



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2019

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 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 begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a petition with the operative clause being:

“We, the undersigned, call on the Nova Scotia Government to immediately withdraw the current ‘Option for Exploration/Expansion’ of Cooke Aquaculture Inc. in Liverpool Bay. We believe that marine-based fin-fish facilities cannot be sustainably operated in a marine environment and therefore demand a permanent moratorium on this kind of aquaculture and request that all future finfish aquaculture sites be only closed containment, land-based facilities.”

Mr. Speaker, the petition contains 658 signatures and I have affixed mine, according to the Rules of the House.

THE SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

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

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

Bill No. 136 - Financial Measures (2019) Act.

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

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

The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, as Chair of the Committee on Private and Local Bills, I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bill:

Bill No. 122 - An Act to Incorporate the Pine Grove Cemetery Company, Lower Stewiacke, Colchester County.

and the committee recommends this bill to the favourable consideration of the House, without amendment.

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

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 995

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will ask for a moment of silence after I read my resolution.

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

Whereas today is Vimy Day, marking the 102nd anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge that took place during the First World War; and

Whereas the battle was the first instance in which all four Canadian Corps fought alongside one another as a single force, which included Nova Scotia's own 85th, 25th, and 106th Battalions; and

Whereas with great sacrifice and heroism, the Canadian Corps captured Vimy Ridge on April 12, 1917, when the 85th Nova Scotia Highlanders captured Hill 145, the place in which the Vimy Memorial now stands, and many say it was when Canada became of age;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly reflect upon the sacrifice made by the more than 10,000 casualties suffered by Canada at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, and remind ourselves of the sacrifices that all members of the Canadian Armed Forces make for our country to this day.

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.

I ask that all members and guests please rise as we observe a moment of silence for those Canadians who perished at the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

[1:11 p.m. A moment of silence was observed.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, may I do an introduction?

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

THE PREMIER: I draw the attention of the House to the East Gallery where we have with us today Kelly Cull, the Senior Manager of Public Affairs for the Atlantic Region of the Canadian Cancer Society, as well as Elizabeth Newman, who's a Canadian Cancer Society board member. With them is Camryn Salyzyn, a cancer survivor and a volunteer at the Susan K. Roberts Lodge That Gives. I would ask them to rise.

I wanted, especially, to recognize Camryn who is with us. Camryn is a courageous young Nova Scotian who fought her own battle and continues to make sure that all of us recognize that this disease doesn't go by age or any other division within our society. By taking on her battle, she's demonstrated that it can be beaten. By also giving back to the Lodge That Gives, Camryn, you are a great example of why this province has so much to look forward to. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 996

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

Whereas April has been designated Daffodil Month in Nova Scotia to raise funds for life-saving research and vital support services and programs for people living with cancer; and

Whereas the Canadian Cancer Society selected the daffodil, the first flower of Spring, as its symbol to represent hope for the more than 6,200 Nova Scotians diagnosed with cancer each year; and

Whereas the Canadian Cancer Society counts on the tireless support of volunteers to sell daffodils across the country to raise money for the fight against cancer;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly acknowledge April as Daffodil Month and do whatever they can to support this important cause and work.

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 Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 997

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

Whereas this week during National Volunteer Week, we recognize the critical role volunteers play across Nova Scotia in helping to build strong, inclusive, and resilient communities; and

Whereas volunteers have an impact on all of our lives, whether that is through sport, education, health care, recreation, or one of many other avenues; and

Whereas more than 410,000 Nova Scotians volunteer each year, contributing an average of 192 hours per year;

Therefore be it resolved that the House recognize National Volunteer Week and the many Nova Scotians who volunteer their time in their communities each year.

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 honorable Minister of Health and Wellness.

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

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

[1:15 p.m.]

RANDY DELOREY: Thank you. Joining us today in the East Gallery, I'd like to draw the members' attention to Joan Craig, the founder of Autism Nova Scotia; Cynthia Carroll, the Executive Director of Autism Nova Scotia; Robyn Bradshaw, and, I believe, Mariann Peters may be there as well, both of whom work with Autism Nova Scotia; as well as Roger and Kyle Angevine. Kyle is an autistic adult and long-time volunteer at Autism Nova Scotia, and Roger's his father. If they could all rise and receive the warm welcome of the Legislature. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

RESOLUTION NO. 998

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

Whereas Autism spectrum disorder is the most commonly diagnosed neurological disorder in Canada; and

Whereas with education, training, and community support, people with Autism thrive and lead fulfilling lives as contributing members of our communities; and

Whereas April is Autism Acceptance Month, a time to increase understanding and knowledge about Autism spectrum disorder and to encourage us all to appreciate and accept each person just as they are;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly show their support for those living with Autism spectrum disorder.

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 Municipal Affairs.

HON. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

CHUCK PORTER: In the gallery today with us, I would ask them to rise when I call their name. They are professional planners and my notice of motion will reflect that, but I will introduce Elizabeth Cushing, Nathan Rogers and Ahsan Habib, and with them from the Department of Municipal Affairs, Mr. Gordon Smith who works in our planning department. I'd like you all to give them a warm welcome today. (Applause)

RESOLUTION NO. 999

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

Whereas professional planners in Nova Scotia play a vital role in helping to shape our communities, protect our natural environment and cultural heritage, and support the provision of services we all rely on in our daily lives; and

Whereas 2019 marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Canadian Institute of Planners, a voluntary organization representing planners across the country of which 175 members are based in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas the Canadian Institute of Planners continues its vital work on key issues affecting the province including climate change, coastal protection, economic development, inclusive economic growth, the creation of healthy populations, the enhancement of beautiful, safe, and connected communities;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this Legislature acknowledge the importance of professional planners in our province and mark this significant milestone in the history of the Canadian Institute of Planners and wish them continued success in their endeavours on behalf of the public interest.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs.

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction, please?

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

TONY INCE: In the Speaker's Gallery, I have with me Senator Wilfred Moore - if they could please stand as I read their names - Ms. Jane Adams Ritcey, Ms. Sylvia Parris-Drummond, CEO of DBDLI, Tony Colaiacovo, Ms. Erin Sargeant Greenwood, SMU Vice President, Advancement, Mr. Malcolm Butler, SMU Vice President, Academic and Research, Mr. Tom Brophy, SMU Senior Director of Student Services, Ms. Deborah Brothers-Scott, SMU Diversity and Inclusion Advisor; and Mr. Cale Loney, SMU Communications Officer.

I'd ask the House to please give them a round of applause. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs.

RESOLUTION NO. 1000

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

Whereas on November 8, 2018, the Viola Desmond Bursary was announced to further support African Nova Scotian students in their post-secondary studies at Saint Mary's University; and

Whereas with the permission of the Desmond Family, Senator Wilfred P. Moore and his wife, Ms. Jane Adams Ritcey, established the new fully endowed bursary which will be given annually to full-time African Nova Scotian Students; and

Whereas the initial award of \$1,946 marks the year Viola Desmond, a civil rights activist and businesswoman, was arrested for challenging racial segregation in the cinema in New Glasgow on November 8, 1946:

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking Senator Moore and Ms. Jane Adams Ritcey for their generosity and support in the community.

I ask for 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

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction?

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

KIM MASLAND: Thank you. I would like to draw the members' attention to the West Gallery. Joining us in the Legislature today we have 8-year-old Brody Kouwenburg, his older brother Keegan, and they are joined by their parents Jennifer and Steven.

Brody and his family drove all the way from Oxford today to be with us for the introduction of a bill and to see his best friend from Cumberland South in action.

I would ask all members to show Brody and the Kouwenburg family the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

Bill No. 143 - Entitled an Act to Amend Schedule A of Chapter 1 of the Acts of 2018. The Education Act, Respecting Emergency Aid at School. (Kim Masland)

THE SPEAKER: Ordered that this bill be read a second time on a future day.

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

BARBARA ADAMS: I would like to draw the attention of the House to the West Gallery, in the front row - and I'll ask both of them to stand. The first person is my right and my left hand, my constituency assistant Lisa Rochon, and to her right is Karina Sanford - and I am going to be doing a member's statement about her son in a minute.

Karina works for Royal LePage Atlantic. She's the Vice-President of the Cole Harbour Business Association and she started a movement called Unplug and Connect,

forcing us to spend time with each other without talking on our cell phones. I would like the House to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

SANFORD, JAKE: BASEBALL SUPER NOVA - CONGRATS.

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Jake Sanford of Cole Harbour for all of his hard work and dedication to the sport of baseball.

Jake started playing baseball for Cole Harbour and then with the Dartmouth Arrows. After Auburn High School Jake went all the way to Nebraska U.S. to play ball for McCook College from 2016 to 2018. He now attends Western Kentucky University, an NCAA Division 1 School, for a full ride scholarship studying Sports Management.

Jake works extremely hard to exceed his goals. He has been named two-time Conference USA Hitter of the Week, has been Perfect Game's National Player of the Week, and was named a Perfect Game Midseason All-American 1st Team, just to name a few of his accomplishments. Jake has earned well the nickname, Super Nova.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in congratulating Jake Sanford.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

JOHNSON, GUYLEIGH: BOOK, *AFRAID OF THE DARK* - CONGRATS.

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Guyleigh Johnson on the release of her second book, *Afraid of the Dark*, which was launched this past January.

In *Afraid of the Dark*, Guyleigh, who is from Dartmouth North, blends poetry and prose to present the experience of Kahlua Thomas, a 16-year-old African Nova Scotian girl living in Halifax. Kahlua doesn't know her father and has a hard relationship with her mother. Throughout the book, Kahlua relates to the reader, in often-graphic and heartbreaking detail, her experience of growing up and struggling with being Black in Nova Scotia. At times she hates it; at other times, she's proud of her heritage and community. Eventually she finds solace in her Grade 10 English class, where she writes through her feelings.

Afraid of the Dark is Guyleigh's second publication, a follow-up to her debut book, *Expect the Unexpected*. It's a wonderfully written, beautiful book.

Along with being an accomplished writer, Guyleigh is a leader in our community and often works with youth in our neighbourhood. Last year, she was awarded one of the inaugural African Nova Scotian Communities Ancestral Roots Awards in arts and culture.

I ask the House to join me in congratulating Guyleigh Johnson on her accomplishment with the release and success of *Afraid of the Dark*.

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

RHYNOLD, KERRI: CANSO MINOR HOCKEY FUNDRAISING - THANKS

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the hard work and efforts of Kerri Rhynold, outgoing fundraising chair of the Canso and Area Minor Hockey Association.

Kerri's efforts as the fundraising chair for the hockey association have allowed the minor hockey program to be a huge success. Kerri's ability to raise funds for the Canso and Area Minor Hockey Association touched the lives of many young athletes in her community. This was an opportunity for them to play a sport they love and learn sportsmanship, confidence, and a love of physical fitness.

While the community is sad to see Kerri step down, they are also commending and thanking her for an outstanding job and all her amazing work and everything she's done for the children participating in local minor hockey.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Kerri for her contribution to the Canso and Area Minor Hockey Association as fundraising chair and wish her all the best as she transitions to her ongoing role as hockey mom and staunch supporter of local athletics.

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

CARTER, HAMILTON: VOLUN. OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

KEITH BAIN: Madam Speaker, Hamilton Carter was recently recognized as one of the Nova Scotia Volunteers of the Year. Hamilton has been instrumental in bringing the St. Paul Island Museum and Lighthouse to life in the tiny community of Dingwall.

Hamilton spearheaded the project and spent many hours corresponding with the Canadian Coast Guard to ensure that the St. Paul lighthouse came home to its rightful place. In 2011, the lighthouse was dismantled from its resting place of 30-plus years at the Canadian Coast Guard in Dartmouth and moved to its home in Dingwall, where Hamilton and community volunteers laboured for over six months putting the pieces back together.

I rise today to congratulate Hamilton Carter on his award and thank him for the many years he has dedicated to his community and the St. Paul Island Museum and Lighthouse, and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

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

THE SPEAKER: Granted.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I'd like to draw the members' attention to the gallery opposite, where we're joined by Carly Sutherland, a teacher, advocate, and mom, who joins us here today as we mark Autism Awareness Month. Please join me in giving Carly a warm welcome. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

**WANG, HONG/YEUNG, ERIC:
CHINESE BENEVOLENT ASSOC. - CONGRATS.**

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Madam Speaker, I rise today to applaud the success of two valued members of our Chinese community here in Halifax, Hong Wang and Eric Yeung.

Both Hong and Eric are successful business owners and restaurateurs. Hong has operated Bai Wei Grill Bar on Queen Street since 2012, and in 2017 opened her second location in Sydney, Cape Breton.

Eric is the proud owner of the thriving May Garden Chinese restaurant chain, which he has expanded to include five restaurants since he took over 25 years ago. Indeed, I was proud to join the ribbon-cutting for his new restaurant at the casino in the month of February.

Both Eric and Hong have incredible work ethic and today in this National Volunteer Week, I want to acknowledge both of their contributions, since immigrating, to serving their community through the Chinese Benevolent Association of Nova Scotia and other organizations.

Please join me in congratulating them both on their success and contributions.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

[1:30 p.m.]

JOYCE, JOHN: VOLUN. OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Madam Speaker, on April 1, 2019, the Nova Scotia Government hosted the 45th annual Provincial Volunteer Awards. Among those being honoured was John Joyce, nominated by the Barrington Area Lions Club.

John is a member of the Royal Canadian Legion where he holds the positions of Sergeant-at-Arms, chairman, and branch service officer. He continues to serve on the board of directors for both the Barrington and Baccaro Regional Curling Clubs, volunteered for VON, the Barrington Area Lions Club and much, much more.

I would like to thank John Joyce for his commitment and dedication to making a difference in his community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

SAULNIER, CHRISTINE: CONTRIB. TO PUB. DEBATE - RECOG.

LISA ROBERTS: I would like to take a moment to recognize a constituent who has contributed a tremendous amount to both Halifax and Nova Scotia through intelligent, principled interventions in public debate about how we can build an equitable and sustainable society.

Christine Saulnier is the Nova Scotia director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives which provides non-partisan research and analysis. As such, she has propelled influential research and publication on a living wage and contributed to the Nova Scotia Alternative Provincial Budget, as well as coordinating the effort of many volunteer contributors.

She is also a volunteer board member at Adsum for Women & Children and is active in several anti-poverty organizations and the Ecology Action Centre's Climate Jobs Council.

Now, Christine has taken the tremendous step of offering to serve as the NDP's candidate in Halifax for the next federal election. I am deeply appreciative of her skills and of her spirit and I want to congratulate her and thank her.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

**MERRITT, AMANDA/LANDRY, STACY:
ADORN SALON, FUNDRAISING - THANKS**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: I would like to recognize Amanda Merritt and Stacy Landry, co-owners of Adorn Salon & Spa. I recognized Amanda and Stacy last year for their success in starting a new business in Beechville and would like to again take this opportunity to highlight the special initiatives the entrepreneurs have taken to connect their business to the community.

In the spirit of the holiday season this past December, the Adorn ladies partnered with the Prospect Road Community Centre, for the second year in a row, to offer their services to seniors by providing some holiday glamour.

Haircuts and nail polish changes were offered on a pay-what-you-can basis. The funds raised from this event were donated to the Prospect Road Community Food Share, a local emergency food bank operated at St. Timothy's Anglican Church.

I ask the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in thanking Amanda and Stacy for thoughtfulness, generosity, and community spirit and wish them continued success.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

CARRUTHERS, TARA - DENTIST: VOLUN. OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

HON. PAT DUNN: Madam Speaker, volunteering means working with others to make a meaningful contribution to a better community. Dr. Tara Carruthers was recently honoured as the Town of Stellarton Volunteer of the Year. Carruthers is a great supporter of sport and a healthy way of life.

Being physically active not only improves the physiological outcomes but research has shown it can also improve cognitive function and mental health. Tara has been coaching elementary school basketball for the past 10 years. She was involved with the Pictou County Lightning Basketball Association, the Steve Nash Youth Basketball program, and found time to be the coordinator of the Pictou County Elementary Boys Basketball League. She is also a volunteer with the Heatherbell Pipes & Drums youth band.

I would like to ask all members of this Legislature to join me and thank Tara Carruthers for her countless hours of volunteering.

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

YMCA: GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJ. - THANKS

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Gender-based violence is a serious issue that primarily affects women and girls from all backgrounds, here at home and internationally. Today, I'm pleased to acknowledge a community initiative that aims to address and eliminate the problem.

In 2017, the YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth launched the Gender-Based Violence Prevention Project which works with newcomer children, youth, and families to raise awareness about this social issue and how to access resources. This year, the GBVP project facilitated workshops with service providers, settlement staff, and newcomers. Some of these workshops were hosted at the YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs in Fairview.

As the most diverse community east of Montreal, these programs serve as important resources for many newcomer families, children, youth, and individuals in my constituency.

I ask the members of this House of Assembly to join me in thanking the YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth and the YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs for this and the many invaluable resources they provide to my community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

BATTLE OF VIMY RIDGE: 102nd ANNIV. - REMEMBER

TIM HALMAN: Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 102nd anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge. On April 9, 1917, the Canadian Corps, after months of preparation, began an assault on three divisions of the German 6th Army. Vimy was part of the larger assault on Arras.

Amid shellfire, sleet, mud, and unbearable conditions, the Canadian Corps fought their way up the ridge to take the high ground. It was a stunning victory and was also the first time that all four Canadian divisions had fought together. Let us remember that it was Canada, a small colonial unit of the British Empire at this time, that accomplished what its former colonial powers could not do in retaking the ridge.

Over the weekend my children and I attended a Vimy commemoration ceremony at Citadel Hill. Army cadets did a magnificent job of honouring Canadians who gave the ultimate sacrifice at Vimy. All members of this House would be proud of the professionalism and respect those young people displayed in tribute to the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

Madam Speaker, I ask all members of this House and all Nova Scotians to take some time today and remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice at Vimy Ridge and to also remember all those who serve in our Canadian Forces.

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

MCDUGALL, DAN: CAO, CHESTER - WELCOME

HUGH MACKAY: Madam Speaker, I rise to welcome Mr. Dan McDougall, who recently joined the Municipality of Chester as their Chief Administrative Officer. Mr. McDougall has a deep knowledge of municipal government, with 12 years of experience in other Nova Scotia municipalities. Provincially he was Deputy Minister of the Department of Municipal Affairs. His most recent position was Chief Executive Officer of Housing Nova Scotia. This depth of experience will serve the councillors and staff of the Municipality of Chester as they develop and implement policies and programs in the future.

On a personal note, Dan will enjoy the beauty of our constituency, as he is an avid runner, marathon participant, and endurance swimmer. Last year he swam with his team in Mahone Bay's harbour swim and hopes to include Chester Harbour in this year's tour of swim events.

Mr. Speaker, I invite the members of this House of Assembly to join me in welcoming Dan to Chester-St. Margaret's and to wish him well in his future endeavours.

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

THOUGHTFUL FOOD PROJ.: FOOD FOR ALL - COMMEND

LARRY HARRISON: Madam Speaker, I would like to draw attention to a wonderful community initiative. The Thoughtful Food Project is a joint project between Musquodoboit Rural High School and the Musquodoboit Valley Healthy Schools Community Committee, in partnership with the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

Between now and December 20th, the students will plan, budget for, and prepare four meals for the entire school, residents of the seniors' villa, and other community members. They will host a day-long Food For All Symposium with guest speakers, visit the Hope Blooms project in Halifax, and participate in a student food action committee.

I commend all the students and organizers of this project, which aims to help youth transition into independent adulthood and support the mental and physical health of people of all ages.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**FARMER, STEVE - PHOTOGRAPHER:
PROF. & PERS. ACCOMPLISHMENTS - RECOG.**

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Madam Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to recognize an outstanding Nova Scotia artist, Ketch Harbour's very own Steve Farmer.

Throughout his over 25-year career, Steve has been called upon to photograph presidents, prime ministers, and dignitaries of all sorts. Steve's outstanding eye has led to his work being featured at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and the National Gallery of Canada. When he is not creating art through his lens, he is teaching and guiding the next generation of artists, as he is also a professor at NSCAD University.

Just recently it was announced that two of Steve's works have been accepted into the Nova Scotia Art Gallery permanent collection. When not creating art or teaching, Steve volunteers with the Ketch Harbour ratepayers association and is a proud father and partner.

Madam Speaker, Nova Scotia is better and more beautiful because of the art of Steve Farmer. His love of art, his eye for beauty, and his compassion for community make our communities a better place. I am proud to live in a community with an artist like Steve Farmer and am even prouder to call him a friend.

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

LIONS CLUBS: TREATMENT RM. PROJ. - THANKS

BRAD JOHNS: Today I rise to recognize the contributions of the Lions Clubs of Sackville, Beaver Bank, Bedford and Fall River. Under the leadership of the Nova Scotia District Governor, Perry Oliver, those four clubs have taken up the challenge to build a treatment room in the oncology and hematology departments at the IWK Children's Hospital.

They've led the campaign to raise \$25,000 in just four months to make the treatment room project a reality. Once this project is completed, in June, it will provide treatment services for children from across the Maritimes who are dealing with cancer diagnoses.

I ask that all members of this House of Assembly thank the Lions Clubs of Sackville, Beaver Bank, Bedford, and Fall River for this project and others, and their charitable service to the people of this province.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

**FITZGERALD, CATE/TEAM MOORE:
QUARTER-FINAL VICTORY - CONGRATS.**

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the achievements of Cate Fitzgerald, the lead position for the Canada Girls curling team and the rest of Team Moore.

After the gruelling schedule of 13 games in 7 days, Team Moore finished fourth. The team won the quarter final beating Saskatchewan. After losing a close semi-final to Ontario, they ended up winning against New Brunswick to bring home the bronze medal. It was an unforgettable experience for Cate and the girls and so well-organized by Team Nova Scotia and its mission staff. With only four days rest, Team Moore was off to Truro to compete in the Under 18 Provincials. The girls won that competition and will compete at Nationals in Edmonton.

I ask this House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Cate Fitzgerald and Team Moore on their win. I wish them great success in the future.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth on an introduction.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I would like to bring the Assembly's attention to the West Gallery where I have a lifelong friend who just happened to be in the gallery today. I would like to introduce the House to Vanessa Fells who is the program coordinator of the Decade program and who is a lifelong friend of mine and a lifelong activist as well.

We're really proud to have her in the gallery today and I would ask the House to join me in welcoming Vanessa. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

RICHARDS, BETTY: VOLUN. OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and applaud Betty Richards on being recognized as Pictou's Volunteer of the Year at the 45th Provincial Volunteer Awards ceremony on April 1, 2019.

Betty has been a dedicated and loyal volunteer in Pictou for over 30 years, she primarily devotes her time to the Shiretown Nursing Home. Betty will pitch in wherever she is needed, whether it is with the recreational department, the library, or assisting residents with chores or reorganizing their rooms. She is always there to help. As part of the Shiretown family, many of her closest friendships are a result of her involvement with the staff and residents of the nursing home.

It is with great pleasure I congratulate Betty on her well-deserved recognition.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

PRIME, JIM: RED SOX BASEBALL, CONTRIBUTIONS - CONGRATS.

KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, today the 2018 World Champion Boston Red Sox will be presented with their World Series rings at Fenway Park, so today is an appropriate day for me to recognize one of Nova Scotia's biggest Red Sox fans, Jim Prime, of New Minas.

Jim not only is the founding member of the Bluenose BoSox Brotherhood, he also helped organize the Nova Scotia tour of both the 2007 and 2013 World Series trophies. In addition to his home, painted in the colour of Fenway Park green and with a room dedicated to the Red Sox, Jim has also expressed his passion for baseball as a writer. He has penned some 15 books, including co-authoring a book on the game's greatest hitters with Baseball Hall of Famer, Ted Williams.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly not only to join me in celebrating the Red Sox 2018 World Series Championship to but also congratulate Jim Prime on his literary contributions to Red Sox baseball.

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

HOPKINS, REBECCA: SEA ADVENTURE 2018 - CONGRATS.

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Rebecca Hopkins from Port Morien, as she was one of 18 Rangers selected from across Canada to travel to the Our Cabana, World Girl Guide Centre in Cuernavaca, Mexico, for Sea Adventure 2018.

While there she participated in a service project at a turtle camp in Acapulco. She also had a day of discussions on the topic, "Stop the Violence Speak Out For Girls." Rebecca also learned about the culture of Mexico and basked in the sun while we were here in the snow.

Mr. Speaker, I stand today to congratulate Rebecca Hopkins on the amazing adventure she was chosen to go on and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

THOMPSON, SHELLEY: BREAKING THROUGH THE LENS - CONGRATS.

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dartmouth North's Shelley Thompson on being the only Canadian to be shortlisted for the Breaking Through the Lens program, which will take place at this year's Cannes Film Festival.

Breaking Through the Lens curates a small selection of the highest-quality feature films directed by women, projects that are already far along in development but not yet made, and gives them the opportunity to pitch in front of top-tier financiers. This year the program had over 200 applications from 54 countries.

Shelley has been shortlisted for her feature film in development, *Dawn, Her Dad and the Tractor*, which is the story of Dawn, a young trans woman and her estranged father, who begin to repair their relationship as they restore an old tractor together.

Shelley has been an actor for many years, but only in the last few has she taken the giant leap and begun writing and directing her own film scripts. She has had so much success and I know we will hear of the success of this upcoming feature when it is finally funded and shot. She's also a strong voice for transgender rights and uses her artistic talent to give voice to an often-silenced community.

I ask the House to join me in congratulating her on this very big accomplishment.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

RANKIN, IAIN - MLA: 36th BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to take a quick moment and ask that the House give a large round of applause, today is a very special day for the larger-than-life, newly married MLA for Timberlea-Prospect. It's his 36th birthday and for his birthday, we are going to give him four hours in Estimates. Happy birthday, Rankin. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

BULLDOGS 15U A TEAM: PROV. BASEBALL CHAMPS - CONGRATS.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the Bridgewater Bulldogs 15U A team. The Bridgewater Bulldogs are the 2018 15U A Tier 2 Nova Scotia provincial baseball champions.

They defeated the hometown Clark's Harbour Foggies in the finals of the six-team tournament. Players Aiden Corkin, Ethan Corkum, Jean Luc Gaudet, Benjamin Gouthro, Charlie Harris, Jack Laws, Nicholas MacIntosh, Brett Risser, Jacob McCharles, Owen Parsons, Keegan Wade-Parker, Brandon Wentzell, and Jaelynn Zinck, along with head coach Chris Zinck and assistant coaches Steven Risser and John Laws, are members of the championship team.

I'd like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating the Bridgewater Bulldogs 15U A team for bringing home the banner to our community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

HOLLOW LOG CAFÉ: LIVE MUSIC - APPLAUD

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, the Hollow Log Café in Caledonia has become a popular year-round spot for residents and travellers alike. It is a place for people to enjoy delicious home-cooked food in a cozy and welcoming atmosphere. Now, it is also a place where people can enjoy live entertainment on its regular music nights.

Indeed, local residents have taken to watching for the next musical gathering and marking it on their calendars as a not-to-be-missed event. Music nights are now filled to capacity, with guests not only feasting on delicious meals such as the famous Log Loader Burger, but sharing great music, conversation, and laughter.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate and applaud Cindy and the Hollow Log Café staff for its dedication and year-round commitment to be a hub of entertainment and community spirit in Caledonia and in North Queens.

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

N.S. NURSES: STAFF SHORTAGES - CONCERN

LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, a recent NSGEU survey of more than 1,000 nurses say their safety, and that of their patients, in hospitals is being compromised by staff shortages and overwork.

Locally, the shortage can be seen in the more than 200 unfilled provincial nursing positions currently listed on the Nova Scotia Health Authority's website. The Authority acknowledges that there are recruitment challenges in rural areas, like mine in Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River, and in services requiring special skills, such as intensive care. Eighty-five per cent of nurses surveyed said that their units are short-staffed at least once per week. When nurses are short-staffed, the consequences absolutely affect both their patients' well-being and the nurses' safety. The vast majority, 92 per cent, said their workload had risen in the last five years.

Mr. Speaker, the core problem here is not enough long-term care facilities and beds for seniors, so when will the government address this core problem?

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

GILLIS, MYRNA - CEO, AQUALITAS: BUS. LDR. OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the CEO of a Bedford company on her recent selection as Bronze Business Leader of the Year at the Halifax Business Awards.

Myrna Gillis is a long-time Bedford lawyer, a Queen's Counsel who is well-known as a skilled and caring advocate. She's also co-founder and CEO of Aqualitas, a licensed cannabis producer. The corporate offices are in Bedford, while the 80,000-square-foot production facility is located in Brooklyn on the South Shore.

The company grows both medical and recreational cannabis organically featuring an environmentally sustainable aquaponics system that uses koi fish. Aqualitas is the fourth Nova Scotian cannabis producer in the province to receive its commercial sales licence. I'd also like to note that the board and C-level executives are mostly women.

I'd like to congratulate Myrna Gillis on her successful company and on her award from the Halifax Chamber of Commerce.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

ATL. MEM. PK. SOC.: CHAPEL POINT BATTERY PARK - THANKS

EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the herculean efforts of the Atlantic Memorial Park Society as they move forward with their \$21.7 million project. This project will provide visitors the opportunity to take a trek through Canada's military history.

This year, Phase 1, Chapel Point Battery will receive a restoration of its observation post, gun batteries, searchlights, power house, and several below-ground fortifications - a Mi'kmaw encampment is also planned.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the more than 50 volunteers, led by Cyril Aker and Brian Ferguson, for their endless hours of very hard work to create this world-class park.

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

LAFARGE PLANT: BURNING PLAN & CLIMATE CHANGE - CONCERN

LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, the LaFarge plant is currently shut down but will reopen at mid-May, and their plan to burn rubber tires will begin in June.

Resident Fred Blois and others launched a Nova Scotia Supreme Court challenge arguing that the July 2017 decision to approve the pilot project did not properly assess the impact of plant emissions; however, this challenge was dismissed by Justice James Chipman. The Court also blocked Doug Hallett, a toxic chemical expert, from providing evidence in support of this citizen group, which essentially suppressed the information.

Mr. Speaker, given that climate change is the biggest threat to our planet and Nova Scotia is under threat of rising tides, how can the Minister of Environment allow this to go ahead? I hope that in the future she will stop it after the one-year pilot program.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

PARAMEDICS: SERVICE AWARDS - CONGRATS.

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, in November, plaques displaying a set of five stamps released by Canada Post were presented to three Mahone Bay paramedics. These plaques were created to recognize and honour the crucial work carried out by emergency responders.

I rise today to acknowledge three Mahone Bay paramedics who were presented with these commemorative plaques: Peter MacPherson, who has 27 years of service; Gary Dares, who has 33 years of service; and Brooke Rhuland, who is in her first year as a paramedic.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask that you and all members of this House of Assembly please join me today in congratulating these paramedics for being recognized for the vital service they provide to our communities.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

BATTLE OF VIMY RIDGE: WOMEN & MEN OF COURAGE - REFLECT

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Today, in honour of those who sacrificed their lives on April 9, 1917 - 102 years ago. Canadian soldiers fought their way up Vimy Ridge amid sleet, mud, and shellfire; 3,598 Canadians lost their lives and 7,000 were wounded in the four-day battle.

April 9, 1917, is the bloodiest day in Canadian history. The Battle of Vimy Ridge was the first time all four divisions of the Canadian Corps had fought together and this symbolically showed the strength of Canadians when we fight as one. Some historians believe the strategic victory at Vimy Ridge symbolizes Canada's coming of age as a nation.

There is a time for war and a time for peace. Let us all have hearts that strive for peace, but also have the strength and courage to stand and face the darkness, with no fear,

with the strength of the men and women that came before us, like those that died that day on Vimy Ridge.

Mr. Speaker, today I stand in awe of their sacrifice and ask that we all take time to reflect, to pray for the souls who fought for us as a country, and for those who serve in our military today.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

CRESS, AMANDA: SPREADING HOLIDAY JOY TO SENIORS - RECOG.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Amanda Cress of Aylesford on founding Spreading Holiday Joy to Seniors this past September. Amanda had the wonderful idea to craft handmade cards for seniors as a way to spread joy to those living in residences this past holiday season.

With the help of her daughter, Amanda began this initiative, which quickly saw an outpouring of community support. In fact, a total of 1,377 cards were made by people of all ages from across the province. In the spirit of inclusivity, they also accepted donations to purchase supplies for those who wanted to participate but needed the supplies to do so. These cards were then personally delivered during visits to seniors living in residences from Windsor to Annapolis.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of the House join me in recognizing Amanda Cress on founding Spreading Holiday Joy to Seniors, an idea that quickly turned into an impactful initiative that put smiles on hundreds of seniors' faces this past holiday season.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

KOUWENBERG, BRODY: DEDICATION, AED AVAILABILITY - THANKS

TORY RUSHTON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an energetic and determined eight-year-old Nova Scotia boy. Brody Kouwenberg was born with what he calls a sick heart and relies heavily on his pacemaker. Brody has had several heart surgeries, and at the early age of eight-years old has had many more heart surgeries than most will ever experience. Brody is dependent upon his pacemaker and an AED nearby, in the event his heart does stop.

Last year in September, Brody was expected to miss school for two weeks when our school, his local school, was put down for minor repairs. After two weeks that school was equipped with an AED. Since that day, Brody has made it his personal mission to see every school in Nova Scotia equipped with an AED and proper training.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask this Assembly to join me and many other Nova Scotians to show our thanks and appreciation to Brody Kouwenberg for his positivity and dedication on this great cause. A job well done, Brody.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

A.F. THERIAULT: 80 YRS. IN BUS. - CONGRATS.

GORDON WILSON: Family businesses continue to be the mainstay of our rural economies, some remaining in the hands of the same family for generations. Over 80 years ago, Gus and Elizabeth Theriault founded such a family business in Meteghan River, a boatyard. It is now the largest and oldest family-run boatyard in the province, run by the third and fourth generations of the Theriault family. The company has come a long way since the days Gus and his crew built wooden boats for the local market. The company now builds state-of-the-art boats, from fishing boats to commuter ferries, which are shipped all over the world.

To celebrate their 80th anniversary, A.F. Theriault hosted an employee-appreciation day and family day last October. The day was an opportunity for everyone to celebrate the company and its employees, and to see the company's new office building and marine railway. At the celebration, the Premier described the company as "an outstanding journey of great success," a journey that the Theriaults are committed to continue.

Congratulations to A.F. Theriault on their first 80 years and on to the next 80 years.

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

SAERC TEAMS: CURLING SUCCESS - CONGRATS.

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to the SAERC boys curling team who recently captured the Highland Region Championship and then went on to a silver medal at the Provincial Championship held in Truro. The team boasted a record of three out of four preliminary-round games.

Mr. Speaker, special congratulations goes out to skip Michael Steele, second Federico Zovatto, as well as Simon Maltby, Gabriel Organ, and alternate Juan Jiminez, an international student, who says he will have to explain curling when he gets back home to Spain.

Also, Mr. Speaker, the SAERC mixed team were Highland Region Champions for high school curling. Representing the Saints on the mixed team were skip Emmett McIver, as well as Kate Steele, Andrea Zovatto, and Kate Phan from Vietnam.

The coaching staff of the teams are to be commended for their time and expertise in helping these two teams achieve success. I ask all members of this House to join me in extending our congratulations to all players and coaches.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Premier on an introduction.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I draw the attention of the House to your gallery. We're joined by the Ambassador to Canada from Ireland, Jim Kelly. Ambassador, I'd ask you to stand.

[2:00 p.m.]

As you know, on the 29th we will begin direct flights into Dublin. We all have a connection to Ireland of some sort or another, and I think our biggest connection to you, Ambassador, is sitting next to you in Brian Doherty. (Applause)

I would ask Brian to stand as well and receive the appreciation of the House, not only for continuing to look after us at certain hours of the day but also for continuing to make sure that your heritage is well represented here in the city and in the Province of Nova Scotia. (Standing ovation)

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. We'll now move on to Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers, and we'll add one minute to the end of Question Period.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

GOV'T. (N.S.): NSHA - CEO EXEC. SEARCH

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, about six weeks ago, Nova Scotians learned that the current CEO of the Nova Scotia Health Authority will be stepping away at the end of the summer. This gave the province about six months to recruit a new CEO. At the time of the announcement, the board of the Nova Scotia Health Authority committed to beginning the executive search in the coming weeks.

My question for the Premier is: Six weeks later, has an executive search been started to find a new CEO of the Nova Scotia Health Authority?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as he would know, the board will be doing that search and that work is ongoing.

TIM HOUSTON: The challenges that we're facing in the health care system have been well reported in this House: tens of thousands without a family doctor, ER closures, insufficient long-term care beds, ambulance backups, Code Critical, tough conditions, and an inflexible administration that in many people's eyes is chasing health care professionals away from the province. We learned last week that 9 out of 10 nurses are concerned about their ability to safely provide appropriate care for their patients.

My question to the Premier is: How would the Premier characterize the last five years of health care under the new Health Authority?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. It gives me the opportunity to talk about the transformation in health care.

The fact of the matter is we had nine district health authorities. We had siloed services across the province depending on where you live. We now have one system where there have been challenges associated with accessing primary care, but much of it is being attributed to around the administrative side. The amalgamation of the administration provided us with savings. The reality of it is that the access to primary care challenge was long before that. You can go back to the mid-2000s.

The reality is that the changes we're making are providing access to primary care better. The honourable member just stood in his place and said tens of thousands. It was only a few months ago there were hundreds of thousands without a physician. The fact of the matter is, lives are getting better. We know there is still more work to do and we're going to continue to do that.

TIM HOUSTON: Every time you show some kindness to the Premier, he misinterprets it. There are close to 100,000 Nova Scotians without a family doctor. Everyone knows that, Mr. Speaker. The Premier is the only one in the province who won't accept the crisis that we have in health care.

Any time there is a change at the top of an organization, there is an opportunity for the organization to take stock of the direction and determine if there's a need to adjust course. I think even the most generous observer of the health care amalgamation - and we don't know what the savings are, if any, when it's all said and done - would have characterized the last five years as bumpy. The current CEO came from a clinical background within the health care system, but the challenges we face today may call for a different set of skills, like something more management driven, with more of an emphasis on technology and workforce planning.

My question for the Premier is: Has the Premier gotten involved in any full assessment of the future of the Nova Scotia Health Authority to determine how to identify the proper direction under new leadership?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. The reality of it is, over the last five years, we've seen an historic investment in infrastructure across the province - \$2 billion invested in the infrastructure providing primary care across the province. The Health Committee is the first one that has ever been put together by a government in the history of this province.

Finally, the Opposition members in that committee said that the Cape Breton redevelopment is a good thing. I hope they go back to their communities and, now that they've been presented the facts, I hope they take those facts back instead of sitting in committee and saying here, do it in your communities. Let's all of us come together to bring people together, when we know we're doing the right thing when it comes to health care and structure in this province.

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

GOV'T. (N.S.): LOWEST MEDIAN INCOME - SIGNIFICANCE

GARY BURRILL: Over the course of the last few weeks as the Premier and I have debated about the economy, sometimes it has occurred to me that anyone listening to us might wonder if we're even talking about the same object.

I've spoken repeatedly about the prevalence of hunger and about the inadequacy of incomes where people are able to pay their rent and their power; the Premier has talked about other indicators which support his view that things are going in the right direction. But there is only one economy. None of its essential features should be obscured or swept aside.

I want to ask the Premier: Does he think it is a matter of major economic significance, as I do, that Nova Scotia has the lowest median income today of any province in the country?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question.

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. I would like to remind the guests in the gallery that you're not permitted to display any signs. We'll ask the security staff to escort them out.

The House will now recess for a couple of minutes.

[2:06 p.m. The House recessed.]

[2:07 p.m. The House reconvened.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I don't agree with the honourable member.

GARY BURRILL: Without a recognition of the significance of fundamental economic indicators, it's extremely difficult for us to make any serious economic headway. I want to ask the Premier if he acknowledges the facts that Nova Scotia has the fastest rising food bank use of any province in the country? That we have the highest incidence of food insecurity of any province in the country, and that we have the most serious incidence of child poverty that exists of any province in Canada today?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again I want to thank the honourable member for the issue he's raising, it's an all-important one. That's why we continue to make adjustments. Oftentimes Opposition will isolate one particular aspect - whether it's minimum wage or income assistance - as opposed to looking at the totality of options people have.

The honourable member would know, up until our government, child maintenance was part of how you assessed income security for families or used it as income for individual families. That no longer happens.

We continue to work to make sure we can provide a myriad of options when it comes to housing and how we can support them. At the same time the pre-Primary program is providing options for a play-based spaces for all four-year-olds in the province; it will allow caregivers to get back into the workforce as we continue to support them.

I want to tell the honourable member we do not think the issue around making sure all our citizens have all the opportunities has been solved. We know there's still more work to do and we're going to continue to do it.

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, the Premier in his answer has failed to recognize the significance of the fact that in all of these areas - whether we're talking about median income or child poverty - we're not even close to the national average, nor are we 7th or 8th or 9th. In every one of these areas we are 10th out of 10. The dead rock rotten, bottom last.

If I were the Premier at the five-and-a-half-year mark and the people I serve were the poorest in the country, and that was true particularly of their children, I would examine myself and I would wonder seriously, where it was over that five and a half years that I had fallen short.

I want to ask the Premier: Does he register any sense of failure that on so many of these major economic indicators the people he serves are at the very bottom?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I listened to the honourable member and I know he was a member of a government that signed some of the richest collective agreements in our province's history.

That means, Mr. Speaker, those that are doing well are doing even better and the reality ... (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Premier has the floor.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, they can continue to yell if they like. The fact of the matter is, they signed some of the richest collective agreements in this province's history and at the same time, ignored vulnerable Nova Scotians.

I want to tell the honourable member, we've signed collective agreements that we can afford, that the honourable member voted against, so we can continue . . . (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Premier has the floor.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to continue to remind the honourable member, we signed collective agreements that this province can afford so we can invest in the very people that were ignored when the NDP were in government.

We have a pre-Primary, Mr. Speaker, for every four-year-old, regardless of the socioeconomic circumstances they were born into. We can invest in health care infrastructure that was ignored by the New Democratic Party. If there is one thing I want to tell the honourable member, I can look every Nova Scotian in the face, I've been the Premier of this province for five and a half years, and tell them I never left any of them behind.

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

PREM. - MLA ACCUSATIONS: REACH OUT - COMMENT

BARBARA ADAMS: Speaking of leaving people behind, Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. In the last few weeks we have had three former members of this House come forward and raise serious questions about the conduct of the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The Premier has said that if any member had come forward with concerns, he would take the matter seriously. They might be former members, but there are three members who have come forward with accusations.

So, my question to the Premier is: Has the Premier made any attempt to contact any of the three former members of this Legislature, who have written and spoken publicly on these accusations, to better understand their stories?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member would know those former members wrote directly to you, Mr. Speaker, and cc'd all of us. As they would also know, this Chamber falls under the Office of the Speaker.

I told the honourable member in this House repeatedly what I have continued to do, Mr. Speaker. I spoke to the member. I can also tell you those letters said that I was told in 2013, that is not accurate.

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, it seems repeatedly that the Premier would prefer that this issue went away rather than addressing it. The Premier has spoken of the regard that he has for these former colleagues, but I do not understand why he will not reach out to hear their stories.

If he, as our Premier, took these issues seriously, I would believe he would want to get the details before he dismisses this and goes to great attempts to assure us that he didn't know. He does know now.

My question to the Premier: Is the Premier not calling these former MLAs because he's worried about what he'll hear, or will he commit today to reaching out to them?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to clarify the honourable member's statement. At no point have I dismissed what was brought to you that was also cc'd to myself and the other Leaders.

Mr. Speaker, I told this House the following morning, I had my assistant who has been with me since 2008, continue to look through all the correspondence: Did any correspondence come from those two members or the former two Leaders - because it also was alleged one of these happened under the former New Democratic Premier as well as the Interim Leader. There was none.

I also went and searched through my own constituency emails to find out if there had been any. Mr. Speaker, there was no correspondence to me, and I've also said to the honourable member, at no point has anyone said to me that there was physical contact between any member of my government and those members.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable members for Dartmouth South.

H&W - ASD: UPDATED ACTION PLAN - TABLE

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. In 2011, the then Minister of Health and Wellness launched Nova Scotia's first Autism Spectrum Disorder Plan. Our government committed to doubling the provincial investment in the EIBI Program as it stood then and adding new funding for those who needed to hire additional care for their children to keep them safe at home, among other commitments.

The action plan was about more than just early intervention, though. It sketched a roadmap for meeting the needs of people with ASD across the lifespan. However, in the eight years since that plan was released, there has been no updates on the status of the Autism Spectrum Disorder Action Plan.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier commit to tabling an updated action plan for meeting the needs of people with ASD across the lifespan?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I'll ask the Minister of Health and Wellness to respond.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the question. As the member knows, we are in Autism Acceptance Month this month, so it's a very timely question to bring to the floor. We've certainly been listening and advancing improvements in supports for people living with Autism Spectrum Disorder, but also for their family members and loved ones.

We continue to advance in this area and support investments to provide new programs and services and supports, based upon feedback we continue to receive from organizations like Autism Nova Scotia.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, addressing the needs of autistic and neurodivergent individuals requires participation across departments and structures and systems. It needs a plan. Autism advocates need to know that the government has considered how different programs are set up to support or exclude autistic people. Too many people have had to make their stories public in order to get the support they need and deserve. We should be doing the work now to make sure the services are readily available when they are needed.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier or the Minister of Health and Wellness agree to conduct an audit of services across all departments, through an autism lens?

RANDY DELOREY: We have been working certainly the three departments most engaged with programs and support in this area include the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Department of Community Services, and the Department of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Speaker, we have engaged and have our staff working, I believe, closer together than they have in the past to do just that, to look at the programs and supports when community members or family members are in period of concern or crisis, to ensure we say what is the suite of programs and supports within all of our departments to come in behind and support them.

In addition to that we are investing in new programs, like the recently announced brief, intensive outreach service program, Mr. Speaker, which again brings a multi-disciplinary group of people to go out into the community or homes to support families and individuals so they don't reach a point of crisis and they get the supports they need in the area that makes the most sense for them.

THE SEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

H&W - YARMOUTH HOSPITAL: ANAESTHETIST SHORTAGE - RESPOND

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, Yarmouth Regional Hospital is now down to one anaesthetist for 55,000 people living in Yarmouth, Digby, and Shelburne Counties. I raised the matter a month ago and the departures discussed have now come to pass.

The NSHA is attempting to recruit another anaesthetist but there is no clarity on when that might happen. An editorial yesterday in *The ChronicleHerald* observed that anesthesiologists are critical to surgical procedures and surgeons won't hang around for long at a hospital where they can't perform surgery. I'll table that article.

My question for the minister: Does he appreciate the concerns that constantly having to backfill specialists' positions is the new normal?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Certainly, we appreciate the concerns when vacancies arise, particularly in specialist areas within our health care system but that's why the recruitment does continue within these areas. As the member noted, there is an existing candidate that has been identified and they are working through that process to fill that spot and continue with additional vacancies

Also, Mr. Speaker, they have temporary locum supports to continue to provide the anaesthetist support at the hospital, with a particular eye to ensure urgent and critical benchmarks continue to be maintained at that site.

CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: While I appreciate the thought of sending down locums tends to be a stopgap, we know that it will not fill the four positions that Yarmouth is funded for. Even under the three it was difficult to make things work. Under one, with a possible locum, still makes it very difficult.

It puts Yarmouth Regional in a very dire spot. Clinicians and staff are concerned about surgeries in the event the lone anaesthetist, and there might be a locum available, gets sick in the coming weeks. They are worried women in labour may need to be redirected to Bridgewater and even Kentville. We know that pregnancies don't necessarily end on time, that emergency c-sections or planned c-sections might end up happening.

My question to the minister is: Does the minister agree that the anaesthetist crisis at Yarmouth Regional is evidence that incentives and recruitment efforts at the NSHA may need to go back to the drawing board?

RANDY DELOREY: As I had indicated previously, the NSHA does have a candidate who is in the process, Mr. Speaker. My understanding there is that they're going through an immigration process, that the work and the availability is there to fill that position. That will help while we continue with the NSHA to do the recruitment process to fill the positions and we look at other initiatives to help address and support anaesthetists throughout the province.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

H&W - NSHA: AG RECOMMENDATION - LACK OF ACTION

KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. We know the Auditor General's recent report was definitely overshadowed by this government's budget. The report makes it very clear, however, this Liberal government has failed Nova Scotians. The Nova Scotia Health Authority implemented only 50 per cent of the AG's 2016 recommendations, and I will table that.

The biggest failure has been the neglect of this government to tell Nova Scotians what to expect from the health care system in terms of services delivered in hospitals, such as where to go for services that were previously offered at the VG. Nobody knows where to go.

My question to the minister: Will he admit that his department and the NSHA have failed Nova Scotians by not implementing this crucial recommendation?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: As the member would know, the report does, I believe, have a benchmark that the AG was looking for on a two-year period. I believe the data in the report also shows that on a three-year period, we were meeting those goals. While I appreciate that we aren't achieving the objectives the AG had highlighted in a two-year period, as a department, we continue to implement the recommendations.

As far as providing more information to the general public through the Health Authority and the department, we continue to do that and make progress, including recently updated wait times information that highlights both the expectations as well as how they're

performing against those expectations for things like mental health, the only jurisdiction in the country that makes that information available for the entire province.

KARLA MACFARLANE: The reality is, Mr. Speaker, people don't know where to go, and people are not getting the services they need. This Department of Health and Wellness completed only four of the ten recommendations from the AG's 2016 report. It is 2019. No wonder we continue to find ourselves in a health care crisis. No wonder health care workers continue to scream for help. No one is taking charge in this province, but we all know who should be.

I will ask the minister: Does he agree that by keeping his distance and not holding the NSHA and the department accountable, he, too, is neglecting to do his job?

RANDY DELOREY: We continue to invest in our health care system. We continue to invest in programs and supports and continue to provide supports and direction to the Health Authority when appropriate. The most recent example, Mr. Speaker, would be around emergency departments and off-loads between paramedics and the hospital system. Very clear direction, very expectations, and very clear progress and efforts being made within the Health Authority to address that concern.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

H&W - NSHA: EMPLOYEE SURVEY - COMMENT

KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Earlier this month, the NSHA issued a work-life balance survey to employees. Surprisingly though, it was removed just shortly after being sent to all the employees. We often wonder why. The NSGEU picked up the torch and launched its own survey, and I will table that survey. The results are alarming. They're bone-chilling, Mr. Speaker: 93 per cent of nurses say patients are being put at risk due to work shortages.

My question is simple: Would the minister agree?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: The work environment continues to be an area of attention for the Health Authority. They continue with recruitment initiatives. As part of government initiatives, Mr. Speaker, we continue to support the expansion of training opportunities for our health care professionals, including nurses. Just last year, there was the addition of 25 additional nurse practitioner seats. We have expanded the training opportunities for physicians... (Interruptions)

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

RANDY DELOREY: We continue, Mr. Speaker, to support these opportunities to ensure there are more people in the workforce available to fill vacancies throughout the health care system, to help improve that work-life balance.

KARLA MACFARLANE: There are 284 vacancies right now for nurses in this province - everyone feel good about that? I don't. So, clearly due to the lack of safe, proper nurse/patient ratio and staffing shortages, patient care is absolutely in jeopardy and this reality is weighing heavily on our nurses, creating more stress and an unsafe working environment.

The Premier and the Minister of Health and Wellness have been invited to shadow a nurse and experience first-hand what nurses are dealing with every day. I would like to know: Will the minister confirm if the Premier and himself have accepted this invitation?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, the member noted in the question the number of vacancies for nursing positions. I am pleased to advise the member that in fact, in 2019, we are anticipating a much larger increase in the number of RN graduates in the nursing programs in Nova Scotia - I think approximately 20 to 24 per cent - and I am quite confident that there will be jobs for each of those nurses here in the Province of Nova Scotia, to work to their full scope of practice to provide care to Nova Scotians and help address those vacancies...

THE SPEAKER: Order, please.

So, just before we move to the next question, this will be the last time I will call order for the decorum. The next time I have to call it, the member will be excused.

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

ENVIRON. - ALTON GAS: FIRST NATION CONSULT - COMMENT

LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment.

Yesterday the minister declared that consultation with Sipekne'katik First Nation around the development of the Alton Gas site have been, in her words, "sufficient."

This, Mr. Speaker, is just the latest in a series of decisions that the government has made around consultation with Indigenous peoples. In every case the government has sided with corporations and against Indigenous people's rights to protect the land and waters of their historic, and I must say, unceded, territories.

So, my question for the minister: How are people to trust her decisions when in every instance the minister has sided with corporations over people?

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I have to disagree with the premise of that question. Certainly, recent decisions that have been made shows that we're always siding on the side of science and approved evidence.

For the inference that I don't care about the river and I don't care about what happens to it, that's certainly not true either. You know, I lived on the Shubenacadie River most of my life, my family revolved around it, farming along the banks of the Shubenacadie River. You know, it's very important to me too, so that's why I had to make sure in coming up with any of these decisions that I knew the water would be protected and all of that was based on science and evidence.

LENORE ZANN: Well, I'm glad to hear that it's so important to the minister; however, this has never been done before. Taking salt from the salt caverns and dumping them into a river has never been done before by this company or any other. This is the first time and Nova Scotians are guinea pigs here.

So, yesterday the minister said the Shubenacadie River is sacred and that she once shared the concerns of the Mi'kmaw water protectors - actually I will table that. Now the minister is saying that the science and available evidence spoke to her, and so she therefore feels that dumping millions of litres of salt brine into the river will have no impact.

Mr. Speaker, in the tradition of the Mi'kmaw people, humans must always consider the impact of their actions on the next seven generations. We only get one shot here to get it right.

My question for the minister is: How is she going to assure Nova Scotians that a vital river, a sacred river, that runs all the way from the Bay of Fundy to Halifax Harbour will be protected for the next seven generations?

MARGARET MILLER: Certainly, I can agree that I did have some concerns when this first came about on my round one environment, but I made sure, Mr. Speaker, that I researched all the material myself, that I saw what was brought forward. There was proof brought by the company . . . (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Environment has the floor. The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River will excuse herself.

The honourable Minister of Environment.

MARGARET MILLER: The science was brought before me, I actually went through all the . . . (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River will excuse herself.

The honourable Minister of Environment.

[2:30 p.m.]

MARGARET MILLER: I just want to assure all members of this House and all Nova Scotians that these decisions are not taken lightly. We actually make sure that we have all the science and the best evidence before any decisions are made. We know that my role as the Minister of Environment is about protecting the environment. I take that very seriously, today and every day.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

GOV'T. (N.S.): SCHOOLS - FIRST AID

TORY RUSHTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Our schools are supposed to be a safe haven, and I believe they are here in Nova Scotia, but we can do better. How can we do that? Every school in this province is equipped with fire alarms, sprinklers and other safeguards. Staff and students practise fire drills, lockdowns and other evacuations.

My question for the Premier is: Does the Premier believe a basic level of first aid or medical attendance should be able to be administered by all staff in this great Province of Nova Scotia, for our students?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I believe our schools should be safe at all levels as the honourable member just referred to.

Earlier today a bill was tabled where a young man's education was impacted by having moved from one school to another without a defibrillator. I think we need to make sure as we go through this process that all of our schools have the appropriate level of supports that are required to provide services to all of our children.

TORY RUSHTON: I thank the Premier for the response. With varied health issues challenging all Nova Scotians, and as we may know, many health problems do not dictate age or discriminate. Does the Premier believe every school in Nova Scotia should be equipped with an AED as another safeguard for our students in this province?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. He would know from that activity today there are schools that currently have those based on the student population.

I know there was a bill tabled. I want to commend both the young men who came in along with his brother who was providing support, along with his parents. I know the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Education will look at that bill, whether this session or in the future, to make sure that if it is required, that those supports are there. But we need to continue to make sure that all of our places are safe.

I think the honourable member from Victoria County presented a bill before that was around defibrillators that was moved through. I can assure the honourable member for Cumberland South that the bill that was tabled today will get a serious look.

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

H&W: DOCTOR RETENTION - OPINIONS

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question through you, is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. As recently as last night I had the opportunity to talk to a doctor in my community who has retired. The question came up about what do we do about getting more doctors, how do we go about that, how do we retain them?

The discussion came down to what his belief was, and what many of his peers' beliefs are, that indeed with this current government and the department, doctors are not given the respect, nor are they asked for their input, on how to do this job properly.

Mr. Speaker, the question to the minister is: How does he respond to that?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question brought forward by the member. I can assure the member that we have the utmost respect for physicians and other health care providers throughout the system.

We do solicit and receive input and feedback from them. Just a few examples, we've added the position and have both people with nursing and physician expertise sitting on the Board of the Health Authority. We also, in the member's own community when I was down in Cape Breton, had meetings at all of the hospitals, basically open meetings with physicians within those communities, to hear that feedback.

Again, I assure the member I continue to listen. We have staff on the front lines as well engage in those conversations to help inform the steps that we take.

ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I am going to thank the minister for his attempt to answer the question.

The reality is that front-line health care workers, doctors in the Province of Nova Scotia, do not believe they have the proper input, and they are not being listened to.

The other thing is, he tells us about all of these committees that these individuals are put onto. The question I would ask is, are they elected by their peers or are they appointed by the government? When they are appointed by their peers and elected by their peers, then they are bringing forward the information that the peers want heard by this government.

Mr. Speaker, does this government do exit interviews? Do they allow elections of individuals to take place so they can be part of the solution?

RANDY DELOREY: I believe the member indirectly made a point that I've made on the floor of the Legislature in response to previous questions: that in fact, not everyone within the same field necessarily has the same opinions or suggestions to move forward. That is one of the reasons why it is challenging, where every time we indicate that we've listened to front-line health care workers, that we've taken their advice to perform an action, the Opposition find themselves in a position to find someone else in the health care system to say we haven't taken their advice to move their interests forward.

Mr. Speaker, I assure you we do consider all of the information that comes forward that we hear from health care professionals. We use that information to inform the decisions we make to move forward in what we believe is the right course to improve health care services across the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

H&W – MACGILLIVRAY, DR. JEANNIE: RESIGNATION - ASSIST.

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, in January I put up a Facebook post to solicit support for Dr. Jeannie MacGillivray, and 1,500 people commented in support of her. The public wants her. I've heard countless stories from people who felt the care they received from her was special, over and above what they expected. She is a great doctor with a great reputation as a surgeon.

She was forced to resign because she was put on call without her knowledge when she was out of town, and she could have lost her medical licence had she not shown up. What it was really about was a refusal by the minister's Health Authority to discuss six proposals she had put forward to create a better work-life balance. She would take her fair share of call work, based on the per cent surgeon position she was allocated.

The minister knew about this too, because he met with her in his constituency office last Fall. Why has he done nothing to help her?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: That assertion would be inaccurate. I hope the member can appreciate that I don't speak about individual employment circumstances on the floor

of the Legislature. I can assure the member that his statement and his assertion are not correct.

ALLAN MACMASTER: For the record, Mr. Speaker, Dr. MacGillivray feels the minister's Health Authority press release was inaccurate.

The truth is that Antigonish has lost 10 doctors over the past year, yet the people of Antigonish are represented by the Minister of Health and Wellness. That doesn't make sense. One would think that if the Minister of Health and Wellness was representing them, they could at least be able to count on him to look after the local hospital. Not so.

Why did these doctors leave? More money and less call work elsewhere, better work-life balance for the same income. One even paid money to buy out their contract because they wanted out.

Why isn't the minister taking an interest in the lives of doctors who have chosen to leave or have had to leave Antigonish?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I believe Nova Scotians would be expecting me to treat all areas of the province equitably. I can't believe the member for Inverness is advocating that I should take my position to disproportionately support constituents. When I took my oath as Minister of Health and Wellness, I took an oath to serve all Nova Scotians in that regard. As MLA, I serve my constituents in that respect, just like every other member of this Legislature, but I do not leverage my position to disproportionately benefit myself and my electoral pursuits.

H&W – ANTIGONISH: PHYSICIAN LOSS - ACTION

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, what's happening in Antigonish is disgraceful. I am not asking the minister to do something special for Antigonish. I am asking him to consider why 10 doctors have left Antigonish in a year. What the minister cannot deny is that these doctors have left because of the conditions created for them by this government and this Minister of Health and Wellness. How could the minister or anyone in this government refute that?

Clearly, these doctors came to Antigonish because they wanted to be there. Then, they uprooted their families and left. These are 10 doctors in one hospital that serves a predominantly rural area. Failing them is one thing but failing to take an interest in why they had to leave is another example of this government ignoring the real state of health care, ignoring people it doesn't agree with, and ignoring people it doesn't want to hear from.

Instead of defending the indefensible, will the minister do better for the people of Antigonish?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, The member in his information seems to forget to include the information about the specialists and family physicians that have been recruited and came to Antigonish. The member fails to take into account the efforts that I've taken as an MLA to connect with the local recruitment team and coordinate through my constituency office when there are prospective physicians coming to town to visit to have that meeting.

In fact, I believe there was a meeting just organized this week. I had the opportunity to attend one of those meetings, which resulted in a psychiatrist and an anaesthetist to come to Antigonish as part of attending those meetings just like very other MLA here has the opportunity to connect with recruiters and as part of their community to help support recruitment to their community.

ALLAN MACMASTER: Going through them like water. The problem the minister has created in his constituency of Antigonish is impacting my people in the constituency of Inverness. We depend on the regional hospital in Antigonish. People are sent there from Inverness and Cheticamp. Our people have been going there for over 100 years.

Dr. Pillai will eventually retire and he was counting on Dr. MacGillivray to keep the operating room going in Inverness. An opening remains for a surgeon in Antigonish. The minister's Health Authority has told Dr. MacGillivray to apply, yet they have done nothing to address the issues which have forced her to resign. She has been working in the Valley doing locums while there is vacancy for that too in Antigonish.

What more can we take from the minister's actions and the Health Authority's, what more can we take from the minister's and Health Authority's inaction other than that he doesn't care about her and the people of Antigonish, Guysborough, Pictou, Richmond, and Inverness, who need a surgeon, have lost one they can count on?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to respond by highlighting to the member the many great health care professionals and surgeons that still perform surgeries in our communities that people in the community can rely on, those great physicians to continue to provide those supports.

As I'd indicated previously, recruitment efforts continue and they've continued to be successful in Antigonish and the surrounding communities. We've had several specialists come both in Cape Breton and in Antigonish for both specialists and family physicians. These recruitment efforts will continue as we support to the people of health care not just in the community of Antigonish, not just in Inverness, not just the Strait, but from one end of this province to the other.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

H&W: E. SHORE MEM. HOSP. - PHYSICIAN INCENTIVES

TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Closures are mounting at the Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital in Sheet Harbour. Local residents are worried that not enough is being done to recruit doctors and nurses who want to practise in their community. We know that the department has offered locum and emergency physician incentive rates to other rural hospitals struggling to retain medical staff. So, I'd like to ask the minister if similar incentives are available to attract physicians to the Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital.

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, the programs and supports we have available are generally targeted towards hard-to-fill positions and vacancies. Whether or not they've been leveraged or directly utilized at that site, I'm not certain, but I can certainly inquire and get the information.

TAMMY MARTIN: I thank the minister for that answer. While the Canada Student Loan forgiveness program for doctors and nurses helps attract medical professionals to other parts of our province, the Twin Oaks Memorial Hospital, the Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital, and the Musquodoboit Valley Memorial Hospital miss out on the support because, although these communities are certainly rural in character, they fall within the boundaries of HRM.

While this rule is a federal one, Eastern Shore residents are calling on the provincial government to advocate for a solution that recognizes the unique situation of rural communities within HRM.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Health and Wellness commit to writing to his federal counterpart in order to properly classify these hospitals as eligible for assistance?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, in fact I have already been in contact with representatives of the federal government to have those conversations on this very issue, and to indicate the concerns so that they understand what the geographic environment and circumstances are within the Province of Nova Scotia; and, how their policies disproportionately impact - or perhaps I should say unintentionally impact.

So, I became aware of that, Mr. Speaker, about a year ago, and I have had conversations with representatives in the federal government.

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

H&W - NURSE PRACTITIONER POSITION: STILL UNFILLED - EXPLAIN

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I know that everyone in this House is tired of me reminding them that the Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage constituency is the only one in

the province without a single family doctor and, frankly, I'm tired of raising the issue myself.

[2:45 p.m.]

Last week I notified the Minister of Health and Wellness that several of the clinical nurse practitioner students who are about to graduate next month had applied for the job in my constituency as far back as December and had never heard from human resources. I spoke with human resources and they said they would get on it.

I called the students, they've heard nothing. I called human resources again, and they told me that the person who I'd been dealing with is now off on maternity leave and the person I spoke with again is now having to start from scratch.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: Can he explain to me why this position, and perhaps others, is taking such a long time for students who want to apply for the job, to even get a call-back?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I believe what the member can highlight - we've had several conversations - the particular position that the member is referencing was posted at multiple locations, the Health Authority had indicated that they didn't have a matched candidate the first couple of times. So, that's a very significant contribution to why it would take so long to fill that position.

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I've hired a lot of health professionals in my day and it's hard to find a matched candidate if you don't bother responding to the people who have actually applied.

These are three students who are graduating from Dalhousie University who never got a call-back for any of the clinical nurse practitioner positions that are available that they applied for.

I don't understand how this can continue to be going on. A year and a half ago, I had a clinical nurse practitioner ready to come to my constituency. I had a place located, you gave me the funding and yet, almost two years later we're still dealing with this issue.

Rather than going back and forth and me making all these phone calls - which frankly was the job of the Nova Scotia Health Authority - will the Minister of Health and Wellness commit to meeting with me and the representatives of the Nova Scotia Health Authority together, so that I don't have to come back to this House in the Fall still talking about this issue?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I can't guarantee the outcome of a search for a particular position, but what I can advise the member is that we've expanded the number

of seats: 25 additional nurse practitioner seats, to ensure we have the supply of trained health care professionals - nurse practitioners - to meet the expansion that we are making, the continued investments in expanding primary care access.

I think we are somewhere in the vicinity of 130 health care professionals that have been hired as part of our collaborative teams across the province, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to make those investments to strengthen these primary care collaborative teams from one end of the province to the other. That's the work that we're committed to doing and this is one of those positions that work is ongoing to complete.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

TIR - SOUTHWESTERN N.S.: GRADERS & CULVERTS - MAINTAIN

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Remember last Fall, especially in southwestern Nova Scotia, a lot of the road maintenance in the area didn't get done because of the abysmal weather. It rained, it poured, it froze, it snowed and, guess what, the grading didn't get done.

Guess what? The roads are almost dry in southwestern Nova Scotia. Yarmouth County has dry roads and you know what? I get called, they call my office and they keep asking me, where are the graders? Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal go find a grader and send it to Yarmouth County, so that we can get our darn roads graded, once and for all?

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member opposite for that impassioned rendition of, I'm sure, one of Shakespeare's famous plays.

The folks in Yarmouth County, (Interruptions) like all Nova Scotians, are extremely important to us. We have 2,250 dedicated people across this province. We're continually investing in new equipment, including graders, across the area. I'll certainly undertake to see what exactly we can do to help the member's blood pressure.

THE SPEAKER: We're going to conclude at 2:52 p.m. You have lots of time.

CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I get a whole other one? Let me talk to you about bridges. The bridges, I tell you, Mr. Speaker - we've had a problem with beavers and the beavers continue to block up all of the culverts and I wanted to know - and maybe this is a discussion between you and the Minister of Lands and Forestry - who's responsible for this? Who's the one that's supposed to clear these culverts out so that water will flow, and things won't flood?

My second question to the minister: Who's responsible for beavers?

LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, it provides me the opportunity to illustrate and accentuate the importance of beavers to Canada. The land was actually founded on beavers. They are doing well. They're back and we . . .

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, 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 motion is carried.

[2:52 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CW on Supply with Deputy Speaker Suzanne Lohnes-Croft in the Chair.]

[7:13 p.m. CW on Supply rose and the House reconvened. The Speaker, Hon. Kevin Murphy, resumed the Chair.]

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The Chair of the Committee of the Whole on Supply will now report:

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

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 a Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

THE SPEAKER: The House will now recess while it resolves itself into a Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

[7:26 p.m. The House resolved into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Suzanne Lohnes-Croft in the Chair.]

[7:48 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened. The Speaker, Hon. Kevin Murphy, resumed the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and considered the following bills:

Bill No. 106 - Coastal Protection Act.

Bill No. 119 - Builders' Lien Act.

Bill No. 121 - Nursing Act.

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

Bill No. 139 - Income Tax Act.

without amendments, and the chair has been instructed to recommend these bills to the favourable consideration of the House.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Public Bills for Third Reading.

PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 103.

Bill No. 103 - Justices of the Peace Act.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 103, the Justices of the Peace Act, be now read a third time and do pass. This legislation will update the

independent review process for determining the remuneration for Presiding Justices of the Peace.

Currently, the commission's recommendations on hourly rates of pay and cost of living increases for Presiding Justices of the Peace, or as they're commonly referred to, PJPs, are binding on government. These amendments will allow government to confirm, vary, or reject the recommendations of the independent review commission. The changes will align the review process for PJPs with that of provincially appointed judges.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotia has 10 Presiding Justices of the Peace working across the province. These are experienced lawyers who play an important role in the justice system. They preside over a variety of court matters and perform some of the same functions of judges - for instance, they have the authority to issue search warrants and to hear after-hours judicial interim release matters; they also take emergency protection order applications in domestic violence situations; and they can hear peace bond applications.

Because of the type of work they do, it is important that the processes used to examine their remuneration remain open and transparent. At the same time it is appropriate, because of the quasi-judicial nature of the work PJPs perform, that the process align with the review process in place for provincially appointed judges.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments will preserve the independent role of the commission by allowing it to thoroughly review and make recommendations to government, and by making the commission's recommendations non-binding on government, it will ensure the province remains accountable for public spending.

Before I conclude my remarks, I want to acknowledge the good work of our Presiding Justices of the Peace and thank the Presiding Justices of the Peace Association for the submission at Law Amendments.

With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, I'll take my seat.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Official Opposition has serious concerns that Bill No. 103 will diminish judicial independence in Nova Scotia. In the past, an independent commission determined the hourly rate for Justices of the Peace. This bill changes the committee's mandate to determine compensation to recommending to Executive Council what that compensation will be.

I'd also like to draw the attention of the House to a submission from Cynthia Chewter, the Presiding Justice of the Peace and Secretary to the Nova Scotia Presiding Justices of the Peace Association. In the submission it is indicated: "We are concerned that Bill 103 diminishes judicial independence in Nova Scotia." In the submission, Mr. Speaker,

it also indicates the following: “In their 2016 submissions to the Law Amendments Committee, the Canadian Association of Provincial Court Judges (“CAPCJ”) referred to binding recommendations as the ‘gold standard of Judicial Independence’ and cautioned that a change to non-binding recommendations would diminish judicial independence in Nova Scotia: ‘Only where recommendations are binding is there an absence of even the hint of politicization in the commission or commission processes.’” And I’ll table that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have concerns that this bill will exert more control over commissions. Let’s not forget that in 2016 government made changes to the Provincial Court Act. Those changes were contained in the Omnibus Financial Measures and those changes are being challenged, still, in the Supreme Court.

In this bill, Mr. Speaker, commissions go from binding recommendations to non-binding for compensation of PJPs. It seems like the commission’s ability to determine compensation for PJPs will simply rubber stamp the decision of the minister and Executive Council.

Mr. Speaker, the Official Opposition remains opposed to Bill No. 103.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, we also have concerns which we have registered in the Committee of the Whole and at second reading about this bill, in particular the change to the role of the independent commission.

As I mentioned at third reading, Presiding Justices of the Peace have qualifications and experiences that are similar to Provincial Court Judges. Nova Scotia has eight Presiding Justices of the Peace who work out of the Justice of the Peace Centre in my constituency, and two Presiding Justices of the Peace who are based in Sydney. A PJP is on duty in Nova Scotia 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. These PJPs play an important role in the criminal justice system. Non-binding commission recommendations compromise judicial independence by politicizing the judicial compensation process.

Nova Scotia created a binding commission to address remuneration for Provincial and Family Court Judges and this process worked well for many years, until the province made the commission recommendations non-binding in 2016. In their 2016 submission to the Law Amendments Committee the Canadian Association of Provincial Court Judges referred to binding commissions as the gold standard of judicial independence.

Mr. Speaker, it is lost on me why we would want to compromise that gold standard, but ultimately I think the courts will make a decision. The Nova Scotia government is now

engaged in litigation with the judges of the Provincial Court and the Family Court of Nova Scotia regarding the constitutionality of the change to the non-binding recommendations.

An effective judicial compensation commission process depoliticizes the setting of judicial compensation, discourages litigation, is cost effective, ensures timely implementation or review of commission recommendations, protects the structural separation of the branches of government, and promotes public confidence in the judiciary. A binding process meets each and every one of these objectives, again, the gold standard.

We also appreciate the submission put forward by the presiding Justices of the Peace at the Law Amendments Committee. Their position is that the outcome of the litigation surrounding the commission for the judges will serve as a precedent for this situation. Our sense is that we may be back at this bill again, but for now we register our concern with challenging this gold standard of judicial independence by politicizing and making the compensation process non-binding.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place to close debate on Bill No. 103.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 103, the Justices of the Peace Act.

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

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 105.

Bill No. 105 - Judicature Act.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: I move that Bill No. 105 be now read a third time and do pass.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the members opposite for their comments in second reading. Clearly, there is much support for these amendments, amendments that will provide greater support and improved access to justice for families dealing with separation and divorce.

Most family law matters are currently heard in two separate courts. This division can be a challenge for families that are already dealing with difficult times. It can also create confusion, contribute to delays in processing cases, and result in duplication or higher legal expenses.

Changes to the Judicature Act will allow for the expansion of a Unified Family Court system, one that provides Nova Scotians with access to a single, specialized court for all family law matters, including separation, divorce, custody, and family property. The federal government has committed to appointing more judges so this court can be expanded, a commitment that we fully support. By allowing for an increase to the number of federally appointed Supreme Court judges, we are enabling this expansion to occur and ensuring all Nova Scotians have access to a single court for family law matters.

In closing, I want to say that I and this government are committed to building a justice system that is supportive and responsive to the needs of Nova Scotians. These changes, I believe, will go a long way in seeing that this happens.

With those few comments, I'll take my seat.

THE CHAIR: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

TIM HALMAN: I want to thank the minister for his comments and for bringing this bill forward. This bill is an access-to-justice bill. Whenever you see a piece of legislation such as this come forward, which we know will be supportive to families and to the residents of Nova Scotia, most certainly, we support that.

Clearly, the aim of the bill is to provide a Unified Family Court for those wishing to divorce or separate. As it stands, my understanding is that in some parts of the province, it is divided into two courts, Supreme Court and Family Court, which has resulted in delays, higher legal fees, and confusion. The bill here will allow these matters to be dealt with in one court rather than two. Seven new federal judges are required to achieve a Supreme Court Family Division, and it's my understanding that these appointments have been approved by the federal Cabinet.

It appears that this process simplifies court procedures, especially in rural Nova Scotia, and the Official Opposition is in support of this bill.

[8:00 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I'm also pleased to stand and support this bill. We know in our own constituencies, I know from my own background, the challenges that the legal system poses particularly in matters of family law where you're dealing with a very challenging time - often people who are self-represented, who don't know how to make their way through court.

The fact that you have to have matters that are currently in two different courts - depending on whether you're hearing about divorce or about maintenance or custody - to have a Unified Family Court we believe will greatly simplify that process. It will make it easier for litigants, more cost-effective, simpler, and along with the addition of judges, it increases access to justice. Therefore we are pleased to support it.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues in both Opposition Parties for the support of this bill, which I believe, and I know they believe, will make access to justice in family law matters timelier, more efficient, and more affordable to those who require those services.

With those few comments, I rise to close debate on Bill No. 105.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 105. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 109.

Bill No. 109 - Pension Benefits Act.

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

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move Bill No. 109, that it be now read a third time and do pass.

This bill, through the amendments, will update the Pension Benefits Act. It will provide both flexibility and stability that were highlighted in the feedback during consultation in 2017. Employers spoke to the need to be able to manage their defined benefits plan, so they can continue to offer those benefits to their employees. The employees wanted confidence that their benefits would be protected. The amendments for the legislative changes respond to both by: (1) introducing reserve accounts; (2) removing limit from use of letters of credit; and (3) allowing for the discharge of liability for annuity buyouts.

This Act does not apply to the Nova Scotia Teachers' Pension Plan, Public Service Superannuation Plan, or Members' Retiring Allowances Plan. These plans are all governed by separate legislation.

Administrative changes around language and clarity will be effective when the bill passes, and the remaining legislative changes are expected to be proclaimed and effective in the Fall of 2019, once those regulations have been developed.

It is my understanding that questions for clarity were asked by the member for Inverness and have been addressed in a meeting with the Finance and Treasury Board staff and that member. With those remarks, I will take my seat.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by thanking the minister for arranging that meeting she just referenced. It was helpful, and I think that's a good way for government and Opposition to work together: when there are questions, to provide answers.

I think it's an example that perhaps some of the other members that might not have the same background that she has in this House, being from over on this side, maybe could learn from. I think I'm even getting a smile over there.

I want to thank the minister again for the meeting and there were some questions. I'm just going to quickly reference them, the three items she mentioned: there's a reserve account and this is essentially so if the employer who is the organized party that has to contribute to that, is contributing to it, it is they who could end up with a trapped surplus. What I was concerned about was the pensioner and any liability that they might be taking on, so that is fine.

Letters of credit, the banks are really on the hook. Any financial institution that would like to take on the risk, why not let them take it if they so wish? There's no harm to

the pensioner. Discharge of liabilities was an interesting one, because people are living longer, and longevity risk has become a problem. If an insurance company wants to take on that risk, let them take it on, so that it may be helpful to the plan.

The only thing I would say in closing is we are going to support this bill. There was another bill that I had put forward years ago about transparency for pensioners - people who have defined benefit plans. Essentially so that each year, or in a year where there are any significant changes to the plan, members of the plan can be made aware in a language they can understand so that they don't face surprises like pensioners of the NewPage pension plan felt the surprise a number of years ago.

I passed that information on to the minister's staff at the meeting and maybe something that they want to take a look at in the future. The intent, of course, is to protect pensioners and to keep them informed. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, we were pleased that this bill was the result of extensive negotiations. We've heard good feedback from everyone involved. It provides a greater degree of security around these pensions that we know play a huge role in helping people save for their retirement. For that reason, we will support this bill.

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

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, to the member for Inverness, I'll be kinder than he was.

I rise now to close debate on Bill No. 109.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 109. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 112.

Bill No. 112 - Education Act.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 112 be now read a third time.

There are four objectives we're trying to achieve with this bill - one is to achieve regular criminal record checks beyond the initial one for all employees before they enter into the education system. We do have 20,000 employees under our employ. We will be rolling this out in a phased-in approach with cohorts of about 20 per cent of those employees at a time. This will mandate an annual declaration that states whether or not an employee has been convicted of a criminal offence; this will standardize pre-employment checks as well as for volunteers; and this will mandate employees to proactively report any charges or convictions of a criminal offence.

This doesn't fix everything, but we know we have to do a better job in light of some of the incidences that have already been discussed in this House to screen and know who's in front of our students and ensure they are better protected and uphold the integrity of all the noble and critical and important professions that are in our education system. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to rise to offer a few comments on Bill No. 112.

As I stated in my comments in second reading, this is an important piece of legislation. This legislation will require new criteria for teachers and educational supports in our public school system. Student safety and protection will be strengthened by this legislation, and we all know and understand that one victim is too many.

This legislation not only will protect our students in the province, but it equally is important to protect the integrity of this very valued and essential profession, and it also will be protected in this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, our caucus did express concerns surrounding the collection and storage of private information, which I raised when I spoke previously to this bill. We know the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner was not consulted on this bill, and this bill will result in a large collection and storage of personal and sensitive information, and that needs to be protected. In raising that concern to the minister, the minister did advise that the previous recommendations of the Information and Privacy Commissioner were considered and informed in the drafting of this bill, and that protection of private

information will still apply under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

I'm glad to see that the government did reach out to the NSTU to discuss this bill, and it's my understanding that they have endorsed this piece of legislation. Since this legislation will be passed before regulations are worked out, I do hope the government will continue to reach out to the NSTU once again, to work with them through the implementation.

With those short remarks, I will close by saying it is imperative that we as legislators ensure we are providing a safe, inclusive learning environment for our students in this province. I believe that this piece of legislation does that, and our caucus will be supporting it.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I am pleased that this is the last piece of legislation that I will be speaking to tonight. I am also pleased to support this bill. All of us want to make sure that schools are safe places for students, families, and teachers.

We're pleased to see, as my colleagues just mentioned, that the government has worked with the unions in the development of this bill. It will be critical that the government follow through on their commitment to continue to consult and collaborate in the development of regulations because, as we know, that's where the rubber meets the road.

We will be looking to the regulations to provide more clarity about how these processes will be implemented. In particular, as has already been flagged, it will be important to balance the need for safety with the need for protection of people's personal information. We will be watching that closely to ensure that that information is closely guarded and, where necessary, conveyed but not stored, perhaps.

We do not want to increase the administrative burden on educators, and we don't want to impose unnecessary barriers for dedicated professionals working in our education system. We believe the bill as written strikes a balance. We were very pleased to hear that the government won't be passing the cost of record checks on to employees who are currently employed in the education system. We look forward to a clear policy from the regional centres on when record checks result in actions taken.

Now that we will have this information, which is important, how will that information be used in operational and procedural ways? That is something we will be looking for. It's not clear right now exactly what that will look like or how the accountability and transparency around that decision making will flow, so that's something that we are looking at as this bill passes and is operationalized.

With that being said, we support the intent of the bill and look forward to getting greater clarity on how it will be put into practice.

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

The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I would like to thank the members opposite for their support and endorsement of this bill and for their thoughtful comments.

The information of our employees will be protected under the current laws of the province, as they are now. I do commit to this House, as I have committed to the union leadership, not just with the NSTU but the other unions as well, that we will be working with them as we develop and roll out the regulations in relation to this important piece of legislation.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move to close debate on Bill No. 112.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 112. Would all those in favour please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk.
Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 92.

Bill No. 92 - Municipal Government Act and Halifax Regional Municipality Charter.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 92, an Act to Amend Chapter 18 of the Acts of 1998, the Municipal Government Act, and Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008 . . .

I want to start that over, because there's an error in what I just said, Mr. Speaker. It must be late in the day.

I move that Bill No. 92, An Act to Amend Chapter 18 of the Acts of 1998, the Municipal Government Act, and Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008 - now that I have the years right - the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter be now read a third time and do pass.

[8:15 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak just briefly to Bill No. 92. We are in support of this bill, as indeed are municipalities in the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities, which have been advocating for a long time for more flexibility in spending.

I want to emphasize that in our view - and in my view - this bill is really just a step toward being responsive to the needs of municipalities, but there are many other steps that the province can and should be taking. With this bill, the province is being more flexible, giving sort of a broader scope of permission to municipal units when it comes to spending, but the province remains very restrictive and in some ways paternalistic when it comes to other ways that municipalities are trying to be responsive to their citizens. For example, municipalities cannot set the speed limits on municipal roads, even though citizens are asking their councillors for livable, walkable, safer communities and neighbourhoods.

Another recent example that really struck me was how the province announced much, much-needed funding late in the budget year for libraries, but then just sort of said, "Oh, and municipalities are going to chip in close to the same amount," without giving those municipal units the sort of notice that they would require in order to plan around that. Of course, municipalities don't have all the mechanisms that the province does have when it comes to raising funds. I think the province needs to be listening a lot more and continuing to really work with our municipalities, including rural ones that are facing funding and liability challenges.

Also, as a Halifax resident, I think back to the way that the province consulted but then ignored the advice of Halifax Regional Municipality when it came to siting the location of the outpatient clinic that is going to be at Bayers Lake, which becomes exceedingly difficult to service in an adequate way with public transit. Whereas another location, in consultation with the municipality, would have actually helped to move us toward the sort of urban planning that is adequate and responsive to the time that we're in with climate change, where we want people to be able to get out of their single-occupancy vehicles and really work to plan our communities and our transportation systems to allow that.

I'm not going to speak a whole lot longer, because we're all tired, and this is going to pass, and we do welcome it. I will look forward to asking some questions about some of

these same themes to the Minister of Municipal Affairs tomorrow in Budget Estimates. For now, I just say that we are in support of this bill and I'm glad to see it moving forward.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 92 repealed Section 65 of Chapter 18 of the MGA. This repealed section outlined the specific areas that municipalities may spend money for municipal purposes. While the specifics were removed and replaced with general expenditure powers, a very specific clause was added back in, which preserves the power of municipalities to contribute to hospitals by way of adding an area rate, thus increasing property taxes. While the ability to add an area rate was in the content that was repealed, we question why this one particular area was specifically added back in.

Mr. Speaker, health care is a provincial budget responsibility. One issue that I've heard loud and clear from municipal councils and staff across the province is that they want the province to stop downloading provincial financial responsibilities. Education costs are an example. The Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities passed a resolution last Fall for the province to freeze mandatory education payments. Education payments by municipalities is a sore point because education is also a provincial responsibility.

Another issue that we have heard loud and clear from taxpayers throughout Nova Scotia is that they do not want tax increases such as an added area rate, thereby increasing property taxes.

Our caucus supports our municipal governments throughout Nova Scotia. However, we do not support this government downloading provincial responsibilities for health care onto municipalities, and therefore we do not support Bill No. 92.

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

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments by the members opposite. I just want to make a couple of closing comments with respect to that.

I want to address some of the concerns that have been stated about this bill, and those concerns relate to the comments being made that the bill gives municipalities new authorities or new responsibilities to provide funding to hospitals. I want to be very clear about the clauses in Bill No. 92 that relate to capital grants to hospitals. This clause has existed in the Municipal Government Act since it was introduced and passed in 1999. I'd like to table that section of the Act, and I'll do that.

Again, let me be clear: this provision currently exists with both the MGA and the Halifax Charter. Clause 6 of the amended bill simply preserves the existing authority. In reviewing Section 65 of the Municipal Government Act and Section 79 of the Halifax Charter, we wanted to ensure that we preserved all existing expenditure authority.

While most of that is covered by the general power to expend, there are a few instances, like this one, that need to be explicitly preserved. We preserved it because we know that hospitals are a provincial responsibility, yet some municipalities may still want to contribute locally. The powers to expend are for any municipal purpose, so by preserving this clause from the list exactly as it is currently worded, we are ensuring that they can still contribute if they wish.

In fact, some municipalities have utilized this authority. As an example, six municipalities in Pictou County came together and provided the 25 per cent community contribution required for the capital associated with the redevelopment of the emergency and pharmacy departments at the Aberdeen Hospital. This provision for municipalities to contribute capital grants to hospitals is optional for municipalities.

This is not new. We are simply making it very clear that we are preserving their authority. To present this new addition to the Act in any other way is incorrect.

Mr. Speaker, I close debate on Bill No. 92.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 92. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill do pass. Ordered that the title be as read by the Clerk. Ordered that the bill be engrossed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please allow me to say that this concludes the government's business for today. I move that the House do now rise to sit again tomorrow, Wednesday, April 10, 2019, between the hours of 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

As it traditionally is Opposition Day here in the Legislature, being Wednesday, the business will be operated and led by the NDP. I'll ask the Deputy House Leader for the NDP to call tomorrow's agenda.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy House Leader for the New Democratic Party.

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, for tomorrow, I would beg leave to call Private Members' Public Bills for Second Reading for Bill Nos. 108 and 141.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to adjourn to sit again tomorrow, Wednesday, April 10th, at 1:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

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

[The House rose at 8:25 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1001**

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 Tatamagouche Fire Department awards banquet this past February honoured Allison Loughead for New Member Badge;

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1002

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 Tatamagouche Fire Department awards banquet this past February honoured Colin Cunningham for 40 Year Service Award;

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1003

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. 1004

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 Tatamagouche Fire Department awards banquet this past February honoured Jon Weatherby for Training Award;

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1005

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 Tatamagouche Fire Department awards banquet this past February honoured Adrian MacCallum for Training Award;

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1006

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 Tatamagouche Fire Department awards banquet this past February honoured Peter Lockerby for Fire Person 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. 1007

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 Tatamagouche Fire Department awards banquet this past February honoured Jim Forbes for Firefighter 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. 1008

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 Tatamagouche Fire Department awards banquet this past February honoured Mike Boiduk for New Member Badge;

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1009

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 Kohltech Windows and Entrance Systems, located in Debert, Colchester North, was recognized by Canada's Best Managed Companies for overall business performance and sustained growth with this prestigious award; and

Whereas 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; and

Whereas the 2018 Best Managed Companies share commonalities that include a clear strategy and vision, investment in capability, and commitment to talent;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Kohltech and thank the owners, administration, and all employees, who serve as an excellent example of the success Nova Scotia businesses can achieve.

RESOLUTION NO. 1010

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 Michael Spencer took on the project of reviving the Great Village ballfield after years of inactivity, and with help from his parents, Logan and Audrey, and other family members, worked hours to bring the field back to playable condition; and

Whereas Mike then began to coach and promote minor baseball for players aged five to 13, with 75 registering the first year and increasing each summer after that; and

Whereas a golf tournament in memory of Doug Peppard provides the main source of revenue for the upkeep of the field and the field now bears his name;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mike Spencer for receiving the Sport Legacy Award at the 35th Truro Sport Heritage Society Awards dinner recently for his dedication, work, and commitment to revitalizing the Great Village ballfield.

RESOLUTION NO. 1011

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas Aqualitas Incorporated reside at the former Bowater Mersey site and have invested over \$20 million to develop their organic aquaponic business producing medical cannabis products, providing much-needed employment opportunities for the area; and

Whereas Health Canada has just issued them a full unrestricted sales licence for their products; and

Whereas this is the culmination of many months of hard work and means they are now able to enter the medical and recreational marketplace both locally and internationally;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate CEO Myrna Gillis and her team at Aqualitas on their diligent and professional approach, which has resulted in this monumental milestone in their company's development, and look forward to watching them grow from strength to strength.

RESOLUTION NO. 1012

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the Liverpool Lions Club was founded in 1964;

Whereas, like many volunteer groups these days, the number of members has declined;

Whereas the club is still doing a great deal of work in Liverpool, including sponsoring worthwhile community activities, providing high school bursaries, and purchasing glasses for seniors, as well as wood fuel and groceries for families in need, using funds coming from Lions Radio Bingo on the local radio station, CKBW, and other fundraising initiatives;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in praising the Liverpool Lions Club on their continued hard work and generosity in the community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1013

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas a group of students from Ridgecliff Middle School received a national award for their work from Learning for a Sustainable Future; and

Whereas LSF is a Canadian charity founded in 1991 whose mission is to promote, through education, the knowledge, skills, values, perspectives, and practices essential to a sustainable future; and

Whereas in this competition several Ridgecliff Middle School students received an honourable mention;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Emma McCarthy on her achievement and wish her success in all her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1014

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas a group of students from Ridgecliff Middle School received a national award for their work from Learning for a Sustainable Future; and

Whereas LSF is a Canadian charity founded in 1991 whose mission is to promote, through education, the knowledge, skills, values, perspectives, and practices essential to a sustainable future; and

Whereas in this competition several Ridgecliff Middle School students received an honourable mention;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jack Geurs on his achievement and wish him success in all his future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1015

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas a group of students from Ridgecliff Middle School received a national award for their work from Learning for a Sustainable Future; and

Whereas LSF is a Canadian charity founded in 1991 whose mission is to promote, through education, the knowledge, skills, values, perspectives, and practices essential to a sustainable future; and

Whereas in this competition several Ridgecliff Middle School students received an honourable mention;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Makayle Jewers on her achievement and wish her success in all her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1016

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas a group of students from Ridgecliff Middle School received a national award for their work from Learning for a Sustainable Future; and

Whereas LSF is a Canadian charity founded in 1991 whose mission is to promote, through education, the knowledge, skills, values, perspectives, and practices essential to a sustainable future; and

Whereas in this competition several Ridgecliff Middle School students received an honourable mention;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Morgan Rafters on her achievement and wish her success in all her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1017

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas a group of students from Ridgecliff Middle School received a national award for their work from Learning for a Sustainable Future; and

Whereas LSF is a Canadian charity founded in 1991 whose mission is to promote, through education, the knowledge, skills, values, perspectives, and practices essential to a sustainable future; and

Whereas in this competition several Ridgecliff Middle School students received an honourable mention;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Grace Eisnor on her achievement and wish her success in all her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1018

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas a group of students from Ridgecliff Middle School received a national award for their work from Learning for a Sustainable Future; and

Whereas LSF is a Canadian charity founded in 1991 whose mission is to promote, through education, the knowledge, skills, values, perspectives, and practices essential to a sustainable future; and

Whereas in this competition several Ridgecliff Middle School students received an honourable mention;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jada Downey on her achievement and wish her success in all her future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1019

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas a group of students from Ridgecliff Middle School received a national award for their work from Learning for a Sustainable Future; and

Whereas LSF is a Canadian charity founded in 1991 whose mission is to promote, through education, the knowledge, skills, values, perspectives, and practices essential to a sustainable future; and

Whereas in this competition several Ridgecliff Middle School students received an honourable mention;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Lucus Brow on his achievement and wish him success in all his future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1020

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas a group of students from Ridgecliff Middle School received a national award for their work from Learning for a Sustainable Future; and

Whereas LSF is a Canadian charity founded in 1991 whose mission is to promote, through education, the knowledge, skills, values, perspectives, and practices essential to a sustainable future; and

Whereas in this competition several Ridgecliff Middle School students received an honourable mention;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Antonio Jackson on his achievement and wish him success in all his future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1021

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas a group of students from Ridgecliff Middle School received a national award for their work from Learning for a Sustainable Future; and

Whereas LSF is a Canadian charity founded in 1991 whose mission is to promote, through education, the knowledge, skills, values, perspectives, and practices essential to a sustainable future; and

Whereas in this competition several Ridgecliff Middle School students received an honourable mention;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Ryan Yang on his achievement and wish him success in all his future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1022

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas a group of students from Ridgecliff Middle School received a national award for their work from Learning for a Sustainable Future; and

Whereas LSF is a Canadian charity founded in 1991 whose mission is to promote, through education, the knowledge, skills, values, perspectives, and practices essential to a sustainable future; and

Whereas in this competition several Ridgecliff Middle School students received an honourable mention;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Nicholas Youssef on his achievement and wish him success in all his future endeavours.

RESOLUTION NO. 1023

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas two years ago, Chadia Kayinamura arrived in Canada after spending 13 years in a refugee camp; and

Whereas Chadia shared her experience through art at the Social Justice in Focus Forum; and

Whereas Chadia hopes to inspire and help other young refugees navigate a new language, a new school system, and a new way of life in Canada, while also pursuing her dream of being an LPN;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chadia on overcoming the many challenges she has faced and for her commitment to helping others.

RESOLUTION NO. 1024

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas several members from Mosaic Church and Nova Church volunteer their time to the Fairview Heights School breakfast program; and

Whereas every school day, they help make breakfast for 160 students; and

Whereas the province's breakfast program would not be a success if it weren't for the support of faculty and these volunteers;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the volunteers from Mosaic and Nova Church for making Fairview Heights' breakfast program a success.

RESOLUTION NO. 1025

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas neighbourhood gardens are important projects that create a sense of community through collective upkeep and sharing knowledge; and

Whereas Common Roots Urban Farm has been a central landmark next to the QEII for seven years; and

Whereas Common Roots will be relocated to the Bi-Hi Park, servicing many people in Fairview-Clayton Park;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Common Roots on their continued success.

RESOLUTION NO. 1026

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas community members in the Mount Royal neighbourhood decorated their homes, provided food and drink, and created games for kids over this holiday season; and

Whereas Danai Spire organized the event to bring people out of their homes and to meet and reconnect with their neighbours; and

Whereas the event was a huge success and created a greater sense of joy and community connection;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Danai and her neighbours for making this past holiday season one to remember.

RESOLUTION NO. 1027

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas this holiday season, teachers at Burton Ettinger Elementary put on a Christmas dance for the students; and

Whereas Amy Adams spearheaded the choreography to Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas is You"; and

Whereas the video garnered over 8,000 views on YouTube and was a big hit among students and parents;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the staff of Burton Ettinger Elementary on their successful dance.

RESOLUTION NO. 1028

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas Ellie Black is a two-time Olympian who recently won gold at the 2018 Commonwealth Games; and

Whereas in addition to her Olympic resume, Ellie was also named one of the greatest 15 athletes in Nova Scotian history; and

Whereas in November, Ellie Black was one of the youngest recipients of the Province's Order of Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ellie on her significant achievements.

RESOLUTION NO. 1029

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas Elsy Makhoulf is a fourth-year Public Relations student at Mount Saint Vincent University and CEO of Lively Public Relations and Branding Inc; and

Whereas Elsy is a talented multilingual singer who is an active volunteer in the Lebanese community and has been featured on the cover of *My Halifax Experience*; and

Whereas while Elsy continues to balance her studies and volunteer initiatives, her business, focused on brand awareness and community connections, grows exponentially;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Elsy on her impressive achievements.

RESOLUTION NO. 1030

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas every month the Fairview United Family Resource Centre hosts a free community dinner; and

Whereas adults and seniors share a meal, meet other community members, and become informed about other programs available at the centre; and

Whereas the community dinner has grown significantly in the past year to 40-50 attendees per month;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Fairview United Family Resource Centre on their successful monthly community dinner.

RESOLUTION NO. 1031

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas many students across the province celebrated African Heritage Month by learning how the unique history of African Nova Scotians is intertwined with the past, present, and future of all Nova Scotians; and

Whereas at Fairview Heights Elementary, Mrs. Tolliver's Grade 6 class had an amazing entry for the Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute African Nova Scotian History Challenge; and

Whereas the Grade 6 students received an award for winning in the category representing African Nova Scotian communities;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Mrs. Tolliver's Grade 6 class on this impressive award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1032

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas at Fairview Junior High School, teachers and students are committed to achieving student excellence; and

Whereas during the last school term, over 203 students received honours; and

Whereas 46% of students had an average of 80% or higher;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the students and teachers at Fairview Junior High on this incredible achievement.

RESOLUTION NO. 1033

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas in 2017, the YMCA launched the Gender-Based Violence Prevention Project; and

Whereas the program works with newcomer children, youth, and families to raise awareness about gender violence and how to access resources; and

Whereas this year, the YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs in Fairview hosted workshops with service providers, settlement staff, and newcomers;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the YMCA on their successful initiatives in the community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1034

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas in February, the Bantam AA Hawks won gold at the Canadian Cup Tournament in Montreal; and

Whereas the team defeated New Jersey by a score of 4 to 1 in the championship game; and

Whereas the Bantam B Hawks followed this winning streak when they won the championship game at a tournament hosted by the Summerside and Area Minor Hockey Association;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the two Halifax Hawks teams on their achievements.

RESOLUTION NO. 1035

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas recently, Huwaida Medani received a Nova Scotia Human Rights Award for her work and advocacy; and

Whereas Huwaida has facilitated the immigration process for many Africans by helping them adapt to life in Canada; and

Whereas in a professional capacity, Huwaida has been a champion for racialized and marginalized women by fighting for more opportunities and leadership roles, while also advising HRM on diversity and inclusion;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Huwaida on this prestigious award.

RESOLUTION NO. 1036

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas Madeline Repchull began volunteering at the Burton Ettinger breakfast program six years ago; and

Whereas she became an important team member, preparing hot meals for every student and teaching other volunteers essential cooking skills; and

Whereas Madeline will be officially retiring from the breakfast program this year;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Madeline on her well-deserved retirement.

RESOLUTION NO. 1037

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas this March, the Mount Mystics women's basketball team defeated the St. Thomas University Tommies; and

Whereas the team went 23 games undefeated and claimed the ACAA-AASC championship title; and

Whereas the Mount women's basketball and soccer teams also won their ACAA championships;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Mount's women's sports teams on their impressive achievements.

RESOLUTION NO. 1038

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas *Parent-Child Guide* is an essential resource that provides relationship, self-help, and child safety advice for many families, couples, and individuals; and

Whereas *Parent-Child Guide* has significantly grown its readership, with approximately 5 million readers since 1995; and

Whereas the free family newspaper is celebrating its 24th anniversary this year;
Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Robert Rockwell and his family on this impressive achievement.

RESOLUTION NO. 1039

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas the Salvation Army is a tremendous support for members of the community in various ways; and

Whereas the Salvation Army introduced a new outreach program called the Mobile Community Response Unit to provide food, drink, and warm clothes to people who need them; and

Whereas the Salvation Army also assisted 477 households in Fairview over the Christmas season;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Salvation Army on their continued success in helping our community.

RESOLUTION NO. 1040

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas Sister Mary MacIntyre entered the Sisters of Charity in Halifax in 1936 and went on to become a teacher and principal; and

Whereas Sister has always been open to new ideas and was a source of encouragement for new teachers and students alike; and

Whereas on March 15th, Sister Mary celebrated her 100th birthday;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Sister Mary MacIntyre on this very special milestone.

RESOLUTION NO. 1041

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas Stanley Paul Chisholm, a resident therapy dog at Fairview Heights Elementary School, recently completed a huge exam; and

Whereas Stanley is now certified to go to libraries and elementary schools for reading programs; and

Whereas Stanley will be an incredible benefit for many children at Fairview Heights;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Stanley and his owners on all their hard work.

RESOLUTION NO. 1042

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas Tara Hatfield began volunteering with the Burton Ettinger breakfast program about 12 years ago; and

Whereas Tara has been a vital part of the breakfast team and has taken the time to get to know the students and listen to their stories; and

Whereas the Burton Ettinger staff, students, and volunteers will miss Tara as she “retires” from the program;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tara on her well-deserved “retirement.”

RESOLUTION NO. 1043

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas reachAbility is a non-profit organization that works with youth, adults, and seniors who face barriers to inclusion and community participation; and

Whereas reachAbility was awarded \$150,000 to provide “Opening Doors for Everyone” training to small businesses in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas part of the customized training will include learning about the accessibility legislation and how to access financial supports to cover the costs of accessibility improvements in the workplace;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate reachAbility on their continued commitment to making our province more accessible for everyone.

RESOLUTION NO. 1044

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas animal-assisted therapy is an important resource for many children and adults with different needs; and

Whereas Yana Gold from the reachAbility Association is the only certified animal-assisted therapy practitioner east of Montreal; and

Whereas Yana is a tremendous support for her patients and is an excellent coach for caregivers, social workers, and family members;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Yana on the positive impact she has on her patients and their support networks.

RESOLUTION NO. 1045

By: Hon. Patricia Arab (Fairview-Clayton Park)

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

Whereas over the holiday season, the YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs hosted a kitchen party filled with delicious food, live entertainment, and people wearing traditional dress; and

Whereas the centre helps newcomers settle into their communities through a variety of programs and outreach services; and

Whereas the YMCA is an incredible support for newcomer children, youth, and their families;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the YMCA on a successful kitchen party and for all the work they do for newcomers.