross Simmonds of Preston, who has a lot to offer businesses. He wrote *Stand Out: The Content Guide for Entrepreneurs* and *The Hustle Manifesto*.

He started his career blogging about video games, which evolved into marketing under the Hustle & Grind banner that he has attached to a large global audience. When a business wants to connect with a new client, they contact Mr. Simmonds, who helps them understand what the customer wants and how that aligns with their company's identity.

I want to recognize and congratulate Mr. Ross Simmonds for his valuable contribution to the business community of Nova Scotia.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

**RUDDERHAM, ANGELA: PROPER SHARPS DISPOSAL - THANKS**

EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute CBU student Angela Rudderham. In her Community Studies program, she realized the importance of her community. Angela started visiting local beaches and parks, picking up 15 to 16 needles from the previous night's activities. She then worked with community groups to obtain a sharps bin at the cost of \$3,000, which took her about a week and a half. The Ally Centre

of Cape Breton will empty and maintain the drop-off bin. Now needles and other things related to drug use can be safely disposed of.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Angela and her community partners for her initiative. Angela can still be found cleaning local parks and beaches at 5:30 most mornings to make her community safe.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

### **DEVEAU, REGINA: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a special lady, Regina Deveau, an active force in her community and an avid volunteer. Regina grew up in Cap Sainte-Marie, and after a short time away she returned to the home she loved to raise her children. Through the years, she volunteered in her community and at her church and she was always ready to help her neighbours.

If you asked Regina what her passions were, she would have included supporting the Liberal Party. First volunteering as a poll captain in 1957, she would be a force in the Party from that point on. Even in the last years with her health waning, she would go to campaign rallies when possible, and telephone people to inform them of upcoming debates or get-togethers. Regina also worked as an assistant to two MPs, Coline Campbell and Harry Verran, and was recognized by West Nova's Liberals as Liberal of the Year in 2007.

My condolences to her husband Antoine and her sons Roland and Dale. She will be missed by her large circle of friends.

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

### **TELILE COM. TV: DIGITAL UPGRADES - CONGRATS.**

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the work being accomplished by a community television station located in Arichat. Telile Community Television was established in 1994 as a result of retraining efforts brought on by the collapse of the Atlantic cod fishery and as a means of communication within the community.

Mr. Speaker, Telile is operated by a board of directors which employs three full-time staff members, as well as summer students and other short-term employees. The station has a reach from Louisbourg to Port Hawkesbury and is also carried on satellite signal across Canada. Recently the station has undergone upgrades to allow it to record and broadcast in a digital format, producing a clearer and crisper broadcast to its viewers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this House to join me in congratulating the board and staff of Telile on their recent upgrades and for the informative and valuable service they provide to the people of Cape Breton-Richmond and the broader public.

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

**HARPELL, MADISON: HELPING THE HELPERS SCHOLAR - CONGRATS.**

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, Helping the Helpers is an organization dedicated to the education and awareness of PTSD, with a focus on frontline professionals. Each year they award their Helping the Helpers scholarship to one deserving candidate.

This year Madison Harpell of Indian Harbour Lake, a student in her first year of nursing at Dalhousie University, is the worthy recipient. Madison was chosen for the award because of her work with the Saint Mary's Academy, Healthy Active Lifestyle Team, bringing attention to PTSD through mental health awareness events. Madison stresses the importance of having PTSD supports and education for nurses because they not only deal with patients suffering from PTSD, they are also very susceptible to it themselves.

Mr. Speaker, Madison's mother Amy is a highly-regarded LPN at the Saint Martha's Regional Hospital daycare surgery department and I have no doubt in my mind that Madison herself will garner the same esteem throughout her career. Congratulations Madison, I wish you much success.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East on an introduction.

TIM HALMAN: In the West Gallery we have Alex Kronstein, a Dartmouth resident and a contributing writer to the Nova Scotia Advocate. Just the other day, Alex was in my constituency office and he showed me the neurodiversity flag he is going to be raising at Halifax City Hall at Grand Parade on March 29<sup>th</sup>.

I ask the House to give Alex a warm welcome to the House of Assembly.  
(Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**PURPLE DAY: AWARENESS - RECOG.**

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Today I rise to bring awareness to Purple Day for epilepsy. It is estimated that one in 100 people and over 300,000 Canadians have epilepsy. Many of the times the cause is unknown.

Epilepsy is a neurological disorder of the central nervous system, specifically of the brain. It is characterized by the tendency to have recurrent seizures. It is not a disease, it is not contagious, and it is not a psychological disorder. We should be educated on how to assist anyone who may have a seizure, in order to ensure the safety of our loved ones, friends and colleagues. There is currently no cure for epilepsy.

I would like to make special mention, Mr. Speaker, of a beautiful-hearted woman, Crystal Angus Smith. She had recurrent seizures and passed away at the young age of 43, back in 2015.

Mr. Speaker, today I wear purple to bring awareness to those living with epilepsy and to make sure that no one is alone in this journey.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

### **A2J & LAW REFORM INSTIT.: LAUNCHED - THANKS**

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Mr. Speaker, in January I was proud to attend the launch of the new Access to Justice and Law Reform Institute of Nova Scotia at Dalhousie Schulich School of Law. It was a privilege to have served in my capacity as Minister of Justice five years ago . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order, order. I'm just going to get everyone to quiet down a bit. The member can restart her statement.

[3:30 p.m.]

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Mr. Speaker, in January, I was proud to attend the launch of the new Access to Justice and Law Reform Institute of Nova Scotia at Dalhousie's Schulich School of Law. It was a privilege to have served, in my capacity as Minister of Justice five years ago, as co-chair in the inception of the Access to Justice Coordinating Committee with Chief Justice Michael MacDonald.

This year, the Law Reform Commission of Nova Scotia is transitioning to become the institute to focus on both law reform and access to justice projects, including #Talk Justice. The institute will continue to make recommendations to update, clarify, and simplify the law, and improve the administration of justice.

Ensuring that the public and our most vulnerable populations have access to affordable and comprehensible legal help is essential; we know barriers to accessing that assistance still exist.

Please join me in thanking the Access to Justice Coordinating Committee and all partners that assisted in this valuable work.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

**COTTON, ROGER - COL.: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

TORY RUSHTON: Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise today to commemorate the life of Colonel Roger Cotton, a distinguished and well-respected native of Springhill who lost his battle with cancer at the age of 54. Military personnel from across Canada and around the world deployed to Springhill to pay tribute to Colonel Roger Cotton during the official military funeral, filling the streets and honouring the fellow soldier with a ceremonial 21-gun salute.

Colonel Cotton served in many positions in Afghanistan, Cyprus, Bosnia, and Macedonia. Colonel Cotton was also awarded commemorations as the Chief of Defence Staff, Commander Canadian Army, and Commander Combined Joint Operations.

I ask the House to join me in a moment of silence to honour the life of Colonel Roger Cotton and thank him for his service to this country.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**HORTON, WINNIE: CFUW BOOK SALE - THANKS**

KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, one of the many great privileges of serving as an MLA is the opportunity to get to know the volunteers who make extraordinary contributions to our communities.

Every Spring for the last 15 years, Winnie Horton has quarterbacked the Canadian Federation of University Women's Annual Book Sale in Wolfville, an event that celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year. I used the word "quarterbacked" because the book sale, while a team effort, needs someone to organize the Saturday collection of used books for six months, recruit the volunteers, troubleshoot, and convene the Acadia football team to move almost 700 boxes of books from storage at the Lions Hall.

Winnie and her late husband, John, whom I recognized in this House in 2016, epitomize the qualities of extraordinary citizens. Mr. Speaker, I invite the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in thanking Winnie Horton for her volunteer leadership and deep commitment to our community.

THE SPEAKER: I want to apologize to the member for Cumberland South. I had missed his moment of silence, so we'll take that now.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

The honourable member for Pictou West.

**WHISTLEBERRY MARKET & EATERY: GRAND OPENING - CONGRATS.**

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, the Whistleberry Market and Eatery has recently opened for business in Pleasant Valley, with a grand opening planned for the Spring.

Owner Peter Zehr and his family are eager and ready to provide a new and exciting shopping experience to the people of Pictou County, as well as travellers dropping in from the nearby highway. This business provides homemade smoked meats, cheese, baked goods, and basic groceries, along with a wide selection of fine, high-quality local products such as jams, honey, and maple syrup.

Congratulations to the Whistleberry Market and Eatery. I know this venue will be a popular draw to our community and will continue to highlight the tremendous local products and small businesses we are proud to have in rural Pictou West.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

**KLEFENZ, CATHERINE: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, on December 10, 2018, with great sadness we observed the passing of one of BLT community's most dedicated and accomplished community volunteers, Catherine Klefenz.

In 2000, Catherine registered the Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Rails to Trails Association and became its founding president, a position she held until the Spring of 2018. In 2002 the Nova Scotia Trails Federation presented Catherine with the White Hills Summit Award for her groundbreaking work on behalf of hiking and multi-use trails for Halifax.

In the course of her work, Catherine served as chair of the Halifax Regional Trails Association and worked to secure funding from HRM and the Province of Nova Scotia for regional trails. Her efforts resulted in linking Halifax trails with the Trans Canada Trail and helped to establish the Rum Runners trail, an initiative to promote active ecotourism in Nova Scotia.

I ask the Members of the Legislative Assembly to recognize Catherine's many contributions. Her work on behalf of Nova Scotia trails will be enjoyed for generations.

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

**MCKEAGE, DAVE: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

BARBARA ADAMS: Today I stand to bring recognition to the amazing legacy of Brigadoon Village left behind by the tragic loss of camp founder Dave McKeage. At the young age of 49, Dave passed away due to complications from treatment during his fourth battle with cancer.

It was after Dave's experience with leadership roles in summer camps that he realized that this camp concept could work. After planning, hard work, and fundraising, the doors opened to Brigadoon Village. An estimated 3,000 children have visited the camp with diagnoses of asthma, epilepsy, and arthritis, just to name a few. These children have had the opportunity of a lifetime to feel they are not alone.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in acknowledging the amazing work of Dave McKeage for seeing hopes and dreams, and the passion he had to follow through with his own.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**FREEDOM FDN.: 30<sup>th</sup> ANNIV. - CONGRATS.**

SUSAN LEBLANC: I rise today to recognize Freedom Foundation of Dartmouth North, which celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary last fall.

Founded by Joe Gibson, Freedom Foundation opened its doors in 1989 in Dartmouth North to assist men recovering from addiction by providing services that foster recovery and build positive self-image and self-worth in a secure and caring environment. Over the last 30 years, Freedom Foundation has seen thousands of men with different addictions and needs come through the door and has helped many find their path to sobriety and health through their program.

In April of last year, the Freedom Foundation opened a second home right across the street from the original one, which still operates to this day. The Dr. John Savage House offers supportive housing to men who are integrating back into the community.

The effects of addictions reach almost everybody at some point in their lives and the folks at Freedom Foundation are dedicated to helping men who come through the doors to control their addictions and rebuild their lives. It is a place of support and healing.

I ask all members of the House to join me in acknowledging the important work happening at Freedom Foundation and to thank Joe and Sandra and all who work and live there for their contribution to Dartmouth North.

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



**PARENT AND CHILD GUIDE: 24<sup>th</sup> ANNIV. - CONGRATS.**

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Today I'd like to recognize Robert Rockwell and his family on the 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their bimonthly free family newspaper, Parent-Child Guide.

Parent-Child Guide is an essential resource for many families, couples, and individuals. Flipping through its pages, you can read articles on relationship advice, self-help suggestions, child safety, and even pet care. Better yet, many of the major articles are written by local professionals.

Over the years, Parent-Child Guide has significantly grown its readership. It's estimated that the newspaper has over 300,000 views a year with approximately 5 million readers since 1995. An impressive feat, for sure.

As metro's oldest free family newspaper, Parent-Child Guide continues to provide important and relevant information to the people of Halifax. I ask all members of this House to join me in wishing Robert and his family continued success.

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

**BENNETT, EMMA: TAEKWONDO, PAN AM GAMES - BEST WISHES**

BRAD JOHNS: I'd like to rise today to acknowledge Emma Bennett. In January of this year, the Grade 8 Leslie Thomas Junior High School student won the gold medal at 2019 Canadian National Taekwondo championships held in Quebec City.

As a result of this win, Emma will now be fighting in June at the 2019 Pan American Cadet and Junior Championship Games, as part of Team Canada, which will be held in Portland Oregon, as well as the World Cadet Championships, which will be held in the Republic of Uzbekistan in August.

Emma is a third-degree black belt and has been training for nine years. She is a role model to her younger sister Ciara, and many other students in her Taekwondo class.

Emma is obviously a dedicated athlete who trains hard and rarely misses classes and I'd like to take an opportunity to thank Emma and wish her great success and a safe, happy trip. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Waverly-Fall River-Beaver Bank.

**ALFORD, EMILY: WORLD MASTERS DART CHAMPS. - BEST WISHES**

BILL HORNE: I was very excited to learn of, and to follow, Beaver Bank resident Emily Alford on her journey to the WINMAU World Masters Darts championships in England last fall.

This trip was an exciting competition experience for Emily, but also a family celebration of her mother's battle with, and recovery from, cancer.

[3:30 p.m.]

Emily secured a top-16 place finish at the competition and got to practice and socialize with many of world's best dart throwers. This trip to England was an experience of a lifetime and more than exceeded her expectations. Prior to and during her trip, there was much community support for the Lockview High School student, which is a testament to the wonderful qualities of this young lady.

On behalf of our community, I wish Emily future success as she pursues her dream to compete internationally.

THE SPEAKER: The member for Queens-Shelburne.

**LUMBERJACKS HOCKEY: NSMBL TOURN. - CONGRATS.**

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the South Shore Major Bantam Lumberjacks who capped off a successful season with a bronze medal win at the 2019 Nova Scotia Major Bantam League Provincials in Pictou County.

Not only did the team capture a medal, but also two players were rewarded for their great efforts during the tournament. Luke Woodworth was named a Tournament Forward All-Star and Ryan Hopkins received a Tournament Defencemen All-Star Award. Luke was also the tournament's point lead, collecting 15 points in total over the six games.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank coaches Shawn Woodworth, Adam Masland, Jeremy Kini, and Kegin Watt for their dedication and to all the Jacks for providing great hockey entertainment to fans in Queens County.

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

**CRINION, BOB: ICE-BOATING AMBASSADOR - CONGRATS.**

BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, today I'll recognize Bob Crinion of Hammonds Plains. Bob is a third-generation iceboater, who's ranked second in Canada and 29<sup>th</sup> in the

world. He belongs to a club of approximately 12 iceboaters in the Maritimes, who will notify each other of favourable ice conditions to enjoy their sport.

An iceboat is a lightweight vessel that uses its sail to glide on the ice. The boats used weigh much less than the sailor that operates it and Bob calls it, “an adrenaline junkie’s sailing machine.”

Bob grew up in Mahone Bay and had to walk across ice to get to school, at times falling in. He learned how to pull himself out of the ice, which is something that helps in the sport. He began iceboating with his grandfather and father as a teenager and continues to do it in retirement.

I would ask everyone in the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Mr. Crinion for following his passion of iceboating and being an ambassador for the sport.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

#### **NORTHSIDE HIST. SOC.: TIME CAPSULE OPENING - THANKS**

EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the opening of a time capsule found in the cornerstone of the former Thompson High School as demolition of the 70-year-old school took place recently.

The Northside Historical Society president Joe Meaney opened the box to find the contents in relatively good shape. Contents included lists of town officials, stamps, coins, school yearbook, newspaper, and letters of the day. The opening ceremony was attended by Chuck Thompson, grandson of Mayor Charles Thompson, after whom the school is named.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Northside Historical Society for opening the door to this history 70 years ago.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Chester-St. Margaret’s.

#### **BOUTLIERS PT. RINK: RESTORED - THANKS**

HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the volunteers who have worked so hard to bring the Boutliers Point outdoor rink back to life, as a community gathering spot with new lighting, netting, benches, and most importantly, a groomed ice surface.

The rink, located on Island View Drive, was first built in 1954, rebuilt in 1966, but had deteriorated over recent years. Thanks to the dedicated volunteers in the community,

the rink is now providing much-needed outdoor winter recreation opportunities for residents.

This past New Year's Eve, volunteers organized a celebration featuring skating, a barbecue, hot coffee, hot chocolate, and even live music, all free for the 60 people who turned up to share the evening. The organizers hope to raise funds to develop and operate the facility as both a winter and summer recreation resource for additional active living opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, I invite the members of the Assembly to join me in thanking the volunteers who are making an important contribution to the active living infrastructure of their community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**MELANSON, JACOB: HOCKEY, CAN. WINTER GAMES - CONGRATS.**

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to recognize Jacob Melanson of Amherst. He is a 15-year-old young man and was selected to join team Nova Scotia in the Canada Winter Games for hockey.

Jacob has been working hard to achieve a goal like this, scoring 63 goals and 101 points for the Truro Bearcats. Jacob is the first men's member of the team from Cumberland County since 2011 and has made his community proud. Jacob has worked hard to reach his goal and is hoping this will get him into the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League.

Please join me in wishing Jacob congratulations for participating in this year's Canada Winter Games.

[3:45 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**SAKER, GAIL: MEET AND EAT LUNCHESES - THANKS**

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, volunteers are an integral part of every community. They give their time and services willingly in order to make positive improvements to the world around them.

I rise today to recognize Gail Saker. Gail is a volunteer who has been organizing the Mahone Bay Centre's, Meet and Eat lunches for over four and a half years. She has spent many hours making soups and sandwiches, turkey dinners, Irish stew, along with other volunteers.

Gail has recently stepped down as the organizer of these events but will remain active on the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you and all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Gail for her contribution to the Mahone Bay Centre over numerous years.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

**PHYSICIANS: SPRINGHILL MINING DISASTERS - TRIBUTE**

TORY RUSHTON: Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise today to remember three doctors that were memorialized for their services during the mine disasters in Springhill.

In December 2018, friends and family gathered to acknowledge the medical services, sacrifices, and contributions made to the mining community of Springhill and the difficult decades of the 1950s.

Dr. Burden, Dr. Fisher, and Dr. Murray were honoured with a plaque that will hang in the Dr. Carson & Marion Murray Community Centre in Springhill. These doctors played an integral part in the community, especially during the 1956 explosion that claimed the lives of 39 men, and the bump of 1956 that claimed the lives of 75 men.

I ask this House to join me in remembering these three men who worked tirelessly for their patients and their community through these difficult days and we will never forget the impact they made in the community of Springhill.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**STUTZ, HANSPETER: LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - CONGRATS.**

KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to stand in this Chamber today to congratulate Hanspeter Stutz of Grand Pré Wines on receiving the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Hanspeter is certainly a very deserving recipient of this prestigious honour. Since beginning his pioneering work in the 1990s, he has been at the forefront of the Nova Scotia wine industry. His exceptional vision and dedication have played a vital role in putting our region's wine, culinary, and tourism industries on the map.

His contributions to the economic success and the vibrancy of our community are truly exceptional and while this award honours a lifetime of success, I know that Hanspeter is not done yet.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in a toast to a remarkable Nova Scotian, Hanspeter Stutz.

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

### **CHAPEL ISLAND: FIRE RESPONSE - COMMEND**

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, on the night of Sunday, March 10, 2019, fires raged in the seat of Mi'kmaq governance on historic Chapel Island.

Chapel Island has served as a spiritual centre for the Mi'kmaq people for thousands of years. The annual St. Anne's Mission attracts thousands of visitors each year for prayer and celebration. It was the meeting place of the Atlantic Canada Mi'kmaq Chiefs from seven districts who travelled each summer to meet as a Grand Council.

The first mass was celebrated on Chapel Island in 1742. By the time the Potlotek Fire Department arrived at the wharf across from Chapel Island, 14 of the approximately 170 cabins on the island were already burning.

Members of this small fire department carried portable pumps across the narrow channel separating the island at the southern end of the Bras d'Or Lakes from Potlotek First Nation. A chainsaw was used to cut through the ice to enable water to be pumped from the lake.

I wish to commend the members of the Potlotek Fire Department as well as members of the St. Peter's Volunteer Fire Department who assisted in controlling the fires and prevented it from spreading to the church and to the additional cabins on the island.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

### **PENNY, LORRIE: RETIREMENT - CONGRATS.**

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, for over 20 years the local Subway in Greenwood has provided exemplary service to all under the leadership of franchisee Lorrie Penny. Lorrie is an individual who truly epitomizes the very essence of community.

The local Subway is well-known for supporting numerous community events, including senior's lunches, school lunch programs, sports teams, tournaments, and much more. Lorrie has previously and very fittingly been described by a colleague as putting the unity in community.

Lorrie has recently announced her retirement and I know how much her business presence will be missed at the local Subway restaurant and beyond. I am certain that Lorrie

will continue to be a strong and dedicated member of the community and I cannot wait to see what her next venture will be.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to please wish Lorrie Penny and her family well as she enters her well-deserved retirement.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Antigonish.

**CHILDREN'S PL. LEARNING CTR.: OP-SHOP DONATION - CONGRATS.**

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, Antigonish is known as a place for social activism and innovative volunteer-driven community projects. The training begins early for our volunteers. Recently, after-schoolers at the Children's Place Learning Centre in Antigonish held a month-long clothing drive to donate to the Opportunity Shop. They passed out flyers, asked family members and friends for help, and raised awareness at their schools. The children gathered 50 bags of quality used clothing to donate to the not-for-profit, second-hand store which sells clothing and donates proceeds to various charities in town and county.

In spite of the frigid temperatures, on March 8<sup>th</sup> the children could be seen walking across town to deliver their donation to the Op Shop. The children were inspired by a letter they received from the Prime Minister who challenged them to take on the task of making their community a better place and that they could change the world.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all members to join me in congratulating these inspiring young Nova Scotians.

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

**MACLEOD, CADEN: SKIING, CAN. WINTER GAMES - CONGRATS.**

KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, Caden Macleod, a 16-year-old from Baddeck, was one of seven members of Team Nova Scotia competing in cross-country skiing at the Canada Games in Red Deer.

During the Canada Games recently in February, Caden showed her stamina and her Cape Breton determination with her final positions as 47<sup>th</sup> in the free female sprint, 29<sup>th</sup> in the 10km mass start female classic, and 36<sup>th</sup> in the 7.5 female interval start.

I rise today to congratulate Caden on her accomplishments at the Canada Winter Games and to thank her family and her head coach Daniel Murray, coaches Lilla and coach Kate for their encouragement, guidance and assistance. Keep up the great work, Caden.

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

### **TOURISM INDUS.: GALA AWARDS - BEST WISHES**

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, the Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores Gala Awards Dinner will be held on April 6<sup>th</sup> of this year, and I am so pleased to see so many dynamic businesses being celebrated for their success.

Of the many nominees, I am proud to see great representation from the Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie riding - the Henley House Pub and Restaurant in Sheet Harbour is up for the Flavour Award; Out of the Fog Museum in Halfway Cove is nominated for the Chief Experience Opportunity Award; and the newly constructed Chedabucto Lifestyle Complex in Guysborough is in the running for the Mike Broomfield Rising Star Award.

Mr. Speaker, the tourism industry in Nova Scotia is booming, particularly in southwestern Nova Scotia, because of our unique establishments and the endearing people who run them. I would like to wish the best of luck to all the deserving nominees - but just a little bit more luck to those previously mentioned.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

### **BURKE & BURKE DESIGN: ARMISTICE STAMP DESIGN - RECOG.**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: The members in the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, today I'd like to recognize Larry and Kelly Burke, the proprietors of Burke & Burke and residents of Shad Bay.

In 1918, on the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month, the First World War came to an end. The newly issued stamp celebrates this armistice and commemorates those who fought and died for peace.

On October 24, 2018, Canada Post issued a stamp marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this armistice and it was a submission of the marketing company of Burke & Burke that was selected for the stamp's design. This is not the first time I have had the pleasure of announcing Burke & Burke's design achievements. In 2014, the firm won a similar national design competition. In 2018, the firm received a commission from Canada Post to create a commemorative stamp for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Halifax Explosion.

Stamps recognizing momentous events in Canada's history are significant culture landmarks. Commemorative stamps also mark significant events in the activities of Canada's philatelic community.



Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of the House of Assembly to join me in recognizing Burke & Burke for their professional awards and national recognition.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

**CDN. COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE: 10<sup>th</sup> ANNIV. - CONGRATS.**

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Mr. Speaker, on February 7<sup>th</sup> I was delighted to attend a special occasion by joining the Canadian College of Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine in Bedford for their 10-year anniversary and Chinese New Year celebration. It was great to be able to speak with their students, learn more about their backgrounds and future plans, and encourage them as they begin to build their careers.

As the first and only private career college providing education and training of acupuncture in Atlantic Canada, the Canadian College of Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine has graduated hundreds of students, creating job opportunities treating the public at large. The college also provides many free treatments to our communities through their outreach events.

I want to applaud the college's president, Dr. Diana Tong Li and Chairman Dr. Franklyn Chen for their fascinating work and devotion and ask all members to join me in congratulating them on their 10-year anniversary.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Fairview-Clayton Park with 30 seconds.

**FAIRVIEW JR. HS: STUDENTS WITH HONS. - RECOG.**

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding academic achievement in one of the schools in my riding. During the last term over 203 students received honours at Fairview Junior High School. That means 46 per cent of students have an average of 80 per cent or higher, which I think is pretty incredible. Not only is this achievement a result of individual hard work, it's also important to mention and thank our dedicated teachers for their commitment to student excellence.

I ask that members of this House of Assembly join me in acknowledging the hard work of the students of Fairview Junior High and thank the teachers for their continued support.

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for Statements by Members has expired.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY****ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

**PREM.: MESSAGE ON HEALTH CARE - CLARIFY**

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, the Premier says there is no crisis in health care, the government says there is enough capacity in the system already and yet we see people being turned away from emergency rooms. We see physicians leaving the province due to the working conditions. We see Nova Scotians struggling to access health care.

Here in the real world, there are serious problems in health care. But in the budget world, not so much. I'd like to ask the Premier: Is the message he is trying to send to Nova Scotians is that Nova Scotians and everyone who work in health care that everything is just fine, there are no problems, our health care system is great? Is that the message?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. He would know this budget is a 6.2 per cent increase in the budget for health care. He would also know there are 15 resident seats for physicians that will be dedicated to Dalhousie University, an increase. He would also know we have 10 dedicated seats for nurse practitioners. Continuing, if he had followed over the last number of years, we're hiring almost all of the graduates of the nursing schools in our province.

We continue to see the average age in nursing drop because we're continuing to hire more in. We continue to recognize the required investments in frontline health care, at the same time we also know, through successive governments, the infrastructure in health care has been ignored. It is no longer being ignored. This government has the largest single infrastructure investment in public health care in our province.

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, last year this government poured an extra \$100 million into health care and I don't think you could find a single Nova Scotian that says the health care system is functioning better than it was. This year they're putting more money in, but if it's not properly managed, you won't get the results. That's really the problem: services are not improving.

There's a lack of credibility on the health care file. We've all heard about the issues surrounding shortages of nurses and situations where the province is paying huge overtime amounts, where nurses aren't allowed to take vacation. (Interruption) Travel nurses is another one.

Can the Premier explain why there's not specific, additional funding dedicated exclusively for the hiring of nurses or does the Premier believe there are enough nurses in the province right now?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As I said in my first answer, for the first time in any government in the province, we've dedicated seats for nurse practitioners. We've provided a path for RNs in this province while they continue to work to take more training to become nurse practitioners. I also said in my previous answer that we're hiring almost all of the nursing grads in this province. He made a large accusation about the health care in this province. Those 4,000 Nova Scotians that had orthopaedic surgery would respond they felt a very positive experience.

I would also tell you that the new people being hired into the health care system are telling you they are positive experiences. We've listened to Nova Scotians. There are challenges associated in some of our communities. We're continuing to work with those communities to ensure that we attract health care providers and at the same time investing in the physical infrastructure that health care providers tell us is required to not only attract but to retain those health care providers in our communities today.

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, bigger hallways is not the answer to hallway medicine. There are serious problems in the health care system. Everyone in this province knows we have an aging population and we have a major shift in our demographics happening in this province, but time and time again we hear that hospitals and emergency departments are bottlenecked because the government has failed to provide adequate, long-term care facilities and access to beds. Yet in this budget, there's not a single dollar for more long-term care beds.

That's a serious problem. I'd like to ask the Premier: the system is either massively mismanaged, or there are not enough long-term care beds. Which one is it?

[4:00 p.m.]

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I would say that for the decade the Tories were in power, they neglected physical infrastructure in this province. That is the stark reality.

The honourable member may not think it's important to invest in the Cape Breton Regional, but I can tell you the health care providers in the province do. The honourable member may not believe it is important to invest in the QEII redevelopment, but I can tell you the health care providers across this province do.

The honourable member is complaining about us adding another 120 long-term care beds in Cape Breton, Mr. Speaker. He may not appreciate that but, Cape Bretoners will . . . (Interruption)

The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington is standing up and complaining. Well, I am going to tell you, the people of Meteghan appreciate the redevelopment and the additional beds that will take place. I look forward to him telling those people, in both official languages, that they don't deserve those beds.

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

### **H&W: NURSING HOME CONSTRUCTION - PLAN**

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks in the emergency rooms of Nova Scotia, we have had people being sent home with pink sheets because the ER was too jammed up to receive them. We have people in Cobequid being fed out of vending machines because they need to be kept there in a facility that was not intended for that. We have doctors and nurses in Kentville, Dartmouth, Halifax, and Sydney speaking out about chaotic and untenable circumstances in their ERs. We know that a core reason for all of this is that emergency rooms have nowhere to discharge their patients because so much of their hospitals are filled with people waiting for nursing home placements for whom there are no places.

In the middle of a health care crisis where this is the case, why would the Premier bring in a budget with no comprehensive program for new nursing home construction in our province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member would know the very health care redevelopment that he has been campaigning against in Cape Breton is adding additional long-term care beds there. He would also know that the long-term care facility in Meteghan as well as the one in Mahone Bay will continue to be redeveloped, at the same time adding long-term care beds to those communities.

The Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, in her Budget Speech, said there would be more opportunity as we continue to work with our partners to provide long-term care within the fiscal envelope of the province. Mr. Speaker, he would also know the redevelopment that is happening in and around the Cape Breton Regional and here at the QEII is providing those efficiencies in the emergency rooms to ensure that those who require emergency service will get it in a timely manner. At the same time, we're providing the physical infrastructure so that those who are looking for primary care in our emergency rooms will have access to that in other parts of the facilities, in our redevelopment components.

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, Mahone Bay, Meteghan, North Sydney, New Waterford - this is not a comprehensive provincial program. A comprehensive provincial program of long-term care facilities is the 300-bed program that was on his desk the day he became the Premier, which ended up the garbage can.

I understand that this budget includes increases for Emergency Health Services in response to increases in call volumes. But in the emergency rooms themselves, which are already up against it because there's no place to discharge their patients, this increased volume could very well have the effect, as one doctor has put it to me, of supercharging the whole emergency room problem because the new patients being brought in haven't got any place to go.

Does the Premier understand that if you move more people into an already-crowded space with no place for them to exit, that space is going to become more crowded than it was before?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, what was on my desk the day I became Premier was a \$600 million hole left behind by the former government and a bunch of promises with no path to pay for them.

The budgets the honourable member has been voting against in this House are providing a clear path to economic stability and allowing us to make the largest single investment in health care infrastructure in the history of this province while retaining a balanced budget and investing in Nova Scotians and hiring more health care workers and, at the same time, providing a realistic path to providing more long-term care beds in our communities.

GARY BURRILL: It would be a privilege to vote against a budget which has no place in it for a comprehensive program of nursing home replacement and building in Nova Scotia.

Look, there is a consensus that is being developed about this. Doctors speak about how long-term care facilities are needed to take the pressures off ERs. Nurses are speaking in various venues about how long-term care facilities are needed in order for them to be able to provide the kind of care in ERs that's needed. Health care policy specialists are saying the very same thing.

The only people who don't think that a comprehensive program of new nursing homes is needed for us in Nova Scotia are the 27 members of this government. What makes the Premier think that the Nova Scotia Liberals know so much more about ERs and new long-term care facilities than anybody else in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: In the honourable member's preamble, he echoed the voices of many health care providers who recognize that we need to continue to provide and expand the delivery of not only primary care but also long-term care. They also talked about ensuring that we provide home care. We continue to invest in those. The minister today in her budget announced four communities that would see an increase in long-term care beds.

The honourable member is listening to those health care providers when it comes to long-term care beds. I hope he takes a moment in time and listens, Mr. Speaker, to the health care providers on Cape Breton Island who yesterday said it was a gamechanger when it comes to primary care in those communities, making sure of cancer care. One of them said, can you imagine what else we could do about bringing care closer to our citizens? That's exactly what happened yesterday in Cape Breton, which he voted against.

He can't listen to some health care workers. He needs to listen to them all when we provide a comprehensive health care policy to our province.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

### **GOV'T. (N.S.): AMBULANCE BACKLOGS - BUDGET**

TIM HOUSTON: This budget implies there are no issues with the delivery of EHS services. That's the exact opposite of what we're hearing from actual Nova Scotians - paramedics and people waiting long wait times for services. The budget today doesn't do anything to address the issues surrounding the lack of ambulances across this province. There's no new money for EHS in this budget today.

How does the Premier reconcile what's happening with ambulance backlogs at emergency departments and the lack of availability of ambulances with not providing an increase in the budget?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member knows we have a contract with EHS. We continue to implement it. We continue to work with our partners, Mr. Speaker. They continue to give us advice on how we continue to work to ensure the offload times change and we deal with people in long-term care. We're working with them, quite frankly, to provide new ways to deliver health care in our province. We appreciate the work and advice that they are providing to us.

TIM HOUSTON: The Premier can wring his hands and push it off to somebody else, but the reality of it is that there's a serious problem with access to EHS in this province. This government had a chance to acknowledge it in their budget today, and they decided not to.

Mr. Speaker, anyone looking ahead can see that we need a clear vision for the delivery of health care in this province, but we don't see it in this budget. This budget says there's capacity, says there's enough nurses, says that doctors are fairly compensated. There is a crisis in health care, and this budget doesn't acknowledge it.

I'd like to ask the Premier: If the Premier really believes that we have enough nurses, we have enough ambulances, and doctors are fairly paid, then that means the resources we have are being severely mismanaged. Which one is it?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I look forward to continuing to have budget debate as we continue to roll out all of the investments that we have made in health care.

I again want to thank the paramedics across this province who provide services in our communities. The fact is we pay for volume.

I would encourage the honourable member - I know we just saw the document today, but there's a \$4.6 million increase for EHS.

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

### **GOV'T. (N.S.): GHG REDUCTION - ACTION**

GARY BURRILL: My question is for the Premier. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change told the world that what is required to address the crisis of climate change is what it called a rapid escalation of the level of ambition towards containing global warming to 1.5 degrees. Today, the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has delivered a Budget Address in which the terms "climate" and "climate change" appear a total of zero times.

A budget that shows no provincial leadership on creating green jobs, no provincial leadership on reducing emissions, and no provincial leadership on investing in climate change adaptation - does the Premier believe that this demonstrates what the IPCC calls a rapid escalation of the level of ambition that the world knows is called for?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to thank all Nova Scotians for continuing to lead the country in GHG reductions. We're 30 per cent below 2005 levels. He would also know we're well on target to be about 50 per cent by 2030.

The reality of it is, in today's budget, we announced \$7 million for green infrastructure; we had \$14.3 million to help Nova Scotians with home energy efficiency to reduce their greenhouse footprint; there's \$23 million associated directly with dealing with the green economy, creating green jobs and helping Nova Scotians reduce their carbon footprint.

Mr. Speaker, that may not seem like a lot of money to the honourable member but it's a lot of money to Nova Scotians.

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, on the day that this Legislature last met, I had the privilege here of joining hundreds of high school students and other young people who took part in a global climate strike led by the kids themselves here, as around the world.

These young people are calling out with strength and conviction, and also out of desperation, for politicians like us to take decisive action to address climate change. Because they were very clear in that demonstration, that it is their view that it is them, and not us, who will face the consequences of a lack of action.

Mr. Speaker, what does the Premier think it says to those young people that this government's Budget Address today does not even include the term "climate change"?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Those young people should be proud of the fact that successive governments of all political stripes in this province have taken this issue seriously. We continue to lead the country in our carbon footprint reduction. Those are all positive signs.

Mr. Speaker, I want to assure those young people who were here that we are not resting on that. Again, I just told the honourable member there is \$23 million to \$24 million invested directly in the green economy - looking for green jobs to help us reduce our carbon footprint; to deal with the very issues the honourable member is talking about.

He would also know, the minister - I think the Minister of Lands and Forestry - has laid out a plan on coastal protection, ensuring that we deal with the issues along our coastal communities.

We continue to listen not only to those young people, but all Nova Scotians who recognize we have an important role to play to help Canada reduce its carbon footprint and, at the same time, ensuring that we turn our economy into a green one.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

**GOV'T. (N.S.) – NORTHERN PULP: NEW EFFLUENT PLANT - CONTRIB.**

TIM HOUSTON: If it is to continue its operations, Northern Pulp will require a new effluent treatment plant. There is much speculation that the province will contribute to the cost of any such new plant. However, there is nothing allocated in the budget for that type of expenditure.

Can the Premier confirm how much the province plans to contribute towards the new effluent treatment plant and when will the province book that amount?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I've said many times in this House, we continue to work with Northern Pulp on the issue of the cleanup of Boat Harbour. We have a liability associated with the closure of that facility nine, almost 10 years, early. That liability negotiation is still ongoing.



I want to assure the honourable member that we, as a government, take our responsibility seriously about the liabilities associated with that particular facility, at the same time ensuring that we keep the fiscal health of this province moving forward. I also want to say to the honourable member, I am still very optimistic that we can see Northern Pulp continue to operate in that community in a way that allows us also to clean up the environment.

TIM HOUSTON: The issue is the Premier acknowledges there is a liability, that means the province will pay something. If the province is going to pay something, it should be reflected in the budget. The Premier hasn't gotten around to putting it in the budget, unless he wants to confirm to this House today. I asked staff today if there is anything for the new treatment plant - nothing; any change to the Boat Harbour cleanup - nothing. Nothing in this budget for either of those two, which could be significant, have a significant financial impact on the province.

If you don't put it in the budget and you know it's coming, that's not being fully up front with Nova Scotians. I'd like to give the Premier one chance to be transparent and not hide the amount - tell Nova Scotians: What is the liability and when will you book it?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, Tim the negotiator, lay out all your cards on the table and then look for a deal. I've said many times in this House, the fact of the matter is we don't have a liability when it comes to the treatment facility. We have a liability when it comes to reducing and closing Boat Harbour early.

We're continuing that negotiation. I want to assure the honourable member we continue to make arrangements to deal with our liabilities when it comes to it, but unlike former Progressive Conservative governments, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to lay out the amount that we believe we owe. We're going to negotiate that, just like we've done with collective agreements, just like we continue to do to make sure that not only do we deal with the environmental liabilities that have been ignored for decades by successive governments but ensuring that we try to protect the jobs in the community the honourable member comes from.

We're going to continue to make sure that we stand with the hard-working Nova Scotians and at the same time build an economy that all Nova Scotians see themselves in as we protect the environment. (Interruptions) Let me finish. We'll do it by paying our bills on time.

[4:15 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: I'd just like to remind the honourable Premier not to refer to members opposite by their first names.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

**H&W: CAN. HEALTH TRANSFER - PMT. POLICY**

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, this is a very sad day for Nova Scotians. All we really heard was regurgitated funding announcements from several months ago, but what the government failed to mention was all the critical funding cuts to health care, long-term care, and seniors. We need some help and maybe we'll get it from the federal government.

I recently attended a town hall meeting with the federal Minister of Seniors and asked her if she would commit to ensuring that our health transfer payments were based on the age of our population, not the number of people. However, she had no idea what the federal Minister of Health's policy was. It's troubling to me that she had no idea. I'm going to ask the question to the Minister of Health and Wellness: Does he know what the federal Minister of Health's policy is on this and does he personally believe that the health transfer payments to our province should be based on the age of our population?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. As the member and the members opposite may realize, I think a former federal Conservative government changed the approach to the Canada Health Transfer program and that's when it changed to a population-based distribution. That continues to be a foundational part of the funding model used by the federal government for the Canada Health Transfers.

BARBARA ADAMS: I have no idea whether that was a yes or a no, but we'll move on. Mr. Speaker, our aging population has high levels of chronic illness and it occupies nearly 50 per cent of our health care budget. We are a small province and we've got large needs, and this budget shows that this government does not know how to address those needs. Without proper advocacy from the Premier and his Minister of Health and Wellness, it's unlikely that our funding from the federal government will change and you've had six years to work on this to more accurately reflect our demographics. This budget shows cuts to adult protection, Nova Scotia government cuts to client-specific expenses for long-term care, and Nova Scotia government cuts for long-term care infrastructure.

My question to the minister is: Will the minister commit to advocating now for the needs of Nova Scotia's elderly population with his federal counterparts?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, through the Canada Health Transfer, as I've mentioned, one of the foundational pieces of the formula used by the federal government does include population-base part of the formula. It's good news that in our province we've been increasing our population the last number of years to help improve the transfers we're receiving. In addition, the work and the investments we've made investing significantly in our home care support programs and various programs to help support our aging population, that's exactly what the member as she looks through this budget will see that we're supporting our aging population.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage on a new question.

### **H&W - PRIVATE HEALTH PLANS: DIRECT BILLING - PROVIDE**

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I still don't know whether he believes it should be based on age or population.

Recently, we made a call to all major home care providers in HRM that are funded by the provincial government. None of them are willing to directly bill the private health insurance companies for our seniors. This forces seniors to pay upfront up to \$500 or more for benefits that they actually have coverage for. These administrative costs and additional hassles have made the private health insurers that our government has chosen to provide service contracts to the ability to avoid that problem. Adequate and affordable home care is a vital part of this government's funding.

I'm going to ask this government: Can the Minister of Health and Wellness explain to me why direct billing to private health plans continues to be optional rather than an expected service provided by his service providers in this province?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, the service providers, the home care services - we've invested heavily since forming government in 2013. We've recognized and heard from Nova Scotians who indicate they want and are able to live in their homes longer with appropriate supports. That's why we've invested to provide more access and more contact hours through our home care providers. We are listening to Nova Scotians who require and can take advantage of the supports as they age in the home and the community and will continue to do that.

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I'll point out again that my question was: Why are his service providers allowed to not directly bill? Again, I didn't get an answer.

So, we'll talk about long-term care beds. This government is finally admitting that we need more long-term care beds, something that the Opposition has been calling for the past six years since they've been in government. The Nova Scotia Health Authority charges a daily fee to people staying in acute care beds while awaiting placement in long-term care. They get that bill sent at the end of the month unless they live in Cape Breton, in which case they get it upfront. When a patient receives placement in a long-term care facility, they have to pay before they move in.

This means we're double billing all of those seniors in acute care beds who are about to go into long-term care, and I don't know too many seniors who can afford this. Can the minister tell me: Does he believe that the current billing process is properly set up to ensure our seniors are able to fully cover their expenses without bankrupting them?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as the member would know, the fees being charged by the Nova Scotia Health Authority for Nova Scotians that have been assessed and are waiting for a long-term care placement is to cover the accommodation costs only; any medical costs associated continue to be covered.

With respect to the number of Nova Scotians that would be in that situation, we've been seeing improvements with fewer Nova Scotians waiting specifically for long-term care access in our hospitals. Those that have been waiting have been waiting less time to get placed from a hospital into a long-term care facility.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

### **H&W - BUDGET (2019): ER CRISIS - ADDRESS**

TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Over the past several weeks, Nova Scotians have been sounding the alarm about the state of emergency care. In North Sydney and Dartmouth, patients have been told to go home without being seen because the emergency department is just too crowded to see them. Imagine being a parent with a sick child, no family doctor and showing up at an emergency room only to be told there's no room for you either.

Will the minister admit this budget does nothing to address the crisis in our emergency rooms that is putting Nova Scotians at risk?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, this budget supports the health care system. This is a significant part of our budget, the speech and the budget that was tabled by my colleague, the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, earlier today. I believe this budget is working to invest and improve the delivery of health care services throughout the system. The health care system is tightly integrated, improvements in primary care supports and access can help reduce pressures in our emergency departments, the continued expansion of collaborative care practices to help improve primary care access throughout our communities - these are steps that will help improve and reduce the pressures in our emergency departments, just one part of the investments being made, \$10 million, additional, in this budget this year.

TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, sadly that is down the road in the future. That's not addressing the crisis that is resulting in people dying today - as the member from the paramedics said, if the ambulance isn't there, they will die. The crisis is today, not in 2020 or 2025.

For the second year in a row the budget includes payments to EHS because there are more people in need of ambulances in the province. Not only are paramedics struggling to off-load patients in overcrowded emergency rooms, but also patients cannot be admitted

to hospitals because there are hundreds of people in the hospitals who are waiting for long-term care.

Will the minister acknowledge that sending more people to an overcrowded emergency department will just make things worse?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I apologize; I'm not sure I understand the essence of what the member was getting at there. What I can tell the member though is the answer to my first response, we're actually investing over an additional \$10 million this year to increase primary care access through collaborative care teams. (Interruptions)

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

RANDY DELOREY: That investment to establish new and expanding existing collaborative care practices in primary care is exactly about keeping people to receive the care they need through primary care providers in their communities, to keep them out of the emergency departments.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the member opposite is not suggesting Nova Scotians should not be calling an ambulance. In fact, they should be. If they have a medical emergency, call the ambulance and the ambulance will get you to the emergency department, you will be triaged, you will receive the emergency care that you need and deserve, because that's what our dedicated health care professionals on the front line are doing.

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

### **H&W - LONG-TERM CARE RPT.: RECOMMENDATIONS - IMPLEMENT**

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, this government seems to be under the impression that commissioning a report is equivalent to solving a problem. Many great recommendations came from the dementia strategy four years ago, but very few of them have been implemented. I fear this year's long-term care report is headed for the same fate.

This government announced today a whole \$2.8 million to fund the recommendations from the long-term care report. That's going to improve wound care, service coordination, and staffing. (Applause) I would be embarrassed to clap at that.

Does this minister really believe that \$2.8 million in funding is going to actually fulfill the dozens of recommendations made in the long-term care report?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for drawing attention to this important work that was conducted over the Fall by an expert panel of individuals, physicians, and nurses to provide us with recommendations.

If the member refers back to that report, what she will notice is that it is a culmination of short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations. What we are investing in that the member highlighted, investments of \$2.8 million in this fiscal year, that's on top of \$2.2 million that we announced last week. That's \$5 million of new investment into technology equipment, as well as programming supports for our long-term care sector. (Applause)

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I am embarrassed as a health professional and as a politician that they would be clapping for these types of announcements, including the money for mattresses and slings in long-term care beds, which should have been in there all along.

Mr. Speaker, this morning I came from presenting at a long-term care conference in Dartmouth and I guarantee you, they have a very different opinion of how this government is doing. Nova Scotians are tired of being hopeful about a report only to having it end up on a shelf. The dementia strategy, the 2010 *Better Care Sooner* report on emergency care, the list of reports goes on and on. I understand that implementing recommendations costs money, but \$2.8 million for all those recommendations for long-term care isn't going to get someone to the toilet, isn't going to get their bathroom privileges done.

Given this government's track record with the implementation of reports, my question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: Will he commit to implementing all the recommendations of the long-term care report and will he provide sufficient funding to do so?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as I responded in my first response to this set of questions, I made it clear. Going back to the recommendations we received in January, the panel recognized the nature of the recommendations, that there are a number of short-term, within 6 to 18 months, and longer-term initiatives to be implemented.

This budget that we announced today is about this coming fiscal year and investments that we're going to be making. That does not reflect the total duration of time that even the expert panel in their recommendations suggested that the efforts would take to implement all of those recommendations.

We're here talking about the investments being made, that's \$2.8 million in today's budget, \$2.2 million that we announced just last week. It's \$5 million going towards the start of the work to implement recommendations that were made just in January.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**H&W: 811 PHYSICIAN WAIT-LIST - REQUIREMENTS**

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Two of my constituents are moving to Halifax because their family home in Mill Village has become too much for them. They're lucky to have a family doctor in Liverpool and although she has agreed to keep them as patients, the commute back and forth to their appointments is simply too much for them.

They've contacted 811, NSHA Patient/Family Feedback, NSHA media communications, and have yet to receive a clear answer as to whether or not they can join the 811 list and keep their current doctor.

My question for the minister is: Are my constituents able to join the 811 list without giving up their current doctor until they have a new one?

[4:30 p.m.]

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians can register either by calling or by going online to the 811 Need A Family Practice. Many Nova Scotians are doing that, whether they're expecting their physicians to retire coming up. I believe there are many Nova Scotians who are registered on the list with the anticipation of their physician's retirement, so I would see that possibility being there to be registered so that they know when a new physician may be available.

KIM MASLAND: I'm glad to hear that response, but I will say that the different bodies of the NSHA that they've contacted have used the word "probably" and reminded them that the list is for people without a doctor, not people looking for a different one. Nothing they've heard has given them confidence that they will be able to keep their doctor until they were matched with one closer to their new home. Everything they've heard has felt like it easily could be rescinded.

My question is: Can the minister provide peace of mind and assure me that once their name is on the 811 list, it will remain there until they are matched with a new doctor in Halifax?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, the work that goes on to verify the process - people do get matched with physicians, and then the physicians who are taking on new patients are being cross-referenced to verify that people have been attached through that.

In addition, there are efforts to contact people who are waiting on a list to find out if they have been attached to verify before individuals are being taking off of that list. They're either hearing directly from the physicians or primary care providers who they've been attached or they're following up with the residents themselves who are waiting on the list to verify when they come off of that list.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

**LAE - CCA PRGM.: GRANT PRGM. - RESTORE**

EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, when the government cancelled the grant program for those taking the Continuing Care Assistant course at NSCC, the number of people registered for the course plummeted. This drop in registration has had a devastating effect on the ability of both private and public continuing care providers to hire and supply enough staff. In a long-term care report released in January, it was recommended that the grant program be reinstated.

My question to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education is: Will he commit to restoring the grant program for the CCA program?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: I'm not aware of the cancellation of that program. I'm more than willing to look into it, if the member would like to provide information. I can do that.

EDDIE ORRELL: Last year, only 85 per cent of the NSCC seats for the CCA program were filled; that's only 307 students. When the grant program was in place, there were between 800 and 1,100 students being trained each year. That was the last time we did not have a CCA hiring issue. In other professions with recruiting and retention difficulties, the government has stepped in and provided programs to help encourage students.

Can the minister tell Nova Scotians why the NSCC received grant funding from the government to recruit early childhood educators but there's been no such funding to fill the seats for the CCA program?

LABI KOUSOULIS: Again, as I mentioned earlier, I'm not aware of any cuts to any funding for that.

I can say to the member that the Early Childhood funding was put in place because our government brought in a pre-Primary program, which is providing program care to all four-year-olds in the province. That created a lot of . . . (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

LABI KOUSOULIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was mentioning, we provided the funding for education because our Department of Education and Early Childhood Development brought in a Pre-Primary Program, which is providing . . . (Interruption)



THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Northside-Westmount will come to order.

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

LABI KOUSOULIS: Maybe I can get my point across without being interrupted this time.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the reason that we brought in program funding for the NSCC was because we brought in . . . (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. If I have to call order one more time for the interruptions and to acknowledge the disrespect for this Chair, people will start to leave.

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

LABI KOUSOULIS: So, for a fourth time, our government brought in a pre-Primary program. We needed to hire many professionals for that. What we did is we worked with our partners at the Nova Scotia Community College and we funded those seats.

I'm very proud of this government to have that program in place and we're providing the pre-Primary program to all kids in the near future. It's great that we're well on the way with this program.

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

### **H&W - N. S. CAREGIVERS: PROGRAM SUPPORTS - EXPAND**

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I have all of the information that the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education needs with respect to that grant program. I'd be happy to provide it.

The Caregiver Allowance is one of the programs that the Premier and ministers tend to boast about - and we are happy about that, but I see no new increase in funds for this program despite the fact that there are more and more people waiting for long-term care beds and the cost of care is going up.

The threshold for this program remains such that in my opinion there are too many people who are unable to take advantage of it. Outside of an emergency, the majority of government programs to help seniors and caregivers have unrealistically low-income levels.

My question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness: Can he explain why only those with severe cognitive limitations are eligible for programs like the Adult Day Program while those with physical limitations are left without support?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: This is a program that we expanded last year. Part of the process that we took for the expansion last year was actually looking at and expanding the access based upon the needs assessment of the residents of Nova Scotia. We did expand based upon that criteria - the medical criteria of the assessment for these individuals so that more Nova Scotians last year would be made available for this particular program.

BARBARA ADAMS: There are smaller organizations like Caregivers Nova Scotia who are trying to compensate for the lack of planning on this government's part, and they are the backbone in supporting our crumbling health care system. Caregivers Nova Scotia helps Nova Scotians navigate the resources and provide education that helps this government's Home First philosophy.

Unfortunately, with a small budget - and I don't see any increase in this budget - they are underfunded and over-utilized to the point where they only have one coordinator for all of Cape Breton, the South Shore, the northern areas, and only 1.5 in metro. Many caregivers are forced to leave their jobs to care for loved ones and they need help from our government.

With the government's Home First philosophy and relief that caregivers provide to the health care system - they need extra help. Can the minister tell me what other resources does this budget offer to the caregivers in Nova Scotia beyond what was already announced over the past five years?

RANDY DELOREY: We invest in supporting Nova Scotians who choose to stay in their homes longer. That includes the investments we've been making - those investments that we've made in previous years carried forward as costs of these investments into the current year and into future years, Mr. Speaker, as we continue to deliver these programs.

Those include significant investments to support our home care providers like I just mentioned at the first response. The expansion of eligibility for the caregiver benefit, but also the supports for home care programs and supports of home care programs as well as the medical needs.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

#### **FTB - CHILD CARE: GENDER ANALYSIS - TABLE**

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

In her budget address, the minister stated that we are expanding child care services, investing \$67 million this year, but in fact there hasn't been an expansion at all. The government has invested no new money, when what we need is a universal system of affordable child care in order to achieve an equitable and expanded workforce.

Can the minister confirm that this is, in fact, a status quo budget with no new money for licensed child care?

HON. KAREN CASEY: As far as the comment about this being a status quo budget, I think the member should actually look at the increase - a 6.2 per cent increase in health care alone; 2.3 per cent in education alone. Mr. Speaker, that's not status quo.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: So, no new funding despite the fact that it's called "new" for licensed child care.

Earlier this month, I asked the minister about women's economic security and at that time she indicated that her department did gender-based analysis of their work; however, when we requested through Freedom of Information the gender-based analyses of budgets, legislations, programs, or policies, we received a letter - and I will table it - saying that no such records exist.

Will the minister table the gender-based analysis that supports this status quo budget for licensed child care?

KAREN CASEY: I believe the question about gender-based was based on a comment that was made by the federal government about their using gender-based budgeting for their process.

I indicated that we were not using gender-based budgets, but that we were certainly looking through a gender-based lens on every program and every policy that we implement.

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

### **H&W - PHARMACISTS: EXPANDED ROLE - COMMENT**

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, there are many seniors in Nova Scotia who don't have access to a family doctor, so getting a prescription is already difficult enough. Pharmacists have the legal right to prescribe and refill certain medications, which could allow seniors to access these medications they need when they don't have a family doctor.

However, the support has not been provided through MSI to compensate pharmacists for this, which doesn't seem fair when they compensate physicians. It's unreasonable to ask a pharmacist to donate his time, or her time, to take on more responsibility without compensating them for it.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: Has the government considered enhancing the role of pharmacists, to fill the gaps left by a family doctor shortage in this area, by providing them with MSI billing codes in order to allow them to be compensated for providing this needed service?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for bringing to the floor an acknowledgement of the pharmacists in this province that operate in, I think, approximately 305 community pharmacies across the province, providing care directly to Nova Scotians.

We've seen in recent years the expansion of their scope of practice but, in particular, I want to acknowledge how great our relationship has been with PANS and the pharmacies bringing new programs like the Bloom Program, providing support around mental health conditions; work with our addictions treatments and the delivery of Naloxone out to individuals in communities to help address opioid overdose. We have a great working relationship. We continue to work with the concerns that they bring forward to us.

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, for far too long the focus has been on acute care and crisis management. The doctor shortage is widespread in this province and is happening everywhere. We need to be creative and innovative to our response to ensure that Nova Scotians of all ages receive the care that they deserve.

There are prehabilitation specialists, social workers, Community Services staff, continuing care staff, and I notice that some of those areas have funding cuts in this budget. Can the Minister of Health and Wellness tell me how many professions in this budget are getting an increase in the number of health care professionals to provide social work care, to provide physiotherapy care, in-the-home care and in health care? We can't look at this budget and figure out whether staffing has gone up or down.

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as the member would know, since the last number of years, we've been investing and expanding access, particularly in the primary health care space, as part of our investments in collaborative practices in communities across the province. That's where you're seeing a number of those allied health professionals including nurses, including the social workers, coming and having those opportunities to provide care.

In this budget, we invested an additional \$10 million to continue the expansion and introduce new collaborative care practices across the province. That's on top of the investments. In the past, since March of 2017, we've hired 130 health care professionals to support these collaborative teams. This \$10 million will go to hire even more.

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

**ENVIRON. - CLIMATE CHANGE: BUDGET AMOUNT - APPROPRIATE**

BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, the United Nations, World Health Organization, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change - they've all stated that the largest threat to the global economy is climate change. The World Economic Forum identified climate change as a dominant threat to health in 2019.

My question through you to the Minister of Environment is: Does she really feel that .018 per cent of an overall budget shows commitment of this government towards addressing climate change?

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable member for the question. I absolutely believe that this budget is exactly targeting climate change through many initiatives within the department.

I also want to thank Nova Scotians for showing leadership in how we are the leaders in climate change mitigation. We have very aggressive targets that are going to bring us to 45 - 50 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2030. That's a leader across this country.

[4:45 p.m.]

BRAD JOHNS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, and I want to point out that there is a difference between mitigation of climate change and addressing the issues on a proactive, go-forward way. I don't think this budget is addressing at all on a go-forward proactive way.

In fact, I want to ask again. I look at this budget and I see just over \$2 million towards climate change of an \$11 billion budget. I'm asking the minister again if she feels that \$2 million of an \$11 billion budget is enough to address climate change?

MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable member for the question. I'm afraid he wasn't listening earlier when the Premier actually spoke to the same issue, highlighting \$23 million in this budget for climate-change initiatives. This House is . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order please. Time allotted for Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers has expired.

**GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government business for today. I move the House do now rise to sit again tomorrow, Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

With tomorrow being Opposition Day. I ask the House Leader for the Official Opposition to call tomorrow's agenda.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable House Leader for the Official Opposition.

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, after Daily Routine and Question Period, we will be calling Bill Nos. 107 and 117 for Second Reading.

I move we now rise to meet again tomorrow at 1:00 p.m.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is that the House rise to meet again on Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> 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 stand adjourned.

[The House rose at 4:47 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 853**

By: Karla MacFarlane (Pictou West)

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

Whereas there have been many accounts of patients sent home from emergency departments before they were examined by a physician; and

Whereas recently the Nova Scotia Health Authority has notified nurses that, due to staffing shortages, nurses will not be approved for vacation leave; and

Whereas the continuing decline of the health care system has not been met with appropriate action by the Liberal government;

Therefore be it resolved that the government acknowledge that the Nova Scotia health care system is in crisis.

**RESOLUTION NO. 854**

By: Hugh MacKay (Chester-St. Margaret's)

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

Whereas Kate MacKinnon was a member of Team Nova Scotia at the 2019 Canada Games held in Red Deer Alberta; and

Whereas Kate MacKinnon placed 4<sup>th</sup> of 30 competitors in the Snowboard Cross Event and 6<sup>th</sup> of 27 competitors in the Parallel Giant Slalom Event; and

Whereas Kate is currently ranked No. 6 overall as a junior girls snowboard athlete in Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kate on her accomplishments and encourage her in her goal of representing Nova Scotia and Canada next year at the World Junior Snowboard Competition to be held in Slovenia in Spring 2020.

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**RESOLUTION NO. 855**

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas Louise Knowles is a resident of Timberlea and well-known youth leader in the Canadian Baptist Ministries, whose passion for social justice and desire to engage youth in faith that makes a difference; and

Whereas Louise has just been appointed to a newly created position of Coordinator, Youth Engagement and SENT Programs, effective March 11, 2019, to expand the Canadian Baptist Ministries connection to youth pastors and leaders across Canada; and

Whereas Louise brings first-hand experience, leadership, and wisdom of the church along with the kindness and compassion of a pastor;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in wishing Louise success in here new role.