



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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

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

Second Session

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2019

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 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. We'll now begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

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

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, yesterday during Question Period I had some questions and I said to the House that I would bring the information.

The first one is the member for Pictou Centre, in terms of the breakdown of Graduate to Opportunities by region. It is broken down by the jobs requested, approved, filled, active currently, and active two-plus years. It is broken down in detail with about 15 communities across the province. I would like to table that, and I have provided a copy of this to the member.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to advise that I provided the member for Pictou West, who asked questions about our sexual violence data, with the name of one of the co-chairs of the committee, and she thanked me for it. She said she will be meeting with them to find out more about the great work the committee is doing.

THE SPEAKER: The information is tabled.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, may I have permission to make an introduction?

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, we have a few special guests here in the East Gallery. In recognition of Adult Learners' Week, we have four adult learners - actually four, plus more - who all spoke at the Literacy Nova Scotia celebration on Monday.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House at the end of the list: Krystal Jackson, Paul Whynacht, Shahani Hashim, Malone Sinclair, Denise Morley, and Krista Congdon, Halifax Community Learning Network; Marie David and Elaine Frampton, LNS; and Mary Goya, Labour and Advanced Education.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask them to all stand - which they all are - and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 939

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

Whereas this week, April 1st to April 6th, is Adult Learners' Week, and Nova Scotians are marking the outstanding achievements of adult learners at events throughout the province; and

Whereas literacy skills give Nova Scotians confidence and opens doors for the rewarding education and employment opportunities our province has to offer; and

Whereas the Government of Nova Scotia is committed to helping Nova Scotians reach their full potential by supporting the development and delivery of adult literacy programs;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize and celebrate Adult Learners' Week in the Province of Nova Scotia, and encourage all Nova Scotians to celebrate the value of literacy as the foundation of lifelong learning.

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 Immigration.

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

LENA METLEGE DIAB: With us in the East Gallery today, I have two representatives from the YMCA YREACH Program. Before I introduce them, I want to let the House, and colleagues and Nova Scotians, know this YMCA YREACH Program provides information, orientation, and settlement integration support to immigrants, refugees, and families who are new to communities outside HRM.

They have staff in multiple smaller centres across the province including over 20 different language instruction sites and nine in-person local settlement and integration support sites. We have nine YREACH offices throughout Nova Scotia including Amherst, Bridgewater, Fundy, Kentville, New Glasgow, Port Hawkesbury, Sydney, Truro, and Yarmouth.

I would now ask both Jennifer Thornhill, Senior Manager, Immigrant Services, YMCA of Greater Halifax-Dartmouth, and Inhae Park, Provincial Coordinator of the YREACH Program, to please rise and receive the very warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Immigration.

RESOLUTION NO. 940

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

Whereas immigrant settlement service providers play a critical role in helping people integrate and adapt to life in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the YMCA's YREACH staff are a key settlement partner as they work across the province, from Yarmouth to Sydney, to assist and welcome newcomers; and

Whereas our settlement partners across the province do an outstanding job in supporting and welcoming people to our province, evidenced by our current 71 per cent retention rate, the highest in the region;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing our hard-working settlement providers who play a key role in helping newcomers put down permanent roots.

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 Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 941

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

Whereas sexual violence continues to be a serious health, social, and public safety issue that affects many Nova Scotians and people all over the world, particularly women; and

Whereas Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April is an opportunity to raise awareness and continue conversations about rape culture, misogyny, missing and murdered

Indigenous women, and the many issues around sexual violence that need to be addressed in our society; and

Whereas talking about sexual violence isn't easy and we ought to continue these conversations, not just during this month but all year, so we can work together to put focus on prevention, education, and supporting survivors;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in encouraging Nova Scotians to take the free online training, Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence: A Nova Scotia Resource, which can be found at breakthesilencens.ca.

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.

[1:15 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Immigration.

RESOLUTION NO. 942

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

Whereas today, April 4th, marks Refugee Rights Day in Canada; and

Whereas this day highlights advances made in the protection of refugee rights in Canada and possible threats to those rights; and

Whereas Nova Scotia throughout its history has welcomed numerous immigrants and refugees to its shores and offered them a place where they could put down roots, raise their families, start businesses, and contribute to our economy and the rich diversity that benefits all Nova Scotians;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing Refugee Rights Day and continuing to support the communities and individuals who welcome refugees to 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.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 136 - Entitled an Act Respecting Certain Financial Measures. (Hon. Karen Casey)

Bill No. 137 - Entitled an Act Respecting a Lyme Disease Strategy for Nova Scotia. (Tim Houston)

Bill No. 138 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 214 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Human Rights Act, to Prohibit Discrimination on Account of Social Disadvantage. (Claudia Chender)

Bill No. 139 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 217 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Income Tax Act. (Hon. Karen Casey)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

100 WOMEN WHO CARE: BRIGHT SMILES PROJ. - THANKS

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, recently the 100 Women Who Care Award funded Bright Smiles, a project for dental and mental health in Pictou County. Cecilia McRae

presented on behalf of the Pictou County Mental Illness Family Support Association under whose auspices the project functions.

Since the inception in 2017, this program has helped 47 people at an average cost of \$2,000. Many who received this service have returned to say their lives have been changed and their new life is awesome.

To the 100 Women Who Care and the Pictou County Mental Illness Family Support Association, I tip my hat and thank you for all you do. Working together for those in need is the gift that keeps on giving.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw members' attention to the gallery opposite where we're joined by Dr. Shane Theunissen, a professor in Child and Youth Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University and Eamonn Doorly, boatbuilder at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. I'd like everyone to join me in offering them the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South

**BUILDING BOATS, CHANGING LIVES:
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING - THANKS**

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Shane Theunissen, Professor in Child and Youth Studies at Mount Saint Vincent, and his colleagues: Dr. Christine McLean, also at Mount Saint Vincent University; and Eamonn Doorly, boat builder at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. This is for their work in developing and furthering the Building Boats, Changing Lives program, which seeks to help youth overcome socio-economic disparities by way of traditional Maritime skill.

A version of this workshop was brought to the Grade 5 and 6 students of Pictou Landing First Nation School. They worked together to measure, cut, bend and nail wood to build rowboats, which they launched at a community ceremony. In the process the youth learn to problem solve, communicate and work together in teams. Their confidence grew as they took initiative and responsibility for their boats.

Please join me in thanking Dr. Theunissen, Dr. McLean and Eamonn Doorly for bringing this unique opportunity for experiential education to young people in Nova Scotia.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

HENNIGAR, GLORIA: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, recently a long-time Bedford resident was laid to rest. Gloria Hennigar was 94 years old. She was devoted to her family and her church, Bedford United Church. She taught the same group of children in Sunday school for five years. She followed their progress long after she no longer taught them, sending them cards and letters.

As one of her formal pupils noted, on days when they had messed up mildly or were feeling down, pulling out the cards and notes that Mrs. Hennigar had written them made them feel so much better, that someone thought so highly of them.

Mrs. Hennigar believed in the power of prayer. She had a notebook and if she heard someone was dealing with a health problem or going through a challenging time, their name went in her notebook and she prayed for them daily. I'll bet there are a lot of people who didn't know Gloria Hennigar was in their corner, quietly sending prayers on their behalf.

Condolences go out to her son Bruce, daughter Ginny Barrett, sister Rosslyn McBride and their families. Gloria Hennigar was one of a kind.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

PARRSBORO SCOUTS: FOUNDERS CELEBRATIONS - BEST WISHES

TORY RUSHTON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the 1st Parrsboro Scouts on their Scout-Guide Week, which was celebrated February 17th to 23rd.

During this week they celebrated the birthdays of both Scout founder Lord Robert Baden-Powell and his wife Lady Baden-Powell. I was pleased to attend the Beaver Buggy and the Kub Car races in Parrsboro this year.

This celebration gives the opportunity for the public to recognize the limitless potential of Canadian youth and the work that scouting does to help build a better world for our nation's future leaders. Scouting and guiding instills values of leadership, honor and team work through the many exciting outdoor programs it provides for children and youth nationwide.

Please join me in wishing both Scouts Canada and Girl Guides of Canada continued success and a strong and vibrant future.

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

MARTIN, HANNAH: ALTON GAS STORAGE PLAN - OPPOSITION

LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to offer my solidarity with Hannah Martin of Millbrook First Nation. She made national headlines yesterday when she stood in the House of Commons as a Daughter of the Vote and demanded answers from the Prime Minister on the Alton Gas Storage Project.

For years we've talked about Alton Gas right here in this Chamber, unable to penetrate the ears of government or get any answers from the minister or the Premier. No support for Millbrook or, as Ms. Martin stated, the grandmothers who are on the Shubenacadie River, living according to traditional ways of life as Mi'kmaq people.

Mr. Speaker, I stand in solidarity with Hannah Martin and all of Millbrook First Nation and Sipekne'katik in opposition to this storage plan. I admire and commend Hannah for taking her voice to the national level, speaking to her community in the House of Commons, since it seems the provincial government just doesn't want to hear it. For all the water protectors who've taken a stand, this is a big moment. We can only hope that what follows is a success of a similar magnitude.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

KOHLTECH: BEST MANAGED CO. - CONGRATS.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, in its 25th year, Canada's Best Managed Companies is one of the country's leading business awards programs, recognizing Canadian-owned and managed companies for innovative world-class business practices. Kohltech Windows and Entrance Systems, located in Debert, Colchester North, was recognized for overall business performance and sustained growth with this prestigious award.

Kohltech's growth and success continue to be driven by the strength of the service the company has always provided and their desire to make doing business as easy as possible in an ever-increasing complex industry. Customer loyalty and word of mouth have propelled the company from a top regional brand to a top national brand.

The 2018 Best Managed Companies share commonalities that include a clear strategy and vision, investment in capability, and commitment to talent. These well-run companies are important role-models that make Canadian businesses and the economic health of both Canada, and in particular Nova Scotia, better.

Our congratulations and thanks to the owners, administration, and workers who serve as an excellent example of the success Nova Scotia businesses can achieve.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

PORTER, TAMARA: AMHERST WINTER CARNIVAL - THANKS

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize Tamara Porter of the Amherst Recreation Department for helping to organize the 5th successful Amherst Winter Carnival.

The Amherst Winter Carnival has many events such as the Valentines Run, the Athletic Achievers Ceremony, art exhibits, chili cook-off, as well as many other active activities for all ages.

Events like this help bring the community together, especially during the cold winter months, to enjoy some fun and some great community spirit.

I would like to thank Tamara for putting her hard work in to helping make this happen for a fifth year, and I look forward to another successful year.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction?

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

SUSAN LEBLANC: Thank you. I'd like to bring the members' attention to the gallery opposite where we have a number of guests here today who are allies and advocates and members of the disabilities' community.

Today we have Dr. Paula Hutchinson, a member of the Community Homes Action Group; Dawn LeBlanc, a member of the Community Homes Action Group; former Member of Parliament Wendy Lill who is the chair of the Community Homes Action Group; Barb Horner, a member of the Disability Rights Coalition; Claire McNeil from the Disability Rights Coalition; Vince Calderhead, a prominent human rights lawyer in Halifax working at Pink Larkin; and Professor Sheila Wildeman.

Welcome to the House and thank you for all the work that you are doing.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**COM. HOUSING FOR PPL. WITH DISABILITIES:
OPTIONS - DISAPPOINTING**

SUSAN LEBLANC: This morning we heard from many members of the disabilities community on the need for urgent action in creating community housing options for people with disabilities.

Year after year, budget after budget, this government has failed to address some of the gaping issues facing the most vulnerable people in our province. Groups like People First, Community Homes Action Group, No More Warehousing, the Disability Rights Coalition, and so many others have been calling on new funding for community homes, and time and again they've been let down.

When this most recent budget was tabled, I was deeply disappointed to see that no new money has been allocated to getting people out of institutions and into community homes or fixing the homes that currently exist. All people deserve the dignity of being able to live full lives in the community of their choice.

I would like to renew and support the calls by the members of the disabilities' community and their allies, implore the government to recommit to its road map obligations, and ensure that the 75 community homes that are needed are complete and open by 2023.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

BIG BROS./SISTERS: BOWL FOR KIDS SAKE - CONGRATS.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Annapolis Valley on their two successful Bowl for Kids Sake events and recognize them for their continued dedication to youth.

For over 100 years, Big Brothers Big Sisters has been matching volunteers and youth in mentoring relationships, which have proven to have a positive impact on young people's lives.

Their annual Bowl for Kids Sake event took place in Greenwood on March 29th and in Windsor on March 30th and great evenings were had by all participants, including some "bigs and littles."

The outpouring of community support was incredible, and while donations continued to come in, it was announced that the unofficial total raised was \$10,500, surpassing their goal.

I request that the House join me in congratulating Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Annapolis Valley on their successful Bowl for Kids Sake events, and recognize them for their continued dedication to providing mentorship opportunities for Annapolis Valley youth.

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

COM. RADIO: MACEACHERN BROADCASTING, SALE - THANKS

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, March 31st marked the end of an era in the quad counties of Nova Scotia.

After 40 years, Bob and Brenda MacEachern of Port Hastings, strong supporters of neighboring communities, sold MacEachern Broadcasting to Acadia Broadcasting and started a new chapter in their lives.

The MacEachern's have devoted their lives to building a community-based radio station in Port Hawkesbury. They have met the programming and information needs of the community by giving the community a voice in setting the direction of the station.

This past Friday, on 101.5 The Hawk, Bob gave a tearful goodbye to the listening audience, but also assured them that he expected the new owners to share a similar community-minded vision for the station.

[1:30 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members here today to join me in sending our appreciation to Bob and Brenda for their countless hours of volunteerism in the quad counties and to thank them for the legacy they are leaving as they embark on their new journey.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

COM. GRPS.: REFUGEE SETTLEMENT SUPPORT - THANKS

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge that this is World Refugee Day. I want to recognize the contributions of countless refugees who are now residents of Nova Scotia. Refugees are immigrants too, who we speak so often of needing to attract and retain.

I want to recognize the contributions of dozens of groups across the province, including Rainbow Refugees, which has many members in my constituency and has welcomed nine new LGBTQ+ newcomers to Nova Scotia just in the last year, thanks to countless volunteer supporters and donors, and Syria-Antigonish Families Embrace, or

SAFE, which has helped to settle five families in Antigonish since 2016, with current applications pending for three additional families, and many more.

I also want to recognize the deep pain of many Nova Scotians who arrived as refugees only to find it impossible or exceedingly difficult and lengthy to bring family members who are still in precarious situations to join them in this province.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

ISLAND CONSOL. SCH.: PREP., BALANCING ROCK TRAIL - THANKS

GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, our volunteers play a crucial role in our communities, and we all greatly benefit from the hours of work they put in. It is particularly nice to see a greater number of young people volunteering in our communities. The students from Islands Consolidated School decided to help get the Balancing Rock trail ready for the many visitors. The rock, a 20-foot basalt sitting on a ledge overlooking the Bay of St. Mary, attracts many visitors wanting to hike the trail and photograph the rock.

After a winter of wind and storms, the trail usually has to be spruced up to be ready for our guests. To get it ready, the students first cleaned up the parking lot area and removed the broken branches off the trail. They also cut the ones that had grown over the trail routes. They repaired the steps and removed those that would have to be replaced. The students even rebuilt a culvert and reattached a couple of interpretive signs on the trail.

Because of the students' efforts, our visitors' hike to Balancing Rock will be so much nicer and safer. I'd like to thank the students from Islands Consolidated School for all their volunteer work.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

LUCY'S CAFÉ & EATERY: NEW ENTERPRISE - CONGRATS.

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Jane Aitkens, the owner of Lucy's Café and Eatery. Jane recently opened up her café on the Waverley Road in Dartmouth East, and it's a great place to kick back with a coffee or enjoy a delicious waffle. They have a wonderful menu. Jane and her staff focus on environmental sustainability and building community, and they encourage you to stay and have a seat and a chat. What a wonderful approach.

Mr. Speaker, entrepreneurs are the foundation of our economy. I highly recommend that the members of this House stop in and support this great local business the next time they're in Dartmouth East.

I commend Jane Aitkens on her hard work to get this business up and going, and I wish her the best of luck in the months to come.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

**BULLY-FREE WORKPLACE:
SAFETY FOR WOMEN IN THE CHAMBER - ADVANCE**

TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I know this Premier isn't the biggest fan of unions, so back in 2010, when they were - as the Premier puts it - just young guys with lots of enthusiasm, they may have missed what women were doing for workers of this province.

On September 8, 2010, Bully-Free Workplaces was adopted by the NSGEU under Joan Jessome. Joan worked hard to get that policy implemented, and thanks to her, today's government employees are promised a safe workplace. Should there be instances of bullying, aggression, or emotional or physical violence, they have a restorative method of dealing with it. They, at least, recognize that this is a problem many women face in the workforce across this province.

I wish we could say that in this Chamber we were leading by example. Unfortunately, that simply isn't the case. What kind of message does it send to the working women of Nova Scotia that the Premier and this government will not only permit bullying behaviour toward women in the workplace but diminish and dismiss complaints so casually?

Mr. Speaker, this Chamber should be a model workplace in Nova Scotia. Instead, it serves as a demonstrable relic of what needs overcoming.

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

LEGION BRANCH NO. 58: 80th ANNIV. - CONGRATS.

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the upcoming 80th anniversary of Courcelette Branch 58 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Sheet Harbour. This May 24th, Branch 58 will celebrate receiving their charter on May 22, 1938. The Courcelette Legion has been supporting Sheet Harbour community and ex-servicemen and women for eight decades through the Poppy Fund, hosting community events, and offering support and engagement.

This May 24, 2019, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., the Courcelette Branch No. 58 of the Royal Canadian Legion will be hosting a meet and greet at the Legion hall in Sheet Harbour with displays of photos, memorabilia, and music. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Courcelette Branch No. 58 on its 80th anniversary and thank them sincerely

for their years of service to previous service members, their families, and their communities.

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

FIREFIGHTERS: HEALING BROKENNESS - THANKS

LARRY HARRISON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Saturday, I attended the service of firefighter Skyler Blackie and it was a very impressive service as my colleagues from the other Parties will attest. A broken set of circumstances resulted in brokenness within Skyler's family and the community of firefighters. His death was certainly a tragedy that affected many people.

I was most impressed by the community of firefighters, some of whom travelled from Boston and Ontario. This community came together to bring healing to Skyler's family and to each other. At worship on Sunday morning, I thought of the broken areas we have in this province and the impact we would have if we joined to bring healing to our province. That truth was getting away from me for a bit. I want to thank the fire service for bringing me back to this important truth. Together we can bring healing to this province and to each other.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

BOYS WILL BE BOYS?: RAISING STANDARDS - EDUC.

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, in today's awakening climate, few axioms have been as challenged more thoroughly than "boys will be boys." But it seems to me that this change in culture has yet to reach the government benches. My son is four years old. If another parent or teacher reported to me that he'd been developing a pattern of behaviour of verbal profanity and aggression or physical confrontation toward other students, my response would not be to diminish these reports by simply chalking it up to his passion or exuberance.

There is no room in this world, in the world that my son is growing up in, for unaccountable machismo or toxic masculinity. I will hold my son to a higher standard, but it doesn't seem that the Premier shares my philosophy within his Cabinet. What does it say when mothers are willing to teach their sons to be accountable when the Premier of this province won't do the same thing with his own full-grown ministers? When the Premier says in response to complainants, we were young guys, he makes it clear that he just isn't getting it. I've encouraged the Premier to do a quick Google search of "boys will be boys" and he'll find several iterations of a popular meme, which reminds us boys will be boys, until we teach them to be more.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

COSY SNACK BAR: DINER-STYLE TWIST - APPLAUD

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Mr. Speaker, the restaurant business can be tough but, with hard work, good food, and friendly service, a restaurant can become a neighbourhood staple. That's precisely the case with Cosy Snack Bar, one of the oldest diners in Halifax. Cosy Snack Bar is known for its welcoming atmosphere, big portions, and affordable prices. In their corner of West End Halifax, they are especially known for exceptional, all-day breakfasts. By blending diner mainstays with delicious Lebanese fare, Cosy Snack Bar owners Tony and Jamilee Maskine of Armdale offer a delicious take on classic, diner-style food.

Tony and Jamilee took over Cosy's in 1986, tweaking the name and bringing their own unique charm to the place. Indeed, Habs fans have noted that Cosy Snack Bar appears to be the most Canadian-friendly restaurant in Halifax. With over three decades at the helm, we can certainly say that Cosy Snack Bar is a familiar staple for Haligonians. I ask all members to join me in applauding Tony and Jamilee Maskine.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

GOLDEN GIRLS: HANDCRAFTED FUNDRAISING - THANKS

EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Golden Girls, a group of senior crafters from Bras d'Or, Alder Point, and Florence. This group meets once a week to have a social gathering while creating a variety of crafts, which are often sold at local fairs and markets. The proceeds are then used to help local families in need and, this year, the Golden Girls helped Talbot House have a better Christmas for its residents. I'd like to take this opportunity to salute these Golden Girls who join together to help the community through their communal efforts.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

HARASSMENT POLICY: BEYOND PHYS. CONTACT - ACKNOWLEDGE

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, our harassment policy has been in place for less than three years but that doesn't excuse ignorance of it. What I heard from the Premier yesterday indicates to me he hasn't read it in full or has forgotten some of the definitions. Our policy defines harassment as any behaviour, act, conduct, or comment, whether occurring on a one-time or a recurring basis. Behaviour, act, conduct, comment.

Mr. Speaker, when pleading ignorance to allegations made about one of his ministers, the Premier said that at no time had anyone raised with him the issue of a member of his caucus physically touching any member of the Opposition.

This diminishment of the complainants' experiences speaks largely not just to the Premier's approach but to the philosophy. He claims, despite reports to the contrary, that he wasn't made aware of any of his members physically touching others. Does that mean he was aware of other allegations, Mr. Speaker? Perhaps aggressive behaviour, profane comments?

Our harassment policy goes well beyond physical confrontation and yet based on these comments, it seems the Premier thinks that all behaviour by his members - short of physical contact - is justified, defensible, and acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, the policy states clearly, as do we on this side of the House, it is not.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

INTL. DARK SKY WK. - ADVERSE EFFECTS OF LIGHT POLLUTION

HON IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize International Dark Sky Week. This year it is being held from March 31st to April 7th. This week was created in 2003 by high school teacher Jennifer Barlow and is held each year around Global Astronomy Day. The week draws attention to the problems associated with light pollution and the importance of preserving dark skies.

We are only beginning to understand the breadth of negative consequences. A growing body of research suggests the loss of natural nighttime is causing serious harm to human health and the environment. For nocturnal animals, in particular, the introduction of artificial light at night could be the most devastating change humans have made to their environment.

Light pollution also has deleterious effects on other organisms, such as migrating birds, sea turtle hatching, and insects. There are about 14 dark-sky preserves in Canada, including Kejimikujik National Park right here in Nova Scotia.

I would encourage all members of the House to learn more about light pollution during this important week of recognition.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

SMITH, ALICIA: LIFE-SAVING ACTIONS - CONGRATS.

JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, life is a precious gift we should never take for granted. That's how Ron Dill feels as he is recovering in hospital after his heart stopped in the parking lot of the New Minas Tim Hortons. Had it not been for the brave actions of 21-year-old Alicia Smith, his doctors fear he would not be alive today.

On March 6, 2019, Alicia heard a commotion in the parking lot and sprang into action. The CPR training she had acquired as a cadet kicked in and she was able to get Mr. Dill to take one breath. She continued her efforts until paramedics arrived and said Miss Smith's actions gave Dill a fighting chance.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my fellow members to join me in congratulating Alicia on maintaining a cool head and her brave actions, which saved this man's life.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY: CULTURE CHANGE - EFFECT

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, sociologist R.W. Connell first articulated the concept of hegemonic masculinity, which has been influential in psychiatry and psychology as well. Hegemonic masculinity is the origin of the term toxic masculinity, which entered my world view as a very helpful concept, through social media during the MeToo movement.

If one was looking for a case study into the toxic aspects of hegemonic masculinity, they need look no further than this very Chamber. Mr. Speaker, the Premier's comments yesterday that as young guys, his members' enthusiasm and exuberance were simply par for the course, contributes to the cycle that perpetuates toxic hegemonic masculinity. By normalizing that behaviour and then dismissing women who have come forward with their experiences, the Premier contributes to a culture that he frequently claims to be fighting against.

This Premier owes the women of this House, and the women who came forward yesterday, an apology. He needs to show leadership to change the culture that he has allowed to continue within this Chamber, within his Cabinet, and within his Party. He needs to commit today to taking action so that this Legislature can be a respectful place of work, unencumbered by an outdated hypermasculine attitude.

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

FAIRVIEW UNITED RES. CTR.: COMBATting ISOLATION - THANKS

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I am continually inspired by individuals and organizations that seek to improve the lives of other community members. The Fairview United Family Resource Centre is one such organization. Every month the resource centre hosts a free community dinner where youth, adults, and seniors share a meal, meet other community members and become informed about other programs available at the centre.

From an initial group of eight to now 40 to 50 attendees a month, the monthly meal has grown significantly in this past year. Several of the adults attending are residents of the various senior complexes in the community and they welcome the opportunity to get out of their apartments and meet other folks.

Of course, volunteers are essential to making the event an ongoing success. The centre is always looking for more volunteers and businesses to sponsor any donations.

[1:45 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of this House to join me in thanking the Fairview United Family Resource Centre for its commitment to tackling senior isolation and food insecurity.

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

PORT MORIEN VOLUN. FIRE DEPT.: 75th ANNIV. - CONGRATS.

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the Port Morien Volunteer Fire Department on celebrating its 75th anniversary.

Port Morien is one of the oldest communities in Eastern Canada. It is a small fishing community of approximately 700 people, and the fire department is a vital part of the Port Morien culture. The Port Morien Volunteer Fire Department is very fortunate to have so many active volunteers who make this fire department a very busy and active, social part of the community.

I stand here today to congratulate the Port Morien Volunteer Fire Department and all their members as they celebrate this wonderful milestone for their department and their community.

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

WOMEN WORKING IN PARLIAMENT - STRIVING FOR IMPROVEMENT

LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Daughters of the Vote congregated in the House of Commons to demonstrate the will and determination of the next generation of Canadian women. I can only imagine how those young women would feel in this Legislature with all of the bullying that has gone on and still continues.

I was very pleased to work on the Legislature's sexual assault and harassment manual with two members of other Parties of this House - both male, one from each other Party. When my dear friend Alexa McDonough was first elected, there wasn't even a

bathroom for female members. She needed to work with the only other woman in the House, a Progressive Conservative whose Party was in government. That's how we got our bathrooms today. We've come a long way since then, but clearly not far enough.

This is my message to those young women who populated Parliament yesterday, some of whom I hope will one day sit in this Chamber and many others across the country: things are not perfect yet. There's still a lot of work to be done, but many of us are working on it. After all, this place belongs to you, and as the saying goes, a woman's place is in the House of Assembly. We just want it to be a healthy, safe space for women to do their work and feel supported.

THE SPEAKER: I want to remind everybody that the time allotted for members' statements is one minute.

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

BAYRIDES: RIDERSHIP INCREASE - BEST WISHES

HUGH MACKAY: I will endeavour to recognize your comments here.

I rise to congratulate BayRides on the recent additions to their fleet and staff. In addition to a new van and access bus, BayRides has added a full-time driver and fleet manager, which reflects the growing demand for this affordable, reliable, and accessible transportation service.

Rural HRM communities around the St. Margarets Bay area are served by BayRides. Although still serving many marginalized citizens, BayRides has noticed a significant change in ridership over the last several years. They now find that 40 per cent of their riders are going to a job in metro, while another 20 per cent are catching the bus and going to jobs in the local area.

Since 2016, BayRides has experienced a 200 per cent increase in ridership, which demonstrates the vital economic and social role that this rural transportation service plays in our rural communities. Mr. Speaker, I wish BayRides all the best in their future endeavours.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

QUEENS SHINES BLUE: 2nd ANNIV., AUTISM SUPPORT - CONGRATS.

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, on April 2nd, communities around the world lit buildings in blue to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day. Well, one day wasn't enough for Debbie Wamboldt and the members of the Queens County autism support group. They work extremely hard all year long to support individuals and families living with autism,

and they called upon businesses, organizations, and individuals to help them raise awareness during April, which is Autism Awareness Month.

The 2nd annual Queens Shines Blue promotes understanding, acceptance, and inclusion. Across the community, people are decorating shopfronts, wearing blue, or holding special events for those on the autism spectrum. Liverpool Sobeys is even providing sensory-friendly shopping hours and the Astor Theatre is hosting a sensory-friendly movie night.

Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to be a part of Queens Shines Blue and applaud all who are supporting this great initiative.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

METRO FORCE WEST WHITEOUT: N.S. PROV. CHAMPS - CONGRATS.

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize some outstanding young females in my community, The Metro West Force PeeWee AA Whiteout on their recent accomplishments.

These young females have excelled at hockey - they finished first overall in the regular season and just won gold at the Nova Scotia Provincial Championships held in Pictou.

I want to congratulate Abby King, Alexis Keigan, Aselin Robertson, Ava Penny, Clare Munro, Grace Driscoll, Greyce Kennedy, Jayden Kendziora, Jorja Penny, Julia McInnis, Julia Britton, Kaitlyn Langille, Kate MacPhee, Ryan Johnson, Ryann Hendsbee, Sadaa Sullivan, Shaela Pinto, and of course, the coaches, Chris, Corey, Steve, and Keenan.

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

**THEATRE BADDECK:
MERRITT AWARD, *THE LADIES FOURSOME* - CONGRATS.**

KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place to recognize and congratulate Theatre Baddeck on receiving Theatre Nova Scotia's Merritt Award for outstanding production by a new or emerging company at the annual awards ceremony held in Halifax on March 25th.

The award went to Theatre Baddeck's production of *The Ladies Foursome*, which was staged during the summer of 2018.

Theatre Baddeck is a professional, non-profit theatre company based in Baddeck that began operations in 2014 and had its first summer season in 2015 with the historical

fiction comedy, *The Young Ladies of Baddeck Club* with co-artistic directors, Christy MacRae-Ziss and Hannah Ziss.

I ask all members of this Legislature to join me in congratulating Theatre Baddeck on their award and wishing them every success in the future.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

SHIPWRIGHT BREWING CO.: NEW VENTURE - CONGRATS.

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Adam Bower who recently opened the Town of Lunenburg's first craft brewery, the Shipwright Brewing Company.

Adam saw the town had a vacancy when it came to the craft brewing industry and knew Lunenburg would embrace one. Shipwright Brewing is located in the same building as Adam's other businesses, the Grand Banker Bar & Grill and Brigantine Inn.

The Shipwright brewery's name was inspired by a heritage plaque outside Adam's current building explaining that a shipwright, a carpenter skilled in ship construction and repair, had built the building. Wanting a name that represented Lunenburg, Adam felt Shipwright was fitting.

Although the brewery only opened in 2018, Bower is already planning to expand to a new location on Victoria Road with plans to have a production facility, large retail space, and a beer garden.

Mr. Speaker, I ask if you and all members of this House of Assembly please join me in congratulating Adam on the opening of Shipwright Brewing Company.

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

PRESERVING TRADITIONS: NEW LOCATION - THANKS

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring recognition to a local business owner, Carolyn Laybolt, of Preserving Traditions. Carolyn's store has been thriving with a new location up the road from my office on Cow Bay Road in Eastern Passage. She is now able to offer her customers a wide array of products and services; pickles, jams, soups, and take-out dinners are just a few of the menu items, but you will also find locally made knits, crafts, and soaps.

Since moving to her larger location, Carolyn has opened her door for fun, creative evening classes like making your own wooden signs and the ever-popular sea glass art.

Preserving Traditions continues to grow, and Carolyn has many aspirations for future classes, products, and services. She also travels south each year to teach business skills to impoverished communities.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in thanking Carolyn Laybolt of Preserving Traditions in Eastern Passage, for all of her hard work and dedication to our community while bringing more wonderful foods and products to our community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

RICHARD, DEBBIE: VERITAS BOOKS, VOLUN. - COMMEND

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a woman from my riding who is enriching the lives of others through her work and faith.

Debbie Richard worked as a director of faith formation for 15 years. For the last five years she has spent her time volunteering at Veritas Catholic Books & Gifts store and now acts as a chair of the Veritas Society.

The store's mission is to promote scripture through multimedia and other materials and was developed because church communities need these materials to practise their faith. Everyone who works at this store is a volunteer.

Debbie also teaches Sunday school at her church and is a gerontology volunteer at Northwood Centre.

Would this House of Assembly please thank Ms. Richard for her valuable volunteer work with the Veritas Society?

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

PICTOU CO. HELPERS: RIPPLES OF KINDNESS - TRIBUTE

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, it's been often said kindness has a ripple effect. That is a phrase that Daniel, Lynn Arsenault's son, used to say over and over again. It's a truth Daniel lived by until complications from muscular dystrophy ended his life on December 7, 2018.

His own acts of kindness may have ended but his legacy continues to be present in Pictou County. In honour of Daniel, Andrea Fuller and Lynn Arsenault created a group to meet needs in the area. It's called Pictou County Helpers and can be found on Facebook. A thousand-plus followers online have assisted numerous people during this past winter. The organization has provided firewood, groceries, and furniture to many residents in need. The group is now in the process of becoming a registered charity.

I would ask all members of this Legislature to join me in thanking Andrea Fuller and Lynn Arsenault for their generosity and valuable time in an effort to help people in need.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

BROWN, KATHIE: VOLUN. OF THE YR. - THANKS

KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, volunteers are at the heart of our communities and their selfless efforts have significant and long-lasting positive impacts on the lives of so many of their fellow citizens. We are very fortunate to have so many engaged, committed, and caring volunteers in communities across this province, including my constituency of Kings South.

One such individual is Kathie Brown of New Minas. From volunteering as a candy striper, to helping raise funds and run programs for local schools, to supporting local soccer and the Village of New Minas leadership representative, Kathie has demonstrated a tremendous commitment to making her community an even better place to live.

Kathie's extraordinary volunteer efforts were recently recognized at the 45th Provincial Volunteer Awards and I ask all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating her on that well-deserved award and thanking her for her many important contributions to her community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**ELLIOTT & PARK - PHYSICIANS:
DEDICATED TO COM. HEALTH - THANKS**

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Dr. Elliott and Dr. Park on continuing the services offered at the New Glasgow walk-in clinic. A significant number of people in Pictou County are without access to primary health care and the list is only growing with the recent retirement of two local physicians. Many county residents rely on this clinic as their only source to primary health care.

The walk-in clinic operates on part-time hours. It is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 4:30 p.m. until the clinic reaches its maximum number of patients.

I and the people of Pictou County are incredibly grateful for the hard work, dedication, and commitment that Dr. Elliott and Dr. Park have displayed in improving local health care services and for making a healthier and better community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

REDSpace: EXPORT BUS. OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate REDspace, on the company's recent win of Export Business of the Year at the 2019 Halifax Chamber of Commerce Awards.

REDSpace is a full-service digital studio in Bedford specializing in web, mobile, gaming, and video solutions. The company works closely with industry leaders including Turner, NBC, Viacom, IBM, and Nickelodeon. The company has grown rapidly to 170 staff in recent years. They've won Emmy Awards. They hire a lot of their staff from NSCC and our local universities.

President and CEO Mike Johnston and his team have created a space where young people want to work, and big companies get results. I want to congratulate everybody at REDspace on their latest award win. I can't wait to see what's next for this company.

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

MAIN-À-DIEU KIDS ZONE : INTERACTIVE PLAY - CONGRATS.

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise here today to acknowledge the *Main-à-Dieu* Coastal Discovery Centre on the grand opening of Kids Zone, a children's activity room in the centre.

The board of directors at the Coastal Discovery Centre are hoping the new children's room will attract youth and younger families to the facility and the area. Thanks to a grant from the Sydney Credit Union, a room being used for storage has been turned into a Kids Zone. This room focuses on interactive play with a dress-up area, moving wall slides for balls, and lots of toys.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to congratulate and thank the board of directors at the *Main-à-Dieu* Coastal Discovery Centre for their many hours of hard work and dedication they put in to keep this focal point in *Main-à-Dieu* a place for people to gather and enjoy.

[2:00 p.m.]

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

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is to the Premier. Do we want a delay, Mr. Speaker, and wait? We would be willing to wait.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Sorry, Mr. Speaker, the Premier is off finishing a media scrum. With the unanimous consent of the House we'd be happy to hold off Question Period, if that's okay with the Opposition.

THE SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The House will now recess for a few minutes.

[2:00 p.m. The House recessed.]

[2:02 p.m. The House reconvened.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

PREM. - YARMOUTH MLA: HOLD TO ACCOUNT - RESPOND

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. This week, we have had two former members of this House come forward with allegations of improper interactions against a member of the government.

The Premier said repeatedly that he had not received any communication on those encounters at the time. The former Interim Leader of the NDP, Maureen MacDonald, has come forward to dispute the Premier's assertions - but that is a matter, Mr. Speaker, for another time.

Putting aside the question of when the Premier found out, he now knows. My question to the Premier: Is he prepared to do the right thing and hold his minister accountable for his alleged behaviour?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the former Leader of the New Democratic Party had said that yesterday as well. What I have said, at no time did anyone tell me that a member of my team had physical contact with a member of the Legislature. We continue to hold our members to account. We continue to make sure that we provide the supports that are required, to provide them with the support to run their departments. I continue to provide good government to Nova Scotia and I look forward to continuing to do so.

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, this is an opportunity for the Premier not to create his own self-imposed entrapment on this most serious issue. There are now a number of allegations taking place. It is an indication that it is true that there have not been sufficient deterrents to this behaviour.

Shrugging off inappropriate behaviour as the prerogative of being a young guy - and I will table those quotes of the Premier - "a young guy." I have a 17-year-old. It is concerning to think that this behaviour could be normalized and acceptable by this Liberal government. I am certain, Mr. Speaker, it would not be acceptable in any other workplace in this government.

Does the Premier believe that his behaviour should be the model for this government and for the people of our province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I am very proud. The work that I have done as the Premier of this province, I have never once had to stand in this House and apologize for misleading it.

When I came into government, gender equality in the Provincial Court bench never existed. When you look at the head of the Public Service, more than half of them are women appointed within our government.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that as long as I have been the Premier of this province, the Deputy Premier of this province has been female, and I continue to listen to women across this province, making sure that their voices are being heard.

At no time did I dismiss those brought in. The allegations were brought in on Monday. We continue to look at those. What I said is what I knew, and what part of those that were reflected to me I responded to in a truthful way.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

PREM. - YARMOUTH MLA: ALLEGATIONS - TAKE ACTION

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. When asked about recent allegations made against the member for Yarmouth, the Premier said that at no time had anyone raised with him the issue of a member of his caucus physically touching any member of the Opposition, and we heard him say it again just now. There are conflicting accounts on that point.

The Nova Scotia House of Assembly Policy on the Prevention and Resolution of Harassment in the Workplace definition of harassment includes any behaviour, act, conduct, or comment directed at and offensive to another person. Will the Premier

acknowledge that the allegations made against the member for Yarmouth describe instances of harassment, as described by that policy?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As I said, the allegations that were brought to me on Monday, I responded to those.

I encourage all members of this House and any workplace, if they are feeling harassed in their workplace, they should go directly to the people that they are supervising - and in this House, Mr. Speaker, that would be you.

CLAUDA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, it is the Premier who sets the tone for the government, and on behalf of our caucus I want to express concern for the tone the Premier is setting.

It is unacceptable that the Premier has categorized allegations of a cabinet minister being berated and pushed as enthusiasm. It is irresponsible to have excused this as the behaviour of young guys. We have a responsibility to use our positions of power to set a much higher standard.

My question for the Premier is: Will the Premier apologize for his dismissive comments and failure to take appropriate action in response to the serious allegations made against the member for Yarmouth?

THE PREMIER: I completely disagree with the premise of her question. For those who were associated with the words that I said yesterday, at no time did anyone agree, or did I say at any point, that a member of my caucus pushed or touched anyone. I said very to the contrary that they did not.

I've sat on this side and that side. I've had members of the Opposition of both parties yelling in this Chamber. What I've said on this thing, the actions that happened inside of this Chamber, and I said to the member from Yarmouth, oftentimes, reminding him that what happens on the floor of this Legislature needs to remain on the floor of this Legislature. The tone matters.

I continue to talk about tone, not only my own, but all the members of this House and I encourage all members to reflect on their own tone inside of this Chamber and outside.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**PREM. - YARMOUTH MLA ALLEGATIONS:
TAKE SERIOUSLY - COMMENT**

KIM MASLAND: My questions are for the Premier. As the leader of the province, does the Premier respect and realize that it takes tremendous courage to speak up? Does the Premier realize how harmful it is to dismiss these courageous women and insinuate alternative motives to those willing to speak up?

How can the Premier simply shrug his shoulders and dismiss the concerns of these powerful women who have stepped up?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I completely disagree with the question. The fact of the matter is that I didn't dismiss them. I continued to look at them, and what I said was that parts of the letters that pertain to me, I said did not happen. No one contacted me and told me that someone in my caucus physically had contact with any member of this House. That's exactly what I said.

I took those issues seriously. I went and looked through the records that are in my office here, as the Premier of the province, as well as in my constituency office. At no time could I find correspondence from either one of the former members or those that were leading their party at any particular time.

What I will continue to do is to make sure, I will continue to take care of the issue of domestic violence and violence in general seriously.

That is why we continue. We are the only party that's putting together a strategy on how we deal with this issue. That is not only unacceptable in this workplace, but physical violence is unacceptable in our own homes.

KIM MASLAND: Does the Premier realize that the dismissive actions in implying that the characters of these women should be questioned has given social media warriors motivation to lash out?

My question for the Premier is: Does the Premier really think these women didn't do a lot of soul-searching before coming forward, probably worrying about social media reaction?

We now know the allegations. Will the Premier please take these allegations seriously?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the honourable member, again, I took these letters very seriously, that were sent to you and cc'd to me and two other leaders of the other two caucuses.

What I can tell you is that the part of those letters that referred to me being told, at no time was I told that a member of our caucus had touched any member of this House, Mr. Speaker.

At the same time, I went through and looked at the correspondence that was in my office here as the Premier of the province, as well as my constituency office, to find out whether or not I had been contacted. I did a search and there was none.

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

PREM. - NURSES' WORK LIVES: SURVEY RESULTS - TROUBLING

GARY BURRILL: My question, Mr. Speaker, is for the Premier. Yesterday the NSGEU released a survey on the work lives of nurses. The results are troubling - 84 per cent of nurses surveyed said they have experienced physical or verbal threats or acts of abuse from those they cared for in the last 5 years; 35 per cent have sustained injuries at work over the same 5-year period. Only 12 per cent said that they feel safe at work.

Will the Premier agree, as nurses have requested, to establish a working group that includes union reps, government officials and NSHA management, to identify immediate steps to improve hospital safety in Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I saw that survey today; it came out that 32 per cent of the nurses responded to that survey. The numbers of challenges at the workplace are certainly concerning and alarming.

He would also know that situations have happened in other hospitals, where we worked with the NSNU to do that exact thing: how do we make the workplace safer, how do we continue to make sure of that, not only from the clients that are in there, but those of us who present ourselves as we walk into either an outpatient or an emergency room?

We will continue to work with our partners, so that we can address the very concerns that this survey has raised.

GARY BURRILL: A key focus of the nurses' concern is the inadequate complement of nurses on the floors of the hospitals of the province - 92 per cent of nurses say that their workload in the last five years has increased and 85 per cent say that they work short in their unit at least once every week.

The government's responsibility here is straightforward: hire enough nurses to provide adequate care to the patients of the province. Plainly, that's not being accomplished at the moment and I want to ask the Premier: When can nurses expect to see an adequate complement of their colleagues at their work?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we will continue to hire nurses across our province. The honourable member would know that almost all of our nursing graduates get job offers from within our province, providing them with the opportunity.

He would also know that the physical infrastructure is an important part of that. This survey would deal with a lot of nurses in the Capital Zone region. He would know the challenges faced at the QEII, he would remember that from his time in government. But unlike what happened then, we're not ignoring the fact.

We're continuing to invest in our health care infrastructure to improve the environment where our nurses and health care teams are working. We're going to continue to do that as we continue to make sure we have the appropriate number of health care providers in those facilities.

GARY BURRILL: I would hope that the Premier has registered some alarm that 93 per cent of nurses surveyed said that they feel patients are being put at risk due to nurses working short.

They cite an increased number of patients falling because there are insufficient numbers of nurses to provide the one-on-one care that's needed. They speak about increased numbers of bed sores because nurses don't have time to provide the care that's needed. They also speak about missed medications, late medications, medications in error.

In the last six months 69 per cent said that they have witnessed themselves, what they called a near miss or an adverse event at work.

Mr. Speaker, the NSGEU has invited the Premier to job shadow a nurse to improve his understanding, and I think he should take them up on it. Will he?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all those nurses across our province that continue day in and day out to provide supports to our families. I want to provide those health care teams that are working with them to continue to ensure that we are able to provide care for those Nova Scotians who require our support.

I also want to say to them, we will continue to make the investments in your workplace and physical infrastructure that are long overdue. Quite frankly I, like them, share the view that much of this physical infrastructure should've been improved a decade ago, but it wasn't. We will continue to work with them and at the same time, we will continue to work with their representatives to ensure that we have the right complement of health care professionals in those facilities.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

[2:15 p.m.]

PREM. - N.S. HOSPITALS: NSGEU SURVEY RESULTS - RESPOND

TIM HOUSTON: Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the NSGEU released survey results that raised real concerns about working conditions at our hospitals. Ninety-three per cent of nurses responding to the survey felt that they have been having to work short 85 per cent of the time and that working short was putting patient safety at risk. That's a frightening number of nurses who report that inadequate health care resources are having serious impacts on patient care.

This is happening right now. I know the Premier likes to talk about physical infrastructure investments that will take place years from now, but where is the urgency to make sure that our hospitals are properly staffed today and tomorrow so that our nurses can feel safe at work and feel that patient safety is not at risk?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to assure all Nova Scotians that inside our facilities across this province they will get world-class care. I want to thank those who are providing it.

As the honourable member would know, it was about 15 or 16 months ago that with the NSNU we looked at the very issue of security in and around facilities, nurses feeling threatened at those facilities. We continued to work with our partners and will continue to do so, but he should not dismiss the fact that the facilities in this province have been allowed to decay and they require a major investment. One of the things we hear from our support teams across the province is that the physical work environment needs to be improved. At the same time, it will continue to hire those professionals to be able to work in that facility.

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it's very kind of the Premier to acknowledge the quality of the professionals we have working in our health care system. They are tremendous people doing the best they can, and it is nice to acknowledge that, but what is even better is if we had a government that would support them by properly resourcing our hospitals.

Sixty-nine per cent of nurses in this survey reported a near-miss event at work, and that's only in the last six months. Nurses were asked if they felt safe at work, and only 12 per cent could say that they felt safe at work.

That is a problem. That is a terrible indictment of the employer. The employer is the Premier of this province and this government. What is the Premier's plan to make sure that nurses can go to work, feel safe, and only have to worry about getting the job done?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member misquoted me. I was talking about not only the quality of the people who work in that facility, but about the quality of care that Nova Scotians receive when they go into these facilities.

Unlike him, I believe that we have world-class health care facilities in this province, world-class health care providers, and when you get into the system you get world-class care. Nova Scotians have continued to tell us that.

What he has to acknowledge is that the physical infrastructure has caused challenges for those who are working inside of our facility. We have listened to them. We continue to make those investments. We'll continue to do so. Same time yesterday in Question Period, I said we'll be working with our partners to deal with offload times, other ways to continue to improve the system. We will continue to do that at the same time that Nova Scotians are receiving world-class quality care in Nova Scotia.

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, 84 per cent of nurses responded that they'd experienced physical or verbal threats or acts of abuse or violence in the workplace. That's a staggering number: 84 per cent.

We're six years into this Liberal Government. It might be convenient to blame prior governments but at some point, this government - this Liberal government - needs to look in the mirror and accept that we are where we are in health care because of where this government steered us and it's time for some proper changes.

Is the Premier taking the concerns of the nurses seriously or is he dismissing them, and is he prepared to talk about real and enforced patient-to-nurse ratios in our hospitals?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the government has always taken the concerns of nurses that are brought to us seriously. We'll continue to do so. As I said, we've received the surveys today. We'll continue to look at the respondents that are there, and we'll work with their organizational partners to continue to respond to the concerns they have. But I want to assure all Nova Scotians, Mr. Speaker, that there is world-class quality care in Nova Scotia being performed every day by nurses and doctors and health care professionals from one end of this province to the other.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

**INT. SERV. - FOIPOP PORTAL BREACH:
ACCOUNTABILITY - COMMENT**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: My question is to the Minister of Internal Services. Happy anniversary - today is the 365th day that the FOIPOP portal has been unavailable to Nova Scotians. Tomorrow marks the one-year anniversary of the Department of Internal Services discovering that they failed to properly protect the

information of Nova Scotians. We know the stats - thousands of pages of personal information leaked, hundreds of Nova Scotians affected. It's the biggest privacy leak in recent memory if not in the province's history - not a standard that most Nova Scotians would expect around a critical failure in the workplace.

My question to the minister: Does she believe that Nova Scotians should be satisfied that the people responsible for this mess - staff and vendors - have been held accountable?

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: I would like to thank the member. It has been a year, and when an anniversary like this comes up, it gives you an opportunity to reflect, and it gives you an opportunity to say how you have moved forward or what you have learned from this.

I would like to start off by saying that a lot of the strength that I have had in terms of dealing with this horrific experience has been from the leadership that has been shown to me by the Premier, the amount of respect and the amount of support, and leading by example in that you put the priority of Nova Scotians first, and you make sure that what you're doing in everyday action is making sure that faith is restored.

As the member said, Mr. Speaker, we can't just have words that express whether Nova Scotians should feel safe. We have actions every day that we are partaking in that show Nova Scotians that we have taken this issue seriously and that they should have faith that their information is protected.

CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: When Nova Scotians worry about the transparency of this government, this is one of the things that they're thinking of. The AG and the Information and Privacy Commissioner cited a culture at the department where protecting personal information was not really a priority. This culture was vulnerable to the type of pressure that created the FOIPOP mess in the first place. It was a culture that was too quick to please and too hesitant to make sure that Nova Scotians were protected.

Will the minister tell me, with the same people in the same roles, why should anyone believe that there's a culture of change at the Department of Internal Services?

PATRICIA ARAB: We have looked at Mr. Pickup and Ms. Tully's reports very carefully, and we have committed to working with them to make sure that what they have seen is not necessarily what we have seen. Sometimes we need to have that independent, external lens that's put on it.

I have met with both Mr. Pickup and Ms. Tully personally. A couple of weeks ago, my deputy minister and senior official met with Ms. Tully and have committed to having regular meetings with her in order to make sure that what it is that they saw that portrayed

the culture that they talked about is no longer, is able to be cut short and able to be eradicated.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington on a new question.

INT. SERV. - FOIPOP PORTAL: RESTORATION OF SERVICE - WHEN

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Again, it's 365 days since the FOIPOP portal went down. Service isn't back up and running. The FOIPOP portal, Mr. Speaker, was announced in September 2016 and launched in January 2017 - a short turnaround. The pressure to get the site up and running in four months created a problem that has now taken a full year to fix, and the site right now is not fully operational yet.

My question to the Minister of Internal Services: I don't want you or the department to rush, but can Nova Scotians expect the portal service to be restored, and when might that be?

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: I would just like to clarify, Mr. Speaker: the portal as it was is not up and running, but FOIPOPs have been requested, and they have been turned out. The public portion, what could be put on the public site, is up. Those things are there. The only thing that currently isn't available is the ability to request online, request through a portal service and make payment through a portal service.

As the member pointed out, Mr. Speaker, we are taking our time with this. We are making sure that the RFP of it is going out to find a model that would be able to replace this that is as thorough as possible. Hopefully, we will have that out to the streets in the next couple of weeks.

CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I think it's good the department is taking the time to make sure the portal is fixed properly or at least the solution is found that's truly going to protect the information of Nova Scotians. It's the diligence should have gone into the process in the first place.

The deputy minister said that he believes the people who created the leak are the right people to fix it, but the culture concerns raised by the Information and Privacy Commissioner rest with those same people. That raises some serious questions about transparency and accountability.

Will the FOIPOP portal undergo a full review by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner before it is put back into service?

PATRICIA ARAB: Again, as I pointed out, Mr. Speaker, we have committed to meeting with the Information and Privacy Commissioner regularly when it comes to this project and other IT projects that are moving down the pipeline.

As we move forward and as we see what the best solution would be, we plan to engage her and see what's in the best interests of Nova Scotians, moving forward after that.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

COM. SERV. - ESIA PAYMENTS: CPP CLAWBACK - END

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. First, I'd like to thank the Premier for acting on our request to end the clawback of child support payments from families receiving income assistance. Unfortunately, children who are entitled to Canada Pension Plan benefits are still having these deducted from their parents' monthly ESIA payments.

CPP children's benefits provide monthly payments to the dependent children of disabled or deceased CPP contributors. Other benefits directed towards children are treated as excluded income for the purposes of ESIA. This is the case for the Canada Child Benefit, Child Disability Benefit and, most recently, Child Support payments.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier think it is appropriate for the Department of Community Services to be taking CPP benefits from children whose parents are disabled or deceased?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'll ask the Minister of Community Services to respond.

HON. KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I do want to make her aware there is money in this particular budget to extend the ending of the clawback of child-maintenance payments, not just to the Department of Community Services, but also to Housing Nova Scotia and to disability support services. I just wanted to let her know that that's an improvement to the work we are doing.

SUSAN LEBLANC: I thank the minister for that. I did understand that that was the case. In fact, I was quite shocked that that wasn't the case last year. I thought when the change came in to end the clawback, that it would be clawed back from all those places. I'm glad that it is now a complete ending of that clawback.

Mr. Speaker, when Ontario ended the clawback of child support, they also excluded the CPP Children's Benefits. Based on the Freedom of Information request, we know that making this change in Nova Scotia would have an annual cost to government of only \$400,000, but it would make a significant difference to the children and families affected.

Parents have contributed to CPP and want to know their children will have access to those benefits in the unfortunate event of their disability or death.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier commit to ending the clawback of CPP Children's Benefits from families receiving income assistance?

KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to let the honourable member know the Premier has been very clear with me, that we need to improve services for children and that's why we have added these additional changes this year.

Of course, it could have been done a long time ago. It could have been done five years. It could have been done ten years ago, seven years ago, but it wasn't, Mr. Speaker, but we've done it now.

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

**INT. SERV. - ONE PATIENT ONE RECORD:
PROCUREMENT CONCERNS - COMMENT**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, last month an editorial caught my eye and it starts like this: The same government department that brought Nova Scotia's worst breach of private information to date assures us that all is well and the most important IT procurement in the province's history. That procurement project is the province's One Patient One Record.

We know the cost is going to be in the hundreds of millions of dollars and we know it's going to involve the health information of every single Nova Scotian.

My question to the Minister of Internal Services: Should Nova Scotians feel comfortable that the same people in charge of the FOIPOP leak are also in charge of the procurement for a massive health data project?

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: I'd like to thank the member. One Patient One Record is obviously a system we are moving forward with. We take it extremely seriously, working in collaboration with our partners in the Department of Health and Wellness and with the Health Authorities to make sure that this is done properly, and it is done concisely, and keeping the privacy of Nova Scotians on the forefront of our minds at all times through each step of the process.

CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: The editorial of Jim Vibert also cites the Information and Privacy Commissioner's assessment of the FOIPOP leak. One significant and troubling factor is that the technology under investigation was implemented by the group responsible to lead privacy across all government departments. That group is now in charge of making sure medical records and diagnoses don't end up on a public server. It

has been established that government has been less than forthcoming about the relationships between departments and those competing for the OPOR contracts.

[2:30 p.m.]

My question to the minister is: Given the transparency issues and serious risks involved in this project, would it not make sense to put a different team in charge of this special implementation?

PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, thanks to the member for the question. I appreciate the words that are expressed within editorials and the questions that are asked, but I come down to actions. We have an action plan in the Department of Internal Services where Nova Scotians can hold us accountable and see step-by-step how we plan to implement the recommendations of the Auditor General and the privacy officer in terms of the FOI breach. In our actions, we are proving to Nova Scotians every day that we are the right team in place to protect their privacy.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

LAE: UNIV. FUNDING - TRANSPARENCY

EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. The minister insists that he has been nothing but transparent when it comes to university funding. The facts don't bear that out. This government got into trouble a couple of years back for failing to disclose quite a bit of university funding that wasn't part of the MOU process. They pointed fingers at previous governments, but the fact is that they had ample opportunity to be forthcoming about those funds and they chose not to.

My question to the minister is: Does he believe that his department and his government have applied the highest standard of transparency when it comes to university funding?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Yes, I do.

EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, transparency tends to go hand-in-hand with fairness. On one hand, the government tells universities if they work hard and make difficult decisions, they can expect to be rewarded financially for their sacrifices. On the other hand, universities like CBU work hard, make the difficult decisions, and get less than their counterparts - or sometimes nothing at all.

My question to the minister is: Why are some universities more equal than others in the eyes of this government?

LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to talk about the investments we've made in CBU. When I became the minister of this department, there was a request from CBU for emergency funding to the tune of \$4 million. That was a one-time ask. What we did is we actually looked at their financial situation. We bumped them up - I believe it was \$1.2 million annual funding, which in three to four years would have gotten them to the \$4 million they asked for, but it would have been extended into perpetuity. As well, in this MOU, it would also have the 1 per cent increase annually, so that \$1.2 million they received would be growing every year.

In talks with CBU, when I visited the campus, we also took a look at funding that they felt they were not responsible to be paying for out of the funding formula, which was the money that they spent on the art gallery and the archives. Our government gave CBU more funding to cover the costs of those, so in the end CBU got much more than they asked for.

We felt that we supported them. We are very encouraged with the great work they do, and we're very encouraged with the wonderful supports they're providing to Cape Breton Island and all the international students they're bringing to the Island.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

TIR: HANTSPORT ABOITEAU - DETAILS

JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. On March 5th, I asked the Minister of TIR when he committed to repairing the Hantsport aboiteau. A FOIPOP obtained by our office showed there was no correspondence about the issue prior to the local MLA announcing the replacement. The minister stated, "We don't have to wait for formal correspondences; we talk to each other." I'll table that.

Verbal commitments are great, but a project costing multiple millions of dollars seems like it should warrant a written commitment.

My question for the minister is this: Does he think it's responsible to verbally commit multiple millions of dollars to projects without any written correspondence?

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to report for the good people of Hantsport that the repairs to the Hantsport aboiteau go on. The contractor is now anticipating a very early summer completion date. The contractor has agreed to work two shifts, seven days a week to complete this important work.

We believe that the danger posed by the Spring runoff has passed, and we're offering a permanent solution for the people of Hantsport. Thank you.

JOHN LOHR: I take it that's a yes to that question.

Verbal agreements can cause problems. Sometimes things get left out, like doors on an aboiteau; or maybe one person says an aboiteau and another person hears box culvert. If you write it down, you can go back and check, but I guess verbal agreements aren't subject to FOIPOP.

Meanwhile, Hantsport residents are a little foggy on what structure they're getting so my question for the minister is this: Will the structure protect all the private land, the ball fields, and the cemetery that the old aboiteau protected, or will it only protect the government assets?

LLOYD HINES: I'd remind the member, Mr. Speaker, that the government assets do belong to the great people of Hantsport and all the citizens of Nova Scotia, and it is our job to make sure that those assets, including all the community assets that have been threatened in that area, are looked after by this repair.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

EECD: BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING - STATISTICS

KIM MASLAND: My question is to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

When I was assigned the role of Education Critic, I was interested in learning the specific stats around bullying and cyberbullying in the province. Our office filed a FOIPOP and we were given some generic numbers with little to no context and no regional breakdown. We were informed that if we wanted to see a regional breakdown we would have to contact each Education Centre separately and make a request.

My question for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is: Does the minister believe that transparency is served when it's so difficult to get a handle on regional bullying statistics?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I know that I did share the provincial statistics with the member opposite. The positive news in that is we are seeing declining reported incidents around bullying and cyberbullying. If the member does need some assistance collecting that regional data, that's definitely something that we can assist with.

KIM MASLAND: I do appreciate the response by the minister. He did share those provincial statistics with me, which was just a broad number.

The government loves to talk about its Open Data Portal, but they're pretty selective about which data is open. Considering bullying and cyberbullying impacts everyone in

some way, and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has an anti-bullying coordinator on staff, I anticipated these statistics to be widely available. As a mother who knows the horror and impact of bullying, the regional statistics are important to know for families who may be considering moving, or to analyze especially problematic schools.

My question to the minister: In the interest of transparency, will the minister commit to publicly publishing regional bullying statistics online for anyone to see?

ZACH CHURCHILL: These stats have been reported on publicly. They tend to be reported on a fairly regular basis. If the member does need assistance in collecting data that is stored in the regional offices, we can definitely assist with that. That's information that we will provide her at our earliest convenience.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

IMMIG.: ATL. IMMIG. PILOT - GENDER ANALYSIS

LISA ROBERTS: My question is for the Minister of Immigration. The Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program is geared towards employers interested in hiring workers to fill labour gaps. The Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, which was mandated by the House of Commons to study immigration to Atlantic Canada, recommended that a gender-based analysis of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program be conducted and targets developed to set a standard for gender equality.

My question is: Has the minister directed the department to conduct a gender-based analysis of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program and have any gender equity targets been set?

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Mr. Speaker, great question and I appreciate that. Let me tell you my role in the provincial Office of Immigration that is to assist employers to fill their labour gaps. In that, we assist any and all employers across the province to do exactly that by helping them do international recruitment, by helping them navigate the immigration system, and I'm pleased to say that because of all of the work that we're doing we have set record trend numbers in 2018 for not only retention but also for bringing people, for landings, for retention, and for our immigration streams that we have implemented and designed over the last couple of years.

LISA ROBERTS: Employment challenges, and particularly underemployment faced by spouses are a significant factor influencing immigrant retention. A recent article by a research associate at the Conference Board of Canada's National Immigration Centre, pointed out that immigrant women are particularly affected by the lack of accessible affordable child care, which influences their ability to enter the workforce. They are more

likely to have lower wages and work on-call, casual, and informal jobs outside of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. hours.

Mr. Speaker, does the minister agree that increasing immigrant retention requires a universal system of affordable child care, that accommodates varying work schedules?

LENA METLEGE DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the members who were here today saw the two wonderful representatives that attended from the YMCA YREACH workers, and that is exactly what we are doing provincially in this office. That is, we are working with excellent, excellent settlement partners across the province from one end to the other, not only to help the newcomers, the candidates that are coming, but also their spouses, their partners and their children in integrating them with language requirements, with jobs, with training, with everything else.

Due to that, we have seen our retention levels increase from 38 per cent to 48 per cent, to now 71 per cent, the highest in the region.

THE SPEAKER: Just a reminder, we will be adding two minutes to the end of Question Period, so we will conclude at 2:52 p.m.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

L&F - FISH. COVE: BRIDGE REPAIR - PAVING

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Lands and Forestry.

Mr. Speaker, the entry point leading into the biggest tourist attraction in our constituency is the bridge to Fisherman's Cove. My community is concerned about the upcoming replacement of that bridge and its effect on our area. Replacing that bridge will cut off direct access to Fisherman's Cove for three months. The detour will likely have residents driving through the Fisherman's Cove parking lot, which is provincially owned.

My question for the minister is: Because the parking lot is already gravel and also very uneven, will the minister agree to paving it, especially in light of the increased traffic we are expecting?

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, thank you for bringing the local issue to the floor of the Legislature. I would certainly be willing to take that information back to the department and see what we can do.

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate that answer and I look forward to working with you.

Mr. Speaker, Discover Nova Scotia has been given \$1.5 million to improve the tourism experience for people visiting McNabs and Georges Island. HRM Council just recently approved a staff report looking into contributing nearly \$600,000 to assist with the installation of a public dock in Fisherman's Cove. This would be one of the greatest opportunities to improve tourism and economic development in my community.

Now, Fisherman's Cove has a working fishing wharf, but we do not have a public wharf. My question to the minister is: Will he tell me what funds his department is prepared to commit to support any federal or municipal funds for a public wharf at Fisherman's Cove?

IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, it is certainly an important question and a good idea to bring forward. I will take it back. I know I have met with the group that is engaged with McNabs Island and we have Georges Island, Tourism Nova Scotia is going forward with a good initiative to drive tourism to that part of the province.

For three years in a row we've broken tourism numbers in the province so, we'll continue to work on our initiatives with the federal government. I know there is significant funds being put forward for that area, for Peggy's Cove and areas up towards Cape Split. I look forward to working with the member and those groups to go forward with those initiatives.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

TIR: CANSO CAUSEWAY ROTARY - REDESIGN

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. I've asked that the rotary at Port Hastings be redesigned with funds made available to improve highways. You will recall those funds were announced at the same time as highway twinning funds.

The Canso Causeway and the Port Hastings rotary form a bottleneck that can cause traffic delays, but they can also impact people's safety. A redesign of that rotary is needed. What's needed right now is repaving of the rotary. Patching will not do. There are way too many potholes. Water is collecting in some areas of the road that makes it very unsafe. It is enough to focus one's attention on where they're trying to go, let alone avoiding road hazards. How many of the minister's own constituents face this each day going to work and going to appointments.

Will the minister see to it that the rotary is repaved this summer?

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, we're awaiting the opening of the paving plants across the province. We're expecting that shortly the first one will open in the Halifax region and as we ramp for our summer paving program, that they will open in other

parts of the province. We expect to have a robust patching plan in place for all our highways, including the Rotary, upcoming.

[2:45 p.m.]

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, patching is not going to be good enough in this instance, it needs repaving. It is about one kilometre of some of the most travelled roads in the province. Surely the minister can prioritize this work for the hundreds of thousands of automobiles that travel it each year.

What kind of message does it send to visitors to Cape Breton Island when the government doesn't care that a major point of navigation is littered with road hazards? How many of the minister's own constituents, I say again, are travelling this road every day? Why is the minister failing to make these improvements a priority, for both safety and for tourism?

LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, as we know, the section of road he is talking about, the causeway rotary, has been in place for many years and is indeed a heavily-travelled part of the province and an extremely important link to Cape Breton from the mainland, and from Cape Breton to the mainland.

The science behind the roundabouts has changed. We are studying that intensively now to see what a long-term solution would be there. In the meantime, we're going to take corrective measures to make sure that the rotary continues to be a safe place for travel, from all constituencies, to navigate that area.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

WCB CASE: GOV'T. (N.S.) - ACTION

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Act. If there is any case history of the perfect example of the benefit of the doubt clause of the WCB Act, Darrell MacKinnon of Pictou County is that perfect case.

I brought this issue to this floor last Spring and in the Fall, and the minister has been sympathetic when we discussed this issue. However, there is absolutely something wrong when a medically untrained WCB caseworker will not accept medical evidence provided from more than one of our province's distinguished medical specialists. The Act states clearly that when there is doubt in evidence evenly presented, the benefit of the doubt is to go to the injured worker. Well not in this case.

My question to the minister: Is he familiar with the benefit of the doubt clause within the Act?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I am familiar with the case the member brings forward to the Legislature, which he has done on other occasions. I have communicated to the member of the appeal process in WCB and what the appeal process is; I would encourage the individual to go through that process.

There is also a Pictou advocacy work group that is funded by the Department of LAE which will help individuals go through an appeal process as well. That is the proper process. In WCB there is no political interference and we do not make decisions as we are not medical professionals.

PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, he has gone through all the appeals processes. He has been to every office in this province. I'll have stats next week dealing with the appeal process and the backlog we have in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we have medical professionals and lawyers who have studied Mr. MacKinnon's case and they have concluded that he should definitely receive his rightful compensation benefits. Once again, it was requested that he provide additional information. He contacted two medical specialists for further reports. A few months later he received a letter that he was denied. I am sure these specialists are frustrated that their findings are once again rejected.

Unfortunately, WCB decision makers are not held accountable for their decisions. If they were following the Act presented to them by the government, we would not need additional layers of bureaucrats weaving their way through appeal after appeal.

My question to the minister is: What has to happen to allow this Nova Scotia resident to receive his compensation for loss of income, health care expenses, and costs incurred by his injuries?

LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I would communicate to the member that it's again what we had spoken about before, which is to go through the appeal process. That is laid out and if the member would like the information, I'm more than happy to provide it to him.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

TIR - HWY. 104 TWINNING: EXIT 28 RAMP - ESTABLISH

TIM HOUSTON: My question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Highway No. 104 will be twinned, and that's great news; it's going to save lives. But the new highway won't have an exit between Sutherlands River and Barneys River. That's 21.5 kilometres, that is 72 per cent longer than the average distance between all highway exits. Right now, we have an Exit 27 and an Exit 29 but no Exit 28.

My question for the minister: Is the minister aware of the community's request that the new twinned highway include an Exit 28 between Barneys River and Sutherlands River?

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. Yes, we are aware of the request and are taking the request into consideration at the present time.

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, the position of the community is, if you're going to do it, do it right. This is the time to put an exit there. Having an exit ramp there would connect the old Trunk 4 highway, and it's a matter of public safety. First responders need better access to the communities along Highway No. 104, because we all know lives depend on first responders' ability to access communities in a quick manner. It will also make winter maintenance much easier, and of course, it will make communities like Broadway and Moose River much more attractive to live in and to visit.

The minister has indicated that he's still reviewing the potential of putting that exit there. I'd like to ask the minister: What action is the minister taking in his efforts to establish an Exit 28?

LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand up and talk about the outstanding job we've done in our twinning program, in particular the improvements that will come to Highway No. 104 between New Glasgow and Antigonish. The majority of the expenditure, I might point out, is in the member's own riding. We're very proud of that, to improve the safety around the province that we had at Marshy Hope and Barneys River, and we will be looking - we have design experts who look at these designs, and we intend to apply their expertise.

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The 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, would you please call the order of business, Public Bills for Second Reading.

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 133.

Bill No. 133 - Human Organ and Tissue Donation Act.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to speak to Bill No. 133 and to have this bill read for a second time.

I was very pleased on Tuesday to stand with Dr. Stephen Beed, as well as many families across the province, to deal with the issue of organ donation. As we all know, the month of April is Organ Donation Month across the country. We as a province should be very proud of the fact that we lead the country in many ways when it comes to organ registration.

The challenge that we had seen was the fact of translating those registrations into actual donations at the time. This bill will be a first not only for Canada but in North America. The bill speaks to presume consent. As we all know, we now have the possibility to opt in as an organ donor. This bill, when it is passed and brought into law, will turn that around and means that we will all be organ donors unless we opt out.

I want to be clear that there are and there will be very clear lines and ability for Nova Scotians to opt out. At the same time, whenever a tragedy strikes, our family members will also still be asked at the time, but one of the important distinctions that I think has been raised by many medical professions was with the presumed-consent clause. It allows that conversation to be very different for our health care providers. They are dealing with our families at the most stressful and tragic times - the loss of a loved one - and going to ask for them to be an organ donor is very different than saying that we know all of us are organ donors and we want to know whether you want to fulfill the wishes of your loved one. That is an important distinction that will allow that conversation to happen across our province.

As has been said many times, and I said it on Tuesday when I introduced our guests in the gallery, this alone will not increase the number of organ transplants in our province. It will be the beginning step of allowing a very different conversation at the bedside for our health care providers, but we also know that in many parts of our province we need to continue to provide training and support teams in and around the issue of organ donation.

I've said publicly that I have committed and made my wishes known to my own family, but the reality of it is that where I live in Nova Scotia, where I live in the community of Upper Granville, if something were to happen to me in that community, the chances are that I might not be able to be an organ donor because of the fact that there was not the support required to ensure that I was able to have the organs retrieved to be able to be used in other families.

I was overwhelmed and moved when I had an opportunity to listen to Kelly Patterson talk about her son, Steven, and the loss that she has suffered losing her son in his twenties, but the gift that she has received through the five donations that Steven provided to his fellow citizens across the province. She annually receives letters talking about what has changed in their lives.

In one of them, she talked about becoming a grandparent twice since he received the donation from Steven. She said that while that doesn't lessen the tragedy to her family, it has certainly made a huge difference in that individual family.

Through that one act of donation, Steven not only changed the lives of the five recipients of the organs, he changed the lives of everyone around them and all those who love them - and the impact.

We want to continue - I believe that all of us, in our own grief, would want to provide that same opportunity, but if there are those who don't, this bill will allow them to opt out and it will allow us to make the investments in the system across the province through training, through education, ensuring that our health care teams in rural communities across the province will be able to respond to the desires of those of us who wish to be organ donors.

Today, there are 39 families waiting for kidneys - I'm sorry, 89 families waiting for kidneys today in Nova Scotia.

I believe that if something tragic happens in this province, the majority of us would want to ensure that any part of us that could stay and change the lives of those individuals or others, we would want that to happen. This bill will continue to allow the conversation that I know has happened in many of our families when it has come to dealing with the issue of organ donation.

I did a national radio show yesterday with a host who was talking about his son turning 16 and talking about the fact - it was in another province - about organ donation and he said: While it wasn't something I was hoping, it wasn't something I thought about doing, I am glad we began that conversation. It struck me, because one member of this House mentioned this about her own experience, his son raised the issue of his eyes, but it began that conversation in that family to the young man becoming a donor.

In this province, when this bill passes, not only will we provide the support and training for health care providers to ask a very different question when tragedy strikes, at the same time not only will we provide greater education over the next number of months to ensure that all Nova Scotians fully understand what this bill will mean, I believe we will also start a greater conversation around the issue of presumed consent in our families.

It is my hope that when this becomes a reality in Nova Scotia, it will become a reality in Canada. I hope the work that happens in this Chamber moves us because there are very few times in one's life where you are faced with a tragedy that out of that tragedy can come so much love for others, and those who were with us on Tuesday demonstrated that.

I want to thank them for being here on Tuesday and I continue to want to thank them for their courage - for those who continue to talk about the impact of their tragedy, but the gift of giving and how it has helped them on their journey of healing.

I want to acknowledge Dr. Stephen Beed, again, for his tremendous leadership and his team who respond across the province to ensure that as many recipients will receive the organs and, at the same time, for helping show the leadership that is required and will be required over the next number of months to help us ensure that we shape this program so that we can actually provide this program across the province.

Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks, I look forward to hearing from my colleagues.

[3:00 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Premier for his comments today and I'm honoured to be able to stand in my place and provide a few thoughts as well. It definitely is a bill that, since introduced, has brought a lot of conversation in the last couple of days. Absolutely, quite a bit of conversation.

Before I had mentioned my incident with my son the other day I asked, of course, for his permission if I could speak about it in the Chamber and he said yes, sure. Then, of course, that evening when I got home, he wanted to know more about it.

So now, as you all are aware, he indicated to me that he did not want his eyes to be provided as a donation if something happened to him. But after a conversation the other evening, he was kind of just like, oh yeah, just whatever, give it all mom.

It's just so interesting to see how people react differently to it, don't they? In my household it's very nonchalant - whatever we can do to help, it's all good. But I have to be respectful and I have to be understanding and empathetic to the other side, because there is another side.

There is quite a compelling debate that's out there. Interestingly enough, and to my surprise, I received a number of emails and phone calls, and there are some concerns. Some of the concerns are: Why does this bill even have to be introduced? We're already doing it. Doesn't this bill kind of negate what we're already doing? For some, it comes across as

now you have all authority over my body. I don't see it like that, but I do appreciate where they're coming from.

So we've had some really interesting conversations among our caucus, but, of course, with our constituents as well. They've been healthy conversations for sure, because it really is about education and awareness. Certainly, I am no expert in the field of organ donation, but I do have to understand the skepticism from others and questioning why.

I know that there's some arguments around concerns of the province's capability to actually harvest patients' organs. Do we have enough health care staff, and are they educated and prepared, ready to do more of this, if this was the overall intention of the bill - and I understand the Premier has made it clear that that is not completely what the intention of this bill is. Is there enough evidence out there, Mr. Speaker, to support that presumed consent will increase organ donations? We have to ask that because if not, then we have to go back to, what is the purpose of the bill?

For me, personally, again I am only speaking for myself right now - anything that can make it easier to save a life, I'm in. There was almost 300 people last year in Canada who died waiting for a liver, waiting for a kidney. I don't think it has to be that way, but again we need to ask ourselves: What is the plan? Are there enough regulations within this bill that when an educational-and-awareness package is rolled out, that Nova Scotians are going to completely understand what this bill is about?

I would ask: What is the plan? How is that educational piece going to be delivered to Nova Scotians? Is it going to only be when their health card is up for renewal, or is every Nova Scotian going to receive something in the mail at a certain point in time before this bill is enacted to go forward? Those are real, sincere concerns coming from Nova Scotians.

We know that the number of organ donations has dropped over the last number of years and that is of great concern. I am very pleased the government has taken the step to come forward with this bill because I think it does need to be discussed. From the emails that I've received, I would hope that at Law Amendments Committee, a number of presenters will come out and share their views.

We want to know if individuals will be notified of the change when they go to the doctor or if they arrive at ER. There are a number of questions. Whose responsibility will it be to inform the individuals and are we only going to create more burden for our overworked front-line health care workers right now? These are definitely some concerns that I know that the government will try their best to answer. I'm sure that a number of these concerns will be coming to Law Amendments Committee.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank again the government for introducing this. I believe it is the right step, but we want to make sure that we bring comfort to all Nova

Scotians with regards to their concerns with this bill. Thank you so much for allowing me to speak.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

LISA ROBERTS: I, too, welcome the opportunity to speak briefly on second reading of this bill. We in the NDP caucus welcome this legislation and I know that I have many constituents for whom this is deeply personally welcomed.

I am going to take a few minutes to speak about some of the impacts of having presumed consent for organ donation. One interesting fact I found is while 90 per cent of Canadians say that they would want to donate themselves, only 20 per cent of Canadians actually sign their organ donor cards. I found that particularly striking right now because my children's health cards arrived, and my children's health cards have them noted as donors. But my health card, which also had expired, arrived at the same time and I wasn't there as a donor. I wondered what was going on.

I know we had a number of conversations in our house because I'm sure that my partner hesitated to check that box on our children's health cards because we don't like to contemplate death. As a society, we really don't like to contemplate death and contemplating organ donation means contemplating death. Nonetheless, we did fill out the form and said that yes, my children would be donors. Somehow that got missed in my application, and I just felt really uncomfortable with the fact that my children could potentially be donors and that I hadn't said that about myself because I want to go first. For the record, let Hansard show: I fully want to go first.

I found it very interesting to read the statistic that 90 per cent of Canadians say that they would be glad to be donors but only 20 per cent fill out the donor cards because I called up and connected with the person who had to send me the application, so that I could adjust my own health care to reflect my wish to be a donor. I know it arrived at my house, and I know it is somewhere in my house, and I'm a mom who works very full time, and I've got two children, and it is somewhere in the paperwork that is piled up. So I remain with this sort of a sense of anxiety because I want to go first and I want to be a donor.

I really welcome this opportunity for more Nova Scotians to, I guess, be the selves that they wish to be by having our consent presumed for organ donation. And I will find my own paperwork.

In some areas of Europe where a similar change has been made, donations have actually gone up in the range of 35 per cent. For those people who are waiting long times for organs, this could really be very, very significant. We know that one organ donor can save up to eight lives; we know that one tissue donor can save or improve the lives of between 50 and 80 individuals.

Of course, both for people who are waiting and for people who love the people who are waiting, that wait is truly agonizing. So I trust that this legislation means something to them - maybe less so practically, but more so emotionally and empathically. That we are saying, as a government, that we are sorry for their waiting and we understand the urgency. I do have concerns. I mean, I hope that this will actually result in more life-saving operations and more quality of life, importantly, for Nova Scotians.

Given the challenges in our health care system, I don't know what impact this will look like, or what the impact will look like in the short term. I think it is important for those individuals waiting that we communicate that we want to do everything that we can, as government, to ensure that their suffering and their waiting is as short as we can make it.

I think this legislation moves us towards that and certainly, also moves towards creating a space for more Nova Scotians to have that really transformative experience, both of giving the greatest gift that one could possibly give and also of receiving the greatest gift that one can possibly receive, which I think is really a powerful experience and a powerfully positive experience on both sides of that relationship.

With those few words, I look forward to hearing what we will hear at Law Amendments.

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

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank the government for bringing forward what I think is a very important bill and certainly, one that I strongly believe is the right path for us to be taking. Again, it's always up to the individual as to how they want to go forward. There are a couple of points that I would like to just pass on and share with the House.

Last session that we were here, Mr. Speaker, I brought up the case of a live donor situation where the wait was quite long. I know that it's been said that this is not going to speed up things, but I think it's important that we realize that there are other methods that are available to individuals. We need to identify those methods and one of them is a live donor that wants to give to their brother, sister, family, friend - whoever it happens to be - because it is an important gift.

In the case that I brought up here in our last session, that's come to happy ending for that family. The individual had their case done, the operation took place. The brother and the sister are both doing well. Unfortunately, shortly after it happened, the father passed away, but the father passed away knowing that his children were well. That they were going to have a strong life and that gave him the ability to move on, so to speak.

The other thing, though, that I wanted to touch base with is about the impact that is on a family that has donated a loved one's organs. In my case, I had a brother who was

only 17 years old who was hit by a car, and when he was hit by the car the bus driver who was a witness to it said he went up as high as the wires. It was a shocking thing for the family. It really set everybody back.

[3:15 p.m.]

The first thing we thought about as a group was that maybe there was some good to come out of it. My mother and my stepfather decided they would donate my brother's organs. You always wonder: Are we doing the right thing? When you have a death like that, which is a shock, it's a little different than when you know somebody has had a long illness and there's a lot of pain, but this was a 17-year-old in the prime of his life.

The reason I bring this story out is to highlight what happened down the road. About eight months after Blair passed away, our family got a letter and in that letter it described – similar to what my colleague had talked about – the number of people and families that were helped. Although it has been quite some time since it happened, it has always stuck with me. There was a total of nine families who saw their lives change by something that was very dramatic in our family.

What they put in the letter was your son's irises went to a person in such and such a location who was a member of a family that had three siblings and it went on - they never told you who got it - but they described how it changed the life of that family. It helped bring our family closer together with closure to know that what we thought was a senseless death, and it was, but to know that at least there was some good came out of it for nine more families - and I think that's so important.

When people are thinking about this, when they're trying to decide whether they should, or they shouldn't, sign - now the presumption it's going to happen if you don't sign up, remember that behind every dark cloud there is some good. This is what can happen with this piece of legislation.

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

LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to stand today to speak to Bill No. 133, the Human Organ and Tissue Donation Act. I would like to commend the Premier for introducing this bill, which I feel is an empathetic bill whose time has come.

The national average of donors is 21 deceased people per 1,000,000 population members in Canada according to the advocacy group, The Organ Project. As my colleague has already mentioned, 90 per cent of Canadians say they'd like to be donors, but only 20 per cent actually donate.

It was very interesting to see after we introduced Bill No. 133 to go home and turn on the TV and see that Saskatchewan also officially declared April 7th as Green Shirt Day, a new nationwide day to raise awareness about organ donation in memory of Humboldt Bronco Logan Boulet who lost his life in the April 6, 2018, Broncos bus crash. Six lives were saved when his wish to be an organ donor was honoured.

They said Saskatchewan has historically been below the national average of organ and tissue donations, but there are efforts now to change that. In an effort to increase organ donor rates the province announced that the 2019-20 budget is going to be also developing a donor registry. Their Health Minister, Jim Reiter, said: "Because it so clearly indicates what a person's wishes are, they found that in over 90 per cent (sic) cases in jurisdictions with registries that families honour those wishes. Whereas in locations where we don't, like in Saskatchewan, it's less than 50 per cent."

He said they've also mulled the idea of a presumed consent, as our Bill No. 133 does here in Nova Scotia and that the Health Minister said that the province has not ruled out presumed consent and will be watching Nova Scotia's presumed consent implementation very closely and is looking to set up a meeting with our Health and Wellness Minister. I found that very interesting.

I also read about a woman named Charlotte L'Oste-Brown, who was diagnosed in 2003 with a terminal lung condition and ultimately received a life-saving lung transplant in 2017. She said, "After such a long wait like that you almost think it's not going to come; that's for sure. I can remember the morning I got the call, I was just leaving the house at eight o'clock in the morning and the gal says, 'Charlotte, we have a pair of lungs for you.' She started describing them, to see if you really want them or not, she didn't have to describe anything. I was taking them, there was no doubt."

No doubt, Mr. Speaker, because the previous 14 years had been filled with anxiety and physical deterioration that took away L'Oste-Brown's ability to enjoy life and work. After the operation she said she had a chance to see her old lungs and was told that they likely would have only sustained her for another two weeks.

She had a lengthy rehabilitation but now has been able to restart her life and work full time once again. She said that she has been in touch with the mother whose daughter donated those lungs. The lungs came from a 30-year-old woman. She thinks of her donor every day when she wakes up and has exchanged letters with the donor's mother. She says, "Her opening line was I followed my daughter's wishes to donate her organs as she always wanted to be an organ transplant donor. She says from now on I will think of you as family and then she told me all about her daughter. That connection is wonderful. I'm very glad that she opted to speak back to me. I feel the connection that we are like family."

Mr. Speaker, just to finish off, I want to mention that yesterday my niece, who is only 15, became a recipient of a donation of a bone from a young person who had died.

My young niece just turned 15 before Christmas and we found out a week before Christmas that she had osteosarcoma in her leg, exactly like Terry Fox had.

My young niece is a wonderful gymnast, so she had to deal with the idea that her gymnastic career - she won a lot of awards and had been across the country - is likely now over. But she faced it with bravery and with a smile and a giggle and said, you know, that she feels that things are going to work out; she has so many friends from the Spartans gymnastic team in Truro who have rallied around her; the teachers at her school have sent pictures of the kids holding up signs for her, including yesterday, telling her that they are with her.

She has been able, through the wonderful technology we have today, to spend lunchtimes speaking to her friends, sharing lunch in her bed with them at school. My sister took the rest of the year off work. She is a teacher at the Truro Junior High School where my niece was going and has been spending every day and every night with her.

They are in the hospital now and yesterday she went through an 11-hour operation to take out the femur in her leg and replace it with a donor bone and then put another bone from behind her shin inside that donor bone, which will serve as the case, the hard case to protect it. So, they put another bone that apparently you don't need, it's right behind your shin, inside that, which is a living bone which then they put together with all the tendons and do all that stuff that those amazing surgeons do - three of them, including a plastic surgeon - working on her for that long.

She came out of the operation last night at about eight o'clock and she had crutched her way into the operation room, my sister said. She insisted on being on her crutches, she didn't want to be on the gurney. When she woke up, she woke up with a smile on her face, with balloons and flowers from all her friends.

I have to say thank you to the Premier again for this wonderful bill. I truly believe in it, and anybody who has any doubt that organ donations and tissue donations are something we should all be doing, come and speak to me, please.

THE SPEAKER: If I recognize the honourable Premier it will be to close debate.

The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: I wanted to thank my colleagues for the comments. The member for Pictou West raised some of the mechanics associated with the issue of presumed consent. It's very much the concerns we have, the concerns that we have heard from citizens. Also Dr. Beed talked about that, and he was very clear.

This Act alone will not increase organ donation, but in many parts of the world where presumed consent comes in, and you follow it with the supports behind it, ensuring

that the supports outside of the urban centre, where the main tertiary facility is and many of the transplants would happen, you will increase by about 35 per cent. I think that was the stat that he used. We need to make sure, and it's the reason the proclamation date will not happen for a period of time. It is because we want to continue to go out, as this conversation is starting, with health care teams and Nova Scotians to make sure that they fully understand that there is an opportunity for them to opt out and to be able to have that further conversation.

I also want to thank the member for Halifax Needham for her comments. I can't help but think I wish all our families were as hers and having that conversation with their young children. I think that demonstrates the spirit of what this legislation is about. I thank her for sharing it, and I, too, look forward to the comments that are going to come before us at the Law Amendments Committee.

The member for Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg demonstrated what it is that we are hoping to accomplish, sharing his personal story. The loss of a sibling is a very challenging one. We expect to lose our parents. We never expect to lose a sibling, and when that happens, it's a devastating thing for a family. Blair demonstrated through his family the great courage to be able to ensure that those nine other families have a new perspective and lease on life. I want to thank the member for sharing his family story here in the House.

To the member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River, I had a call from Premier Moe yesterday when this bill was introduced. They are looking at this very closely. They are looking at ensuring that what we do here, they want to try to see if that will happen in Saskatchewan. You're right; their rate of registration is not as high as ours. One of the challenges and one of the things that we talked about is that registration is one part of this, and Dr. Beed was very clear. We lead the country in registration though oftentimes the wishes of our donors can't be met because of the fact that we have not put the back support behind it. That's what part of this goal is really about, ensuring that we can meet the wishes of our families. With presumed consent, I think we will have the conversation happening at the kitchen table with young kids like the member for Halifax Needham is having.

To the member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River, sharing your niece's story, it is remarkable that, on the 3rd of April, which happens to be Organ Donor Month, she is there getting a second lease on life. You described her going into the emergency room. I would suggest she's got a bit of her aunt in her and her spirit. (Laughter) I think I speak for all members of this House. I hope you take from this House our love and best wishes to your niece, to your sister, and to their family as they begin their journey of healing.

Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of the member's niece, I would like to close second reading of Bill No. 133.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 133. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable Government House Leader.

[3:30 p.m.]

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 135.

Bill No. 135 - Nova Scotia Power Privatization Act and Nova Scotia Power Reorganization (1998) Act.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Business.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 135, an Act to Amend Chapter 8 of the Acts of 1992, the Nova Scotia Power Privatization Act, and Chapter 19 of the Acts of 1998, the Nova Scotia Power Reorganization (1998) Act, be now read a second time.

This legislation will support the competitiveness of one of Nova Scotia's largest private-sector employers, Emera. For context, the 1992 Act established Nova Scotia Power as a publicly-regulated private-sector utility and the 1998 Act enabled the creation of Emera, the energy corporation that now holds subsidiaries - such as Nova Scotia Power - along with other utilities in the U.S. and Caribbean.

The amendments remove the provision that blocks non-Canadian residents from owning more than 25 per cent of voting shares of Emera Incorporated. Emera asked government to amend the legislation because that rule limits their funding flexibility and ability to grow.

There are more than 100 publicly-traded North American utilities and power producers - 30 of those being Canadian companies - and Emera is the only one with restrictions on foreign ownership of shares. To continue to grow in the global energy market, it is critical to have access to capital and the ability to use shares as currency. If we want a Nova Scotia-based company to be able to compete with other energy companies on a level playing field, we need to do our part from a policy perspective.

This legislation maintains the rule - the very important rule, I might add - that no outside entity can hold or control more than 15 per cent of the voting shares of Emera, and shareholders are prevented from teaming up, so there's no ability for a takeover here. The

legislation will also reinforce the requirement for Emera and Nova Scotia Power to maintain their head offices and principal executive offices in Nova Scotia.

A couple of important points on that: this was the government's proposal on this piece around head offices, and Emera was very supportive of it. They are fully committed to maintaining their head offices in Nova Scotia, and this is a great opportunity to reinforce that commitment. The existing legislation does have requirements along these lines, but we added amendments that strengthen it. Frankly, Nova Scotia has seen too many head offices come and go or stay in name only.

Public corporations like Emera need to be able to use their shares to grow. At the same time, the province understands the value of head offices as economic magnets and drivers. Head offices are the key to sustaining and fuelling the kind of economic ecosystem Nova Scotia is building.

It is also important to understand that this was never a quid pro quo. Both government and Emera recognize the good sense of both amendments, the signals they send, and the impacts they have both here at home and around the world.

These amendments will have absolutely, positively no impact on Nova Scotia Power ratepayers. It is important to have growing innovative companies like Emera truly rooted in our communities even as they continue to grow and thrive internationally. The amendments will help them expand and innovate more, and that's what we want all Nova Scotia companies to do. This government is committed to creating the conditions to support economic growth for entrepreneurs and innovators, small businesses, and large employers.

Nova Scotia-based businesses are competing with the world. We need to make sure the playing field is level to help them thrive here at home as well as abroad. With that, I will take my place and listen to my colleagues across the floor.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, this is a very brave government. We're still hearing about people who were upset about the privatization of Nova Scotia Power - well, I guess it would be about 20 years ago now. I have no doubt that many of those people will question this legislation. I know in the coming year we may see some changes in the power rates, which people may connect the dots, whether they're there or not, to this legislation. I say that with a bit of jest, but I also say that for many people who will interpret the two as being connected.

What we do like about this bill is ensuring that the head office of Emera stays in the province. It is good to see that, and I'm sure there was some negotiation between them and the government with this bill. We do know that at the end of the day Nova Scotia Power, which is the entity of concern to this province in terms of our power rates, is

regulated, and at the end of the day it is within the government's control to control what service people receive and all asset approvals and power rate approvals. Of course, whatever assets they're buying and using to generate the power, Nova Scotians are paying for all of that essentially, so government still retains the power through all of that regulation.

This bill is probably good for shareholders of Emera. If there is a potential listing in the New York Stock Exchange, that will then place the company before the eyes of many people who may not have taken the opportunity to look at the company before, so that is good for Emera and for its other companies. You know, Nova Scotia Power is just one of its companies that fall under Emera and we know they have operations all over North America, so I think from that perspective, it's positive for shareholders.

I do think the public will likely raise some concerns about this bill, and we look forward to seeing all sides of it at the Law Amendments Committee.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words on this bill; I think they'll be less charitable than those of my colleague.

As he mentioned, there are many Nova Scotians who are still upset about the privatization of Nova Scotia Power, and the reason they're upset is that as with most privatizations, you're promised better service and cheaper bills when the market gets hold of something, and we haven't seen that.

This bill, as it's been said, allows Emera to increase its profits, but it doesn't ensure any increased investment in Nova Scotia, and it doesn't ensure any increased benefits to Nova Scotia Power customers, so at the very least, I would say this bill represents a missed opportunity. Emera is generating significant profits, even in the media that came out around the introduction of this bill, that was the focus. Emera is strong, they are buying up all kinds of power utilities, they are making a lot of money, their shareholders are actually seemingly doing just fine.

Their revenue last year was \$6.25 billion. Their gross profit last year was more than the entire revenue of the P.E.I. government - it was \$2.65 billion in gross profits. Yet, Emera takes the hundreds of millions of dollars it collects from us ratepayers every year and guess where those go? They go to those shareholders, the shareholders who will benefit from this legislation.

But in the meantime, and I can speak to this from my own constituency, we experience more frequent power outages, our rates are not going down, and not withstanding some investments through other departments in solar our power grid isn't getting much greener.

I have a friend who moved to Dartmouth and in one neighbourhood, which we've alerted Nova Scotia Power about but have not seen any significant work on, they had eight power outages in their first year as residents of Dartmouth.

Downtown Dartmouth loses power all the time. To be in the downtown core of the largest municipality in the province and to not be sure every time the wind blows hard or we get a snowstorm, which in Nova Scotia is an awful lot, whether your power is going to go out, that signifies a problem to me. These failures impact Nova Scotian businesses and consumers, as well. We've lost the power grid in downtown Dartmouth a few times recently as well.

Our position, Mr. Speaker, is that Emera is already not investing enough of its profit back into our infrastructure to deliver us more reliable power, to lower our rates, to build more renewable energy infrastructure.

Again, Mr. Speaker, this bill is a missed opportunity. This was an opportunity to address some of the issues we have here, as Nova Scotia Power ratepayers, Emera being the parent company. We didn't do that.

Going forward as it is now, every time Nova Scotia Power makes an investment in our power the ratepayers pay for them. It is not those \$2.65 billion of profit that could cover some of those investments. It's the ratepayers. It's people of Nova Scotia.

The brand-new Nova Scotia Power building in Halifax, formerly the Electropolis sound studio, which has been turned into the state-of-the-art suite of offices, needs a new roof. It's a brand-new building, it needs a new roof because the job wasn't done right. Guess who is going to pay for that new roof? Ratepayers are going to pay for that new roof; \$1.65 million of further expenses of Nova Scotia Power are going to be put through to Nova Scotian ratepayers.

This bill doesn't do anything to change anything for Nova Scotians who experience failures of the power grid, who experience high electricity rates, and who still don't have a reliably green grid. This bill is a missed opportunity.

The minister in his opening remarks said that no other power company has these same restrictions on foreign ownership. Again, isn't that an opportunity for us to be a leader in this area? Emera is not hurting, Emera is thriving. So, for people who are happy at privatization, they are doing fine. Emera said it needs to be more competitive. I would argue that they are very successful, so I am not totally clear why this change is required at this time, particularly as I've said, without any assurance that there will be improvements made for the people of Nova Scotia and the customers of Nova Scotia Power.

We are disappointed in this bill because what this bill does is it supports increased profits for Emera and it gives nothing back to Nova Scotians, except for head office. The

head office is already here, we're glad to see the provision in that bill. We're glad to see that that provision was strengthened so the CEO and some people who report to that CEO will have to work in an office in Nova Scotia. But even with those strengthened provisions, it's totally unclear how that will play out.

Like my colleagues, I also look forward to hearing what people have to say in Law Amendments Committee, and I look forward to more discussion at third reading.

THE SPEAKER: If I recognize the minister it will be to close the debate.

The honourable Minister of Business.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the honourable members opposite for their comments and I will join them, as always, in looking forward to Law Amendments Committee. It's really where our legislation, all government legislation - we get an opportunity to hear what people think, and I'm sure advocates from different sides will come out to express their concern.

I think I'm going to respond to the comments from both honourable members and they are probably going to be sort of mashed together a little bit, because it's an ebb and flow of Nova Scotia Power and Emera, the parent company.

First of all, both of my colleagues referenced the privatization and the impact of that one way or the other. That was 1992 and 1998. I have no idea what the impetus, the motivation for the government was at that point. They might have been the right decisions, they might have been the wrong decisions. I don't know the details, I haven't done a significant amount of homework on that. All I know is that we are where we are.

The member for Inverness said something that is absolutely correct, and on behalf of our caucus and government, I'd like to thank him for referring to us as being brave, Mr. Speaker. That was a joke that turned into one of those awkward moments.

It is brave in the sense that for anybody, any government to stand up and talk about something that has a positive impact for Emera and Nova Scotia Power, there's going to be a natural reaction to that in this province, there's no doubt about it. That is where a bit of the brave comes in, I don't want to sound sanctimonious or cliched here about our government but that's how we know it's the right decision. This is the right thing to do and I'll get into details why again after the Committee on Law Amendments and third reading, so we'll get to talk about this more.

The reality is, they're one of 100 utilities that have to compete on a global marketplace and investments are important. When they're capped at a particular borrowing rate at 25 per cent foreign ownership and none of their competition is, it restricts their

ability to go out and raise the capital they may need for major projects; mega projects, which are impactful to Nova Scotia as the home base for Emera.

[3:45 p.m.]

The Nova Scotia Power issues are very separate from this. Nova Scotia Power is still going to exist. The URB is still going to operate the processes. Nova Scotia Power is still bound by the original borrowing requirements, the ownership requirements, the outside, non-Canadian ownership requirements. Nothing changes for them. This is the parent company of course. When we talk about power rates and stability on service and such, that's a conversation that's always ongoing for all of our communities, for the Minister of Energy and Mines, for me as the Minister of Business, and for all of us as MLAs. That's not going to change; nothing happens with respect to that.

On the stock price, there's no comment to make either way. Bruce Marchand from Emera was asked that yesterday and he said the same thing, there's no definitive way we can tell what's going to happen with the stock price.

But that was the need for confidentiality, which puts us all at an uncomfortable level; when you have to sort of keep the bill under wraps for a significant amount of time. That's the reality of it.

When you look at this, this is not a guarantee of - and I'll close on this topic - this is not a guarantee of increased profits for Emera. It's a greater opportunity to raise capital outside of Canada, and they have to make decisions on projects and if those projects are successful, then they obviously benefit from that; if they're not successful, they have to deal with the consequences of bad decisions. Good and bad decisions are going to impact their operations just like they always had. Their profits and their ability to pay their bills is no different, this just allows them to manage the cost of borrowing on very significant investments that they'll make.

Back to my original comments, I understand the Nova Scotia Power-Emera concern. Even to stand in my place as the representative for the government on this legislation and talk about it, it gets risky, but Emera is a corporation. They are a corporation that are here. I'm really happy their headquarters are here.

A lot of Nova Scotian families who are connected, obviously, to Nova Scotia Power and Emera are happy that they're here. They're a huge employer. They're a community operator. I'm not going to use this to sing their praises but at the end of the day they're an important, valuable corporation. They're one of our largest and I think they're not at that 25 per cent threshold so they're not pushing for this, they don't need this.

When the question is: Why now? It's because we want to get this in place as we move towards the significant pieces of legislation that reduce red tape for the private sector.

This was our timetable; it wasn't their timetable. There was no definitive timeline. They're not at the 25 per cent threshold, they're at about 19 per cent, so there was no definitive need for this now.

When we talk about corporations and if this turns into success, if they open up their capital requirements, open up their investment portfolios and bring in more by way of investment and increase their capacity in other jurisdictions, in Canada and abroad, that equals success.

We're happy when Michelin succeeds; we're happy when Oxford Frozen Foods succeeds; we're happy when Sobeys succeeds. This to me is no different. Again, I will say it very clearly, I get the connection with Nova Scotia Power and the fact that ratepayers, all of us, have issues with supply, with price, with cost, with all of those things. At the end of the day, Emera is a homegrown Nova Scotia corporation and when they succeed, it's good for our economy.

We're always going to have those conversations and concerns about power rates, always going to have those conversations about affordability, renewable energies, the impact on the environment by way of power generation, but this is not about that. This legislation is very narrow in its scope and focus. This is about giving Emera the opportunity to compete with those 100 other companies, utilities, so we can grow and they can invest.

Certainly, as they use their subsidiaries, they're going to look at those key investments and Nova Scotia is a key jurisdiction for them, so we would certainly anticipate that they'll look at those opportunities that enhance job creation here, enhance stability for Nova Scotia Power, keep people working, and control the power rates by way of the URB.

So, with that, I do appreciate, again, the comments from my colleagues opposite. I truly look forward to the Law Amendments process, and with that I would like to close Second Reading on Bill No. 135.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 135. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Law Amendments.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Government Motions.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole on Supply.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

TIM HALMAN: I rise this afternoon to speak on Supply, to speak on a number of issues related to the budget that's being put before this House.

The other day when I was sitting at my kitchen table going through the estimates, which I have no doubt all of us in this House do as per our responsibility, my oldest child, who is in Grade 5, came to the table and sat down and I started to show her what a provincial budget looks like. I think it's very important that while I'm part of this journey as an MLA, my kids learn the functions of government and what a budget is.

She asked what a budget was, and I said that this is the accounting of the province, just like Dad puts together a budget for our house. We want to make sure that the things that we're spending maximize the household, the things that we're spending improve our quality of life. A province or a country, I indicated, is no different - absolutely no different. You have to have a number of factors that go into constructing a budget.

Let me start off by saying that I firmly believe that it is fundamental for any jurisdiction, whether it's a municipality, a province, or a nation, to live within its means. I grew up at a time in the 1980s and the early 1990s when deficit spending was the norm of governments, and that certainly limited options for governments when I was a teenager in the 1990s. I certainly have an appreciation, as I know other members of this House do, of balanced budgets.

As I said, a number of ingredients go into constructing a budget and one of the values that I have, I certainly know the Minister of Health and Wellness has as well, with what he said the other day with regard to balanced budgets - this is a critical ingredient - but what ingredients when you take a comprehensive look at what a proper budget should be? In many respects, while we see a balanced budget put before the House, which I believe is a positive, prudent thing to do of any government, if a budget does not take care of the needs of the people, then that budget has a social deficit.

While on paper this budget looks good, on paper this budget is balanced, I believe it poses some major significant problems for the province moving forward.

You know, Mr. Speaker, just yesterday as I was walking to Province House, just like the colleagues here, as we were on our way to Province House, we saw protestors

outside. These protestors were our health care professionals, those who are on our front lines every day. Our paramedics, our nurses, to give an example, who go above and beyond every day to ensure Nova Scotians get the best health care that they can get. They are beyond frustrated and I believe we need to pay attention to what they're saying. What they're saying is that the way the money is being allocated in our health care system is not sufficient.

You know, Mr. Speaker, when reports are issued by organizations like the NSGEU, indicating that 93 per cent of nurses believe patients are being put at risk due to working short; that 69 per cent of the respondents say they have witnessed or been involved in a near miss or adverse event at work; when 92 per cent out of 1,009 responses, say in the past five years their workload has increased; when 80 per cent say their employer's decision to change the way they interpret overtime language in their collective agreement has actually increased their workload further; when 85 per cent of respondents say their unit works short at least once per week, and 77 per cent say their employer's decision to change the way they interpret overtime language in their collective agreement has actually increased the amount of time their unit has worked short; when only 12 per cent of the respondents say they feel safe at work - only 12 per cent - we have a major problem and I believe the government needs to pay attention to that. I'll table that document with those statistics.

Mr. Speaker, in my faith tradition, the Judeo-Christian faith tradition, I'm reminded of the Book of Proverbs. Wherein the Book of Proverbs it says: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." What I believe I have read out there is that you're seeing many people, front-line workers, calling out to government saying things aren't working. When you have protestors outside of Province House, our front-line workers, telling government that the systems that are being executed are not working, I believe government needs to pay very close attention to that.

Let us not forget, Mr. Speaker, while this is a budget that is balanced on paper, it lacks vision. What happens when a government, or a budget that they put forward, lacks vision? You are going to start to see your front-line workers, those who have to execute the public policies of the province, you're going to start to see them push back because they don't buy into the government plan to address these issues.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you look at the \$11.5 billion budget, over \$4.5 billion is going to health care, \$1.4 billion is going to education. But if we pay attention to those in the system, they will tell you that the way in which services are being provided in those budgetary areas, there are major, major problems. We have our front-line workers, whether it's in education or health care, coming to Province House, telling government the manner in which money is being allocated is simply not working and I believe the source of the problem is because the government is thinking too short-term. It is time for a broader vision in health care. It is time for a broader vision in education.

It seems as though, Mr. Speaker, that often, certainly in my short time as an MLA observing this government, it seems like oftentimes when initiatives are put in place, it comes off more as effort-sprinkling rather than a strategic plan linked with a clear end goal. I'm wondering, what is the end goal? What is the vision of this government when it comes to envisioning an early 21st century health care system? I'm curious as to what this government's vision is for an early 21st century education system. Two key departments I know that are very important to my constituents: health care and education.

[4:00 p.m.]

It's just that oftentimes the actions that are being taken by this government seem to be reactionary. It seems to be almost two or three steps behind what the problem is. That's why I am encouraging this government to think longer term, to think in a visionary way.

While I was going through the Estimates, I can see that, yes, there is balance, and balance in a budget is important. I know the government's side and the Official Opposition are united in the importance of a balanced budget, but there are other ingredients that have to be factored in, and I believe it is time, now more than ever. Nova Scotians are looking for that vision, that early 21st century approach to our health care system and our education system.

Even with things relating to transportation - certainly in the last few weeks, like many MLAs, I've had a lot of calls about potholes. I've had calls about noise pollution off Highway No. 111.

To that extent, as we design our highways, we need to start thinking about perhaps putting up noise barriers. In the community I represent, we are going to be seeing a new subdivision going into Dartmouth East over the next five to seven years - the Port Wallace development - which will increase traffic enormously on the Waverley Road, which is already, during rush hour, at capacity.

There is a time in that moment for the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal to demonstrate vision, to construct and renew highways that focus on reducing noise pollution.

This is just an example of shifting your thinking, where you want to think more long term. You want to think in terms of making things better over the next 20 or 30 years, not necessarily for the short term over the next four or five years.

We have a lot of issues in this province. As elected officials, we know that. As elected officials, we know there is a lot of work to do.

While I believe balance is important in this budget, I believe in this budget there is a fundamental ingredient missing, and it is the long-term vision that this province requires.

We are into the early 21st century, and in many respects, whether it's our health care system or our education system, we are, in many regards, perhaps using an outdated way of thinking, whether it's in our curriculum, in our public schools, or perhaps in our health care system.

Look at the evidence. Our front-line workers in our health care system and in our education system have been saying for quite some time that things are not working. Investing money is important, but it must be strategic, and it has to have a vision. I say respectfully, that while balance is important, this budget is missing that fundamental ingredient.

Again, I go back to that famous line from the Book of Proverbs: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." I remind this House of that. I think that is very important. It is a key part of leadership that we recognize that there has to be a clear direction, as a government, where we want to take our province and our community.

This budget, as I've said, while balanced on paper, misses a fundamental ingredient that I believe this government should get to work on and clearly articulate to Nova Scotians the path forward in our health care system.

Again, just the very fact that there were so many out here yesterday at Province House from our health care system telling us that there are major problems with the system - I believe we should adhere to their advice and pay very close attention, because there has been a growing rift between those who develop policy and those who execute policy.

I believe it is on government to try to renew that relationship, to listen to those front-line workers who, day in and day out, have to execute the policies that government develops. That rift has been growing, and I believe this government needs to work on building those relationships and constructing policies in consultation with those who execute public policy. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, Budget Estimates is the time to examine and approve or disapprove of government spending and, upon my examination of the budget, I have a few broad strokes and then a very specific topic I'd like to discuss.

This budget puts Nova Scotians deeper in debt. This budget takes us from \$15.1 billion to \$15.3 billion in debt, \$200 million further in debt. Instead of paying down our debt, this government is spending and making spending decisions that future governments will have to find ways to pay off.

The offshore accord negotiated by Progressive Conservative Premier Hamm and his team brought \$1.3 billion in total revenue to fiscal Nova Scotia, to our budget, including

this year, \$8.2 million, this year, it's finished. There's nothing in the budget to replace this revenue source.

What will happen to our GDP if Premier McNeil allows Northern Pulp to close? It is the largest single exporter through the Port of Halifax.

In the budget, about \$1 billion comes from Canada Health Transfers. It's money from the federal government, and I believe Nova Scotia is getting shortchanged. The transfer is based on equal per capita cash for all provinces. It's not based on demographics. We know in health care the older the population the higher the cost of our health care. As our young adults leave this province to find work, other Nova Scotians return here to retire, and we have a problem with being able to afford the cost of our health care system. The federal government must be lobbied to change the Canada Health Transfer to reflect the demographics of our population.

This budget lacks vision, like my colleague mentioned, and it lacks solutions to fix the current health care crisis. I actually have two speeches, one called the perfect storm, which outlines the causes of the collective waves that have put us where we are at this moment in time, and solutions to calm the storm. But instead, I'm going to speak from a place of personal impact because the work we do here in this Legislature affects all Nova Scotians.

I am a nurse, and I see my fellow nurses hurting and they're hurting because they see patients suffering. They see people suffering. Today, we heard our Premier give a comment that we have a world-class health care system, and I beg to differ. We do have world-class health professionals, but we do not have a world-class health care system. In a world-class health care system, you do not have 93 per cent of nurses surveyed saying that their patients are at risk due to working short staffed. Our nurses are tired and they need a rest. My fellow nurses need safe working conditions that are supportive.

I'm married to the kindest man. He is a family physician and I see him getting tired. He comes home every night around 7:30 p.m., has supper, and then sits at the kitchen table and does paperwork on his computer until midnight or later every night. Lab work, referrals, WCB insurance forms. When he is on call, which is 50 per cent of the time, he's called in all hours of the night to deliver babies, see sick patients who are medically unstable. He is always tired. I try to convince him to take vitamins and eat healthy and exercise so that he feels better, but he is always tired.

We have four children and not one of them wanted to follow in their father's footsteps to become a physician. One of them, when he was only four years old, said: "Mummy, Daddy works too hard and he is never home." Now our children are grown and my husband lives with the regret that he was not there enough while they were growing up.

My husband and I left Nova Scotia in the Savage years. In the mid-1990s under then Premier John Savage things were bad here in Nova Scotia. It's hard to say if they were worse then than they are now. I remember that the morale in the health care system was so bad that we made a decision to move to Wisconsin. We had a six-week-old and a two-year-old, and I remember crying the whole drive there.

Should we have stayed in Wisconsin where my husband worked half the hours and earned 50 per cent more? No. We made a choice to come back to Nova Scotia because of family. We wanted our children to know their grandparents; we wanted our children to be able to play with their cousins and have family. We came back to Nova Scotia because we felt that we could make a difference in our home province.

When I was five-years-old, I said goodbye to my mother from cancer. I knew I wanted to be a nurse and work in health care and help people like my mum. I made that commitment at a very young age - like the member for Halifax Atlantic, I remember very vividly life at the age of five. While I am not a practising nurse in a hospital today, I use my nursing skills every day, helping the many people who come to see me, as a member of this Legislative Assembly, people trying to access health care.

I came into politics to try to help things improve and get better, but I didn't know that my work as an MLA would be so directly linked to my purpose as a nurse. Whether it is the mum who hugs me in the grocery store and then tells me about her daughter who tried to take her own life and when she took her to the emergency department was sent back home and told there is no psychiatrist for you here in this province, or whether it is the paramedic who contacts me because he is worried that EHS Medavie have not scheduled an ambulance in our area and he knows that if someone has an emergency that the closest ambulance in the nearby community may not make it in time and he knows it's not right.

Whether it's my friend whose father is in a nursing home locally and I know that the staffing situation is so poor that he and the other residents living in this nursing home are not safe, or whether it's our local emergency department that is closed because two of the doctors both have wives at home dying from cancer and they have no other doctors to help them cover the emergency shifts.

Every day I have patients coming to me desperate for help. I am a nurse and once a nurse, always a nurse, and I can't turn my back on people when I know that we can do better, and I know that we must do better. The situation that we are in right now is due to administrative failings, not health care professional failings. It is up to us here in this Legislature to lead, to lead positive change.

No one else in this province has the power to create this change like we do here in this Legislature. I believe we must start now; we must listen to one another and not turn a deaf ear or make fun across the way because we're elected under a different Party. We

were all elected by the people to serve them, not to serve a Leader, not to serve a Party, but to serve the people and to do what is necessary to fix the administrative failings, and to provide a safe and accessible health care system to the people of Nova Scotia.

[4:15 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: I would just like to remind the honourable member for Cumberland North, as she had referred earlier in her remarks to Premier McNeil with his surname - it's not proper to use surnames in this House. Just a friendly reminder.

The honourable member for Sackville-Beaver Bank.

BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege today to be able to stand up here in this House and talk at supply about this budget. Today, I want to discuss issues that I have in regard to health in this budget and how it's laid out. Particularly, the lack of how health and some of the health care issues in my community, and the adjacent community of Sackville-Cobequid, how they're not being addressed in this budget again this year. I find that very frustrating, Mr. Speaker.

I stood up last year, and the previous year, and talked in regard to the Cobequid and the expansion of the Cobequid Community Health Centre. With the QEII redevelopment plan that is now before this House that has been passed, that \$2-billion plan, I see how the Dartmouth General being impacted positively by that plan and I see how the VG Infirmity sites are being impacted positively by that plan. Unfortunately, I see absolutely no investment in the current infrastructure at the Cobequid Community Health Centre. I think that I would be remiss if I don't point that out again.

Mr. Speaker, we have a wonderful facility there that is relatively new in the Cobequid Community Health Centre. It has only been there for about five or six years now. I recall back to my time on council when the province was looking at where they were going to relocate - we had the previous Cobequid Health Centre, which was in a former liquor store that had been converted to be able to house Cobequid at the time. They were in discussions about where they were going to relocate the new Cobequid. There were a number of sites at that time that came up that were looked at - the current site was selected because of its proximity to the major highways, Highway Nos. 101 and 102.

I also remember at that time the maps that were going around that showed the catchment areas that fed into the former Cobequid site that would then be feeding into this site. I remember it wasn't just areas that were showing on the map of Sackville, Beaver Bank, Fall River, Bedford, Lucasville, those areas. It went way up into Truro, Shubenacadie was showing on the map as feeding into that Centre, Clayton Park, Rockingham, Fairview - all that area was feeding into that Centre. I remember those at the time because I thought geez, how many people? They showed the numbers, the statistics

of people from those communities that were actually coming to the former Cobequid site, and they used that as justification for the new site.

Mr. Speaker, I stand as a Progressive Conservative. Some of the Progressive Conservative policies, I may not be the most hard core of a Progressive Conservative on. But what I am a hard core Progressive Conservative on is fiscal conservatism. In fact, I point out that at the last election, of the 51 members sitting in this House, I think I ran the cheapest campaign of all 51 people in this House. Somebody else said it's not cheap, it's actually frugal.

I am a fiscal conservative, and when I see money being thrown away on something when we just don't have the money in this province to throw away, I find it very frustrating.

When I saw back in 2017, this government spent \$7.5 million to acquire that land in Bayers Lake - in some respects a new community outpatient centre there will be wonderful, because what that will then do is remove those residents from Fairview, Rockingham, Clayton Park, and Bedford - all those residents who are currently coming out and using Cobequid Community Health Centre, will be able to stay out there. That's a wonderful thing. The people in Fall River, Sackville, and Beaver Bank won't have to wait in lines now. I think that's great.

But, as a fiscal conservative, what a bloody waste of money that is. You bought \$7 million piece of property that . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Sackville-Beaver Bank will retract the phrase, "bloody waste of money."

The honourable member for Sackville-Beaver Bank.

BRAD JOHNS: I'll retract bloody waste of money.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, sir.

BRAD JOHNS: Yes, what a waste of money and as a fiscal conservative, Mr. Speaker, it drives me nuts when I see in this province the need for physicians, the need for nurses, the need that the emergency centres, and the back up.

You know, people that are coming to Cobequid Community Health Centre are now receiving something that they have never received in my 50 years of living in Sackville. It's a pink slip. They're being told that they're not going to be seen and they have to go home. So when we're investing \$7.5 million on a piece of land - we already owned Cobequid, it was constructed to be built on, Mr. Speaker.

In fact, when you actually look at the company that did the construction, I think it's Pomerleau, when you actually look on their website and you look at the plan that was laid out initially for the Cobequid Community Health Centre, that centre was laid out to be four stories. It's two stories. It was laid out to be four stories.

When they constructed that site, they put rocks in there the size of my car so that they would be able to build up. They acquired land, so that they would be able to build backwards on that site. That site was laid out, and in fact - and I've brought this to the attention of some of the members on the other side of the House - currently HRM has a ballfield that's right in front of that facility that I believe is for sale. Why this province wouldn't grab that for additional overflow parking, is beyond me.

That facility was constructed, designed, and situated to be expanded upon. Yet, here we are looking and still talking about this outpatient centre in Clayton Park. Mr. Speaker, I think that's a shame. If we had taken that \$7.5 million and invested that into a site we already had, we would be further ahead in construction, we'd already be starting there.

I went back and looked through Public Accounts in November of 2009 - there was a report that was before Public Accounts and they were debating health care, and there were representatives there from Cobequid Community Health. At that time, it was recognized that facility needed to go to 24-hour, seven-day-a-week emergency room care, which still is not there. I've brought that before the House here in the past. I've been told that the board there says that that's not needed. It is needed, but we don't see that in this budget.

We're giving out pink slips, obviously, telling people to go home because we're not going to be able to see them by 12:00 a.m. Well, obviously, if there's enough people that are there that we need to extend the hours there, why are we not doing that?

I know that it's been stated in this House that this new outreach centre that's going to be in Bayers Lake, that that's going to alleviate some of the stress off Cobequid, and I'm sure it will initially. But when we look at the growth of the areas of Beaver Bank and of Middle and Upper Sackville, growth going on in Fall River. We've got the Burnside Extension, which ironically, will run right past the existing Cobequid, which to me makes even more sense to expand Cobequid because now the people from Burnside will actually be able to jump on the Burnside connector and be to Cobequid within three, four minutes.

I just don't understand why when we're talking about \$2 billion investment in the QEII redevelopment site - it's a \$2 billion investment into health care which I applaud the government for, but yet Cobequid and Sackville are totally being ignored in that. I just don't think that that's fair. I brought it before Estimates in the past in 2017. I brought it up in the 2018 Estimates. Here I am at the budget of 2019 and there's nothing there that is going to address these things. I certainly am glad that I have the opportunity to stand up

here today in Supply and express the frustrations that not only I have, but that the people I represent.

We're having an election right now in the area of Sackville-Cobequid, that seat. It's ironic that although the current government doesn't have a nominated candidate right now in that seat, what I would point is that both the nominated candidate from the NDP and our nominated candidate, Steve Craig - both of those people are talking about the need for 24/7 care at Cobequid, both talking about expansions needed at Cobequid, both are talking about wait-times at Cobequid.

It's going to be really interesting to see who comes forward as the government's nominated candidate because they are going to have to go and knock on the doors of the people in Sackville-Cobequid and they are going to have to say well, you know our government didn't invest in there in 2017 or 2018 and it is not addressed there in the \$2 billion redevelopment plan. It will be interesting to see how that pans out at that time.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes what I want to say. I do appreciate members in this House and the ability to stand up today and speak about that. I hope it does not fall on deaf ears. I know that sometimes people sit, because I do it sometimes, and they are not paying attention and they are sitting there doing other things, but I certainly hope it doesn't fall on deaf ears today.

Before I conclude I will say I find it somewhat ironic that the two things in 2013 that this government preached on was they promised that they were going to de-privatize Nova Scotia Power, which came up here today and obviously we're not going that way, and they also promised a doctor for every resident - every person in Nova Scotia would have a doctor - and that certainly doesn't seem to be the case here either, six years later.

I guess I still have three minutes, so while I still have the three minutes, I also want to address that it's not just Cobequid where we're seeing a lack of investment by this government in health care. There was a new strip mall that was recently opened up in Middle Sackville - it has a Tim Hortons, it has a new Pharmasave, and one of the things the developer did was they actually put in a place to have a small health care clinic. I have talked with members of the NSHA about this. It is there, it's designed, it's built, it's sitting there, it's at no cost to the taxpayers, no cost to government. But yet it has been sitting there for three years with no family physician, with no nurse practitioner, with no advertisements on NSHA site for it.

Once again, it shows the lack of the investment that this government continues to put into Sackville-Cobequid-Beaver Bank-Fall River area. We're not seeing the investment in the health care that we need, and it's frustrating.

With those comments, Mr. Speaker, I'll sit down, and I thank you very much for your indulgence.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

The House will now recess while it resolves itself into a Committee of the Whole on Supply.

[4:28 p.m. The House recessed.]

[4:32 p.m. The House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole on Supply with Deputy Speaker Suzanne Lohnes-Croft in the Chair.]

[8:00 p.m. CW on Supply rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Suzanne Lohnes-Croft in the Chair.]

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The Chair of the Committee of the Whole on Supply reports:

THE CLERK: That the Committee of the Whole on Supply has met, made considerable progress, and begs leave to sit again.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

KEITH IRVING: Madam Speaker, this concludes the government's business for today. I move that the House do now rise, to sit again tomorrow, Friday, April 5th, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Business will include Committee of the Whole on Supply and then second reading on Bill Nos. 136 and 139. With time permitting, we'll move to third reading on Bill Nos. 92, 103, 105, 109, and 112.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is that the House rise to meet again on April 5th, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

We stand adjourned until 9:00 a.m. on April 5th.

[The House rose at 8:35 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 943**

By: Barbara Adams (Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage)

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

Whereas Autism Acceptance Day and Flag Raising takes place on April 1, 2019, at Grand Parade in Halifax, Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the main objective is to raise awareness amongst the general public and decisionmakers about the acceptance of those with autism; and

Whereas Autism Acceptance Canada is working to express the value of inclusion, building connections, and working toward implementing autistic pride and identity;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize that acceptance is important and that Autism Acceptance Day and Flag Raising improves knowledge of the movement to the general public to address the needs of those living with autism.

RESOLUTION NO. 944

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Bill MacKinnon for the Outstanding Service Award for both 35 and 45 years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 945

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Darrell Currie for the 2018 Long Term Service Award for 20 Years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 946

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Greg Muise for the Outstanding Service Award for 35 Years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 947

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Leo Morrow for the Outstanding Service Award for 35 Years and the Clem MacKinnon Sportsmanship Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 948

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep

members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Robert Johnson for the 5 Year Long Term Service Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 949

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Stan Hampton for the 2018 Long Term Service Award for 35 Years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 950

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Charlie MacKenzie for the Outstanding Service Award for both 35 Years and for 45 Years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 951

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Dennis Faber for the John Petrash Most Improved Fire Fighter Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 952

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured John McKay for the Carl King Officer of the Year Award, as well as an overdue 45-Year Service Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 953

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Marty Woodward for the 2018 Long Term Service Award for 35 Years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 954

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Sam Currie for the 2018 Long Term Service Award for 5 Years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 955

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Steve Willis for the Outstanding Service Award for 25 Years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 956

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Clint Verhuel for the 2018 Long Term Service Award for 20 Years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 957

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Derek Richard for the Keith Hamilton Fire Fighter of the Year Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 958

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Johnathon Debay for the Stan Groves Junior Fire Fighter of the Year Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 959

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep

members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Randy Currie for the 2018 Long Term Service Award for 20 Years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 960

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Rev. Scot Penner for the 2018 Long Term Service Award for 15 Years;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.

RESOLUTION NO. 961

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Colchester North)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is very fortunate to have so many people who volunteer for a variety of causes and give freely of their own time and expertise to help others, and local volunteer fire departments are an excellent example; and

Whereas putting out fires at homes or businesses is no longer the only job firefighters are called upon to do, and many more volunteer hours are required to keep members up to date with regular training nights, courses, and work on their certification levels; and

Whereas each year fire departments hold a banquet to honour and thank their members and the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Awards banquet last December honoured Walter McElhinney for the Outstanding Service Award for both 35 and 45 years, as well as the Clifford MacDougall Fellowship Award;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this very deserving and dedicated firefighter.