



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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### Second Session

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2019**

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House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

**HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 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 Minister of Community Services.

HON. KELLY REGAN: I beg leave to table a petition with the operative clause being:

“THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that WE, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia to ensure that women who require a full or partial breast prosthesis as a result of a growth defect or due to surgery as a result of breast cancer receive full MSI coverage of required breast prosthesis every two years.”

Mr. Speaker, the petition contains 1,993 signatures and I have affixed my signature as per the Rules of the House.

THE SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

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

HUGH MACKAY: I beg leave to table a petition, the operative clause reads as follows:

“We the residents of New Ross request that the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal immediately assess and repair the deplorable condition of the Fraxville Road Lunenburg County Nova Scotia.”

Mr. Speaker, there are 192 signatures on this petition and, as per the Rules of the House, I have affixed my own. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

Before we move on to the next agenda item, I neglected to read the topic for late debate for tonight at the moment of interruption, as submitted by the honourable member for Dartmouth North. It reads:

Whereas 40 per cent of Nova Scotians live in energy poverty;

Therefore be it resolved that Nova Scotia Power be required to prioritize substantive investments in the sustainability, quality of service, and affordability of electricity in Nova Scotia over profits for external shareholders.

That will be the topic for late debate tonight.

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

#### **TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

#### **STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

#### **GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction before reading a resolution.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MARK FUREY: I draw my colleagues' attention to the Speaker's Gallery where we are joined today by Ms. Catalina Aguilar from the UN Human Rights Council in

Geneva. Ms. Aguilar was appointed the UN's first Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on December 1, 2014, a role and mandate that was established in recognition of the need for persons with disabilities to be guaranteed the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms without discrimination, and the need to address the barriers that persons with disabilities continue to face in all parts of the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to provide to Ms. Aguilar, on her first trip to Canada, the warm welcome of the Nova Scotia Legislature. (Standing Ovation)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1046**

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

Whereas the United Nations Human Rights Council, recognizing the need for persons with disabilities to be guaranteed the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms without discrimination, appointed Ms. Catalina Aguilar as the first Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and

Whereas Ms. Aguilar is visiting with federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal authorities with establishments providing services for persons with disabilities and others to discuss significant issues related to accessibility and human rights and the measures taken for the successful realization; and

Whereas recognizing accessibility as a human right, the Province of Nova Scotia passed and proclaimed the Accessibility Act, committing to a more equitable and barrier-free province for all Nova Scotians by 2030, and is honoured to be presented the opportunity to meet with Ms. Aguilar to share our commitment and our work and to learn from her how we, too, can further strengthen the protection and promotion of such rights;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House welcome Ms. Aguilar and, in her presence, reaffirm our collective commitment to advancing accessibility and the rights of persons with disabilities.

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.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, may I have your permission for an introduction?

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

LEO GLAVINE: In the East Gallery today are the founding partners of the Tidal League Inc. and you'll hear their exciting proposal as I read my notice of motion. If they could rise when I introduce them. Kurt Benson, Gabriel LeVert, and Gabriel Roy are here with us today, so I ask the House to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

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

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1047**

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

Whereas Tidal League Inc. is working diligently to hold the first Tidal League tournament this August, which aims to promote the region as a basketball hot spot featuring NBA players and local talent who play professionally overseas and at the Canadian university level; and

Whereas the event will allocate a percentage of proceeds to a community fund that will be dedicated to growing the game of basketball across the country and will provide opportunities for underprivileged youth to develop skills and enjoy the game they love; and

Whereas select local business start-ups will be afforded the opportunity to pitch their business ideas to the NBA players, assisting in making entrepreneurial dreams of Nova Scotians a reality;

Therefore be it resolved that the House recognize Tidal League Inc. for the work they are doing to provide youth with opportunities to enjoy basketball, to promote sport, and to assist entrepreneurs in Nova Scotia in a unique and exciting way.

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 the Public Service Commission.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1048**

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

Whereas April 10, 2019 is the International Day of Pink, a day where communities around the world can unite in celebrating diversity and raising awareness to stop homophobia, transphobia, transmisogyny, and all forms of bullying; and

Whereas this international movement and celebration was started right here in Nova Scotia by two students who intervened and took action when they saw another student being bullied and discriminated against; and

Whereas no one should experience the negativity created by discrimination in our families, our schools, our workplaces, or anywhere in our society;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly acknowledge the Day of Pink to show our shared commitment to celebrating diversity in all its forms, to respect one another, and to take an active role in this important social change.

Mr. Speaker, 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.

[1:15 p.m.]

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1049**

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

Whereas 2019 marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nova Scotia Talent Trust; and

Whereas the Nova Scotia Talent Trust was originally created to assist Nova Scotia-born singer Portia White pursue her music career and continues to support the development of talented Nova Scotians in pursuit of a career in the arts; and

Whereas the Trust has assisted the professional development of over 1,000 Nova Scotians and has awarded scholarships totalling over \$2 million since its creation;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate the Nova Scotia Talent Trust on their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and recognize the critical role they play in the development of Nova Scotia artists.

Mr. Speaker, 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.

The honourable Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1050**

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

Whereas African Nova Scotian civil rights activist Joan Jones recently passed away at the age of 79; and

Whereas Ms. Jones was the founding member of the Afro Canadian Liberation Movement; Black History Month Association; Black Community Work Group; Inner-City Initiative; Police Black Community Liaison Committee; Black Outreach Program; Concerned Citizens Against Drugs and the Ujamaa Reference Group; the Inaugural Council; and one of the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children Restorative Inquiry Council of Parties' Commissioners; and

Whereas Joan will always be remembered for her unwavering commitment to racial equity and human rights on behalf of all Nova Scotians;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly please join me in acknowledging the extraordinary life of Joan Jones and the positive impact she has made in the civil rights movement and for our province and our country.

Mr. Speaker, 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. (Applause)

The honourable for Dartmouth East on an introduction.

TIM HALMAN: In the West Gallery we have Travis Price, co-founder of Pink Day. I will ask Travis to please stand. Travis has done a lot of great work advocating on behalf of our youth and raising awareness of bullying and cyberbullying. I ask the House to give Travis a warm welcome. (Applause)

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 144 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 293 of the Revised Statutes, 1989. The Motor Vehicle Act, Respecting School Bus Safety. (Hon. Pat Dunn)**

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.

**BEHM, SHANNON KELLY:  
TALLAHASSEE COM. SCH. BREAKFAST PRGM. - THANKS**

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge constituent Shannon Kelly Behm for all of her efforts to raise funds for the Tallahassee Community School Breakfast Program.

Shannon has, with the help of many community members, held auditions for a live play - *Curtain Call at the Cove*. Shannon is no stranger to theater so the idea for this fundraiser came naturally to her. The cast and crew are local community members and have volunteered many hours in preparation for the show.

When Shannon is not preparing for shows she is hard at work teaching children's Broadway, adult tap dancing and serving as a member of the Passage Players Society. Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to attend this play and it was hilarious.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in thanking Shannon Kelly Behm for her hard work and dedication to her community of Eastern Passage, Nova Scotia.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, may I make an introduction?

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

I'd like to draw the members' attention to the West Gallery, where we have in attendance today Stephen Saunders, who has just recently been told he was in remission, and his daughter Hailey MacDonald, who fought so tirelessly to bring some resolve to her dad's issue. So please, everybody, welcome them to the House.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

**SAUNDERS, STEPHEN:  
LYMPHOMA, TREATMENT OPTIONS - DETERMINATION**

TAMMY MARTIN: Stephen Saunders was diagnosed November 2015 with follicular non-Hodgkin lymphoma, stage four. After many, many different, difficult and grueling treatments, his biopsy results came back, and it was found his lymphoma had transformed from follicular non-Hodgkin's, which is usually slow growing and non-aggressive, to a subtype of diffused large B-cell lymphoma, called double-hit, which is extremely aggressive.

He was collected for a stem cell transplant using his own stems in March of 2018. PET scan was at the end of March and showed a relapse and the stem cell transplant were taken off the table, and no options were available. By the beginning of November, he started to fail and after a scan showed his progression, he was taken off the clinical trial.

Unfortunately, due to the aggressive nature of his cancer, he developed a spinal cord compression the day before his consult. It was rescheduled for December 27<sup>th</sup>. He was then told the government would pay for the consult and would consider paying for the treatment. December 18<sup>th</sup>, Stephen Saunders was told he was an ideal candidate in Boston for the CAR-T treatment. He is now in remission and we are so happy to have him with us.

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

**ADAMSON, JULIE: E. SHORE MAPPING PROJ. - THANKS**

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of one of our local artists, Julie Adamson of Spry Bay. Julie spent the summer working on the Eastern Shore Coastal Community Mapping Project.

The Eastern Shore Coastal Community Mapping Project is a celebration of Eastern Shore communities. Exploring the archives and stories of our very own local historians from Liscomb, Port Dufferin, Sheet Harbour and Clam Harbour. Julie spent the summer searching out village histories and photos.

Julie herself interviewed community members along the Eastern Shore - from Liscomb to Little Harbour - for stories that she then used to create beautiful and informative maps, representing the past and present of the area.

By all accounts, the presentation was magnificent. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to acknowledge the creative work of Julie Adamson and thank her for her contribution to collecting and sharing local stories and experiences in her efforts to preserve the Eastern Shore history.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**BURROWS, GREG: VOLUN. OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, Volunteers are worth their weight in gold. Greg Burrows was honoured this month as the Town of New Glasgow's Volunteer of the Year.

For the past two decades, the local businessman has supported recreation, community development and sports teams for young athletes.

Greg is well known in Pictou County circles and has provided coaching for hockey, baseball, swimming and track teams. He was the founder and key organizer for the Ride the River event that drew hundreds of people to the New Glasgow Waterfront. He was also President of the West Side Community Centre and involved in numerous fundraising campaigns to support the youth in New Glasgow.

I would ask all members of this legislature to join me and thank Greg Burrows.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

**SAUNDERS, STEPHEN: LYMPHOMA, TREATMENT OPTIONS - SUCCESS**

TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, Part 2.

By the end of November, Stephen Saunders was told he only had two to three months left to live and CAR-T in Boston was the only real chance he had of survival. His doctor had requested funding from MSI and the Department of Health and Wellness and a letter campaign was started the next day.

They booked a consult in Boston and payed out of pocket as a family because the funding hadn't come through. The consult was for December 20<sup>th</sup>. Stephen appeared on CBC on the news on December 18<sup>th</sup>. Shortly after that they were told that the government would pay for the consult and would consider paying for the treatment.

CAR-T is only approved in the United States, is still in clinical trials in Canada, and it was the only option that was available on the table to save Mr. Saunders' life. They continued the letter campaign after December and funding was approved on January 9<sup>th</sup>. They were flown back to Boston and his cells were collected on January 16<sup>th</sup>. They flew back to Boston at out-patients, had chemo for a week, and on March 15<sup>th</sup> they were told he was in remission.

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

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to do an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

PATRICIA ARAB: If I could draw the members' attention to the East Gallery, we are joined today by Ms. Yana Gold. If she could rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

**GOLD, YANA: ANIMAL-ASSISTED THERAPY - THANKS**

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, animal-assisted therapy is an incredibly important resource for many children and adults with different needs. The acceptance, warmth, and lack of judgment that a therapy triangle - patient-therapist-animal - can provide helps patients overcome their challenges.

Although animals are essential to this therapy triangle, the therapist is key to the program's success. That is why I would like to recognize Yana Gold from the reachAbility Association who is the only certified animal-assisted therapy practitioner east of Montreal.

Originally from Israel, Yana has practised all over the world but now calls Nova Scotia her home. She coordinates the Sycle program which is a class that focuses on conflict resolution, effective communication, and stress management.

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

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of this House of Assembly to join me in thanking Yana for her work and the positive impact she has on her patients and their support networks.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**DART. SHELTER SOC.: NEW EMERGENCY HOUSING - THANKS**

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give recognition to the Dartmouth Shelter Society, an organization recently founded by Dartmouth residents.

The Dartmouth Shelter Society was formed to address a need for emergency crisis housing. This group of hard-working individuals identified a need to help our community's most vulnerable and set out to create solutions.

By partnering with Sonlife Community Church, Dartmouth Shelter Society will be opening for emergency crisis housing very soon. They handle organizing volunteers and other resources and have the potential to make a positive impact on many lives.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that we thank the Dartmouth Shelter Society members for giving back to their community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.



**CHANGEMAKERS CLUB: YOUTH IMPACTING THE WORLD - RECOG.**

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the teachers and students of the Crichton Park School Changemakers Club.

The Changemakers is a group of Grade 4 to 6 students who want to make a difference in the world around them. The program was founded after students researched the United Nations Goals for Sustainable Development. They discovered how the goals could impact people on a local and global scale and that there was much they could do to change the world around them.

With the guidance of their teachers Jacquelyn Reid and Karen Van Buskirk, the students have taken on a number of issues. They have had great success in making reusable beeswax snack bags. They are building and decorating bee boxes, and they have been involved in many community activities like the Crichton Park's Feed Nova Scotia program, partnering with Alice House for the Fresh Start for Families campaign, and cleaning the school grounds.

The Changemakers Club is a remarkable example of what youth in Dartmouth North and across the province are capable of when given the opportunity to make a difference.

I ask the members of this House to join me in recognition of the Changemakers of Crichton Park School for their outstanding achievements and dedication to making a difference.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

**N.T.L. SIBLINGS DAY: HONOURING SIBLINGS - RECOG.**

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: I rise today, April 10<sup>th</sup>, on National Siblings Day - a day created to honour our brothers and our sisters - to pay homage to my four sisters and one brother. Mr. Speaker, I am blessed to have five siblings. Today I stand in this historic House of Assembly to recognize all their support and love.

On behalf of my sisters, I want to highlight the attribution and contribution of my brother, Steven. Steven, for me and my family, is an unsung hero. He is intelligent, generous, and a savvy businessman. He is a son, husband, father, uncle, and a fantastic role model. He does a great deal of good in his community without inviting great fanfare and always with humility. In that way, he truly is his father's son.

Steven puts his family first and is a mentor to his siblings, children, and his nieces and nephews. He is always there when you need advice and I value him for that.

[1:30 p.m.]

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

**CDN. CTR. FOR GENDER & SEX. DIVERSITY:  
OUR HIST., TRAVELLING MUS. - COMMEND**

LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, April 10<sup>th</sup> is the Day of Pink, which is the International Day Against Bullying, Discrimination, Homophobia, Transphobia, and Transmisogyny across the world.

In celebration of this day of inclusivity and acceptance, the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity has launched a new resource called the Our History initiative, which aims to bring a mini museum into schools, community centres, libraries, organizations, offices, and workplaces.

Along with the free museum exhibits, they have launched a history textbook, quiz, and video to help stop bullying in schools, communities, and workplaces. I applaud the initiative of the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity and encourage all members to spread the message of inclusivity and positivity for all.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**OTHOW, TATA ABULE: YOUTH LDRSHIP. - CONGRATS.**

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to recognize a young constituent who is showing leadership both academically and socially at Citadel High School. Tata Abule Othow was elected student council co-president at Citadel High by her peers, and she has focused on being friendly to all students and engaging them in student-led activities.

Seventeen years old and in Grade 12, Tata has been accepted to Dalhousie University for computer science and is also still considering engineering.

Tata was born in Ethiopia and spent time in Kenya before arriving in Halifax in 2008, where she started Grade 7. Now living in Mulgrave Park with her mom and siblings, she has participated in several programs of the Phoenix Youth and Community Centre and, through Let's Make It Happen, had a job placement at the Central Library. She was also a participant in Future Roots, a social enterprise that gave youth their first experience of paid employment. She now works part-time at Lawtons.

A strong, outgoing Black woman who likes math, Tata is one to watch. I congratulate her on her accomplishments to date and will be following her career with interest.

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

**ELLIOTT, MURRAY: COM. SERV. - THANKS**

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, Cole Harbour-Portland Valley is blessed to have the volunteers we have. Every day, hundreds of people donate their time to sit on boards, clean up our community, serve breakfast to young people, tutor, and much more.

I would like to take this time to highlight a particular volunteer for his service in our community. Murray Elliott is a retired fire chief for Cole Harbour. He sits on the Cole Harbour and Area Business Association, and he is a member of the Westphal-Cole Harbour Firefighters Association. He continues to serve the community in many ways, including being a member of the Cole Harbour Kiwanis.

Our community and I are inspired by Murray and his ongoing work to make our community better.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**HIGHFIELD PK. PHARMACHOICE:  
FREE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS - COMMEND**

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Highfield Park PharmaChoice. As of last week, Highfield Park PharmaChoice will provide free menstrual hygiene products to customers in need. Customers need only approach a member of the staff and let them know what they need. They've heard the conversation in this House and elsewhere and have decided that they want to start to make a change.

In addition to providing free menstrual products to those in need, for every menstrual hygiene product purchased in their store, Highfield Park PharmaChoice will donate the same item to the program. Interested individuals can donate products or money to support the program by visiting the store.

I want to thank Highfield Park PharmaChoice for their leadership, and I hope others will join them.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

**BOWDEN, JESSICA: DEDICATION TO YOUTH - THANKS**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to share with you the remarkable accomplishments of Jessica Bowden. Jessica's exceptional achievements include being president and CEO of *Teens Now Talk*, as well as an inspirational speaker, personal development facilitator, and international professional model and wardrobe consultant.

As a teen mom in the 1970s, Jessica faced hurdles culturally, financially, and educationally. Jessica used these obstacles, along with her own determination and her powerful mindset, to realize her own successes and design engaging programs to help youth follow their dreams.

*Teens Now Talk* is a magazine dedicated to inspiring youth and creating pathways and opportunities for young adults to develop, grow, and succeed. Over the past 25 years, Jessica has shared her skills, gifts, and talents to bridge the gap between teens and their parents, and help them navigate through difficult years together.

Jessica has helped teens succeed by teaching core values and by building self-confidence and self-esteem. Jessica has been honoured with numerous awards and is proud to be the first female African Nova Scotian and Atlantic Canadian to receive the Hope, Success and Empowerment Award, presented by former Governor General Michaëlle Jean in Ottawa.

I ask the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Jessica on her phenomenal career and her dedication to youth.

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

**ROZICKI, RYAN: 9-0 BOXING RECORD - CONGRATS.**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate boxer Ryan Rozicki of Sydney Forks after he recently defeated Hungarian Laszlo Penzes. Ryan Rozicki remains undefeated as a professional. Rozicki knocked his opponent out in the second round after repeatedly knocking him down.

The Sydney boxer is back in the ring in May when he takes on experienced American fighter Shawn Miller. The up-and-coming Rozicki, who captured the North American Boxing Association's Canadian cruiserweight title last October, now sports a 9-0 record, with each and every win coming by way of a knockout.

I stand here once again to congratulate Ryan Rozicki on his current boxing record and wish him every success in his future boxing career.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**HFX. CREATIVE PRODUCTIONS: WELL DONE - CONGRATS.**

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate and express my appreciation for some local creators. Maggie Rahr is a constituent and the journalist behind *What Happened to Holly Bartlett*, a new podcast from Accessible Media Inc. about a Halifax Needham resident who died in 2010 in mysterious circumstances.

Holly was highly accomplished, including with her white cane, which is why her many friends and family have continued to have questions about her death, which was deemed accidental.

I also want to congratulate the cast, crew, and creators of *Diggstown* on CBC Television, especially Floyd Kane, its creator and executive producer. I recognize many scenes, many actors, and many themes in this show, including Nova Scotia's particular talent with historic and structural racism, and I highly look forward to binge-watching it as soon as we get out of here.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

**DOUBLE C TRUCK STOP: WELL-EARNED CUST. LOYALTY - RECOG.**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, old-style diners are becoming a thing of the past, but Colchester North has one exceptional one. The Double C Truck Stop in Lower Debert has a great reputation spread by the many truck drivers who spread that reputation all over Canada and into the U.S.

Debbie Cock, with numerous members of her family, has run the restaurant for 21 years, assisted by her husband, Darrell, until his death recently. The truckers have become like family because they have been faithful for so many years. The restaurant's food is made fresh daily from scratch. Meats are cooked daily and a baker comes in at 4:00 in the morning just to make sure that the restaurant's own bread will be on-site. The homemade pies and desserts are made from recipes belonging to Darrell's great-great-grandmother. They are nostalgic of earlier times for many older customers and a delicious delight for those of us who are younger.

The hospitality of the staff and the fresh food have earned the Double C a spot on Peterbilt Atlantic's Top 3 Diners in Atlantic Canada. For anyone looking for a delicious homestyle meal, the Double C is the place to go. You will receive a warm welcome and a huge and delicious homecooked meal.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**SPECIAL OLYMPICS FLOOR HOCKEY:  
TWO-DIVISION ADVANCEMENT - CONGRATS.**

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Special Olympic floor hockey team from Shelburne County on placing fourth in Division A on February 24<sup>th</sup>. This is a very impressive achievement for a team that has moved up two divisions this year, played hard, and displayed great teamwork.

I have had the pleasure of meeting some of these players when touring SASI Works in Shelburne, where they also show amazing skills and do tremendous work.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the men and women on this team for their incredible performance this season. I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating this strong team and wish them every success in the future.

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

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: I beg leave to make an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, in the East Gallery is Fairview-Clayton Park resident Massimo Spensieri. I ask that he please rise to receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

**SPENSIERI, MASSIMO: COM. SERV. - THANKS**

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, Massimo Spensieri is a talented, hard-working resident of Fairview-Clayton Park. He was former assistant captain of the Halifax West hockey team and currently plays for the Liverpool Junior B team.

Massimo is a kinesiology student at Dalhousie University who recently headed up a charity hockey game for Feed Nova Scotia. In the future he hopes to pursue a career in medicine, working with both athletes and members of government to ensure a healthy lifestyle for all Nova Scotians. He is hard-working, dedicated, and one of the best human beings I have ever had the pleasure of knowing.

I ask the members of the House of Assembly to join me in acknowledging Massimo for all he does and wish him the very brightest of futures.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

**BARRON, MARIAH: 5.11 YOUTH/FAM. CTR. - CONGRATS.**

EDDIE ORRELL: I rise today to congratulate Mariah Barron as director of the 5.11 Youth and Family Centre; 5.11 is a term used to describe the highest possible level of difficulty in rock climbing, and the Northside has very high levels of problems facing its youth today.

The centre has attracted over 300 youth already to its 12,000-square-foot facility. 5.11 is a respectful environment where life skills are taught through a variety of workshops. Future plans include a rock-climbing wall, music venue, an indoor skate park, a crisis centre, laser tag, and life skills programs.

I'd like to take this opportunity to give best wishes to 5.11, all their volunteers and corporate sponsors on future development and service to the community.

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

**WALSH, MATT:  
SPECIAL OLYMPIAN/INCLUSION ADVOCATE - CONGRATS.**

BEN JESSOME: Today I'll recognize Matt Walsh of Westwood Hills. He grew up and attended school in Liverpool until Grade 12 when he transferred to Sir John A.

Matt is a proud Special Olympic athlete. He has co-hosted the Inspired Gala the past several years. He is a dedicated employee at Subway and feels supported and valued both at his job and with his involvement with Special Olympics.

He is a member of the Inclusion Logistics Committee at the NSSSA and he has been there for three years, helping to plan an inclusion conference for high school students with intellectual disabilities.

Matt was recently chosen to sit on the Education Standard Development Committee that will develop recommendations for standards to make the education system more accessible for students with disabilities, a position I am certain he will fulfill very well.

I would ask all members of the House to join me in congratulating Matt Walsh on being chosen to sit on the Education Standard and Development Committee and wish him well in all his future endeavours.

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

**RICHMOND EDUC. ACAD.: VILLA VIGNETTES - COMMEND**

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, residents of the Richmond Villa in St. Peter's will now have their stories told and their voices heard, thanks to students and staff at Richmond Education Centre/Academy.

Mr. Speaker, seniors' stories will be written and illustrated by 23 Grade 5 and Grade 12 students. The students are developing these stories into booklets called *Villa Vignettes* under the direction of their teachers, Justin Fougere and Donna Martin.

Mr. Speaker, the *Villa Vignettes* is an intergenerational initiative through the Mind Body Spirit project, in partnership with the province and the Municipality of Richmond County.

Mr. Speaker, *Villa Vignettes* has given seniors the opportunity to interact socially and positively with youth, and I commend everyone involved. I ask members of the Legislature to join me in sending appreciation to the students and staff of RECA and to the seniors and staff of the Richmond Villa for actively encouraging this intergenerational initiative.

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

**KIRBY-BREEN, MARIA: YOUTH VOLUN. AWARD - CONGRATS.**

HUGH MACKAY: I rise today to congratulate 17-year-old Maria Kirby-Breen from Chester who was recently awarded the 2019 Nova Scotia Youth Volunteer Award. Ms. Kirby-Breen's love of people, wildlife, and the environment are demonstrated through her active and diverse volunteer engagements. Maria has worked to support grandmothers raising grandchildren orphaned in Africa by the HIV-AIDS epidemic.

Closer to home she works as a volunteer in the youth program at the Chester Playhouse. A committed environmentalist, Maria served on the Board of the Friends of Nature Conservation Society and is one of the founders of her school's Environment Committee. Recently Maria was a co-presenter before the Municipality of Chester Council that resulted in a grant to install refillable water stations at Forest Heights Community School.

Mr. Speaker, I invite the members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating Maria on receiving the 2019 Nova Scotia Youth Volunteer Award and wish her well in all her future endeavours.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**ROSS, ALEX: FAMILY OVER FAME - THANKS**

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Today I'd like to recognize Alex Ross of Family Over Fame. On February 26<sup>th</sup>, Alex donated \$1,000 to the Breakfast Program at the Joseph Howe Elementary School. Alex was previously a student there. This school helped shape Alex as a person and as a business owner. He is a man who gives back to those who have helped him in hopes that he may help to inspire others.

Alex Ross started the business and community movement, Family Over Fame, which reflects his personal mission. Family Over Fame means put your family first and never forget where you came from. Alex celebrates his home community, Uniacke Square,



whenever he can. He hosts an annual community party where he celebrates his family and his community.

I am privileged to know Alex, and today I would like to thank him for his generosity in giving back to his community.

[1:45 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**CENTRAL SPRYFIELD SCH.: COM. COMPASSION - THANKS**

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to recognize the staff of Central Spryfield Elementary. This year when tragedy struck our community the staff at Central Spryfield quietly went about helping to hold our community together. They had the near impossible job of talking, listening, and explaining the tragedy to all the youth impacted.

A big heartfelt thank you to Jackie Bourget, Kathryn Brown, Kim Conrod, Donna Davies, Chantal Eastwood, Ryan Gallagher, Jillian Jackson-Rutledge, Courtney Jones, Mary Leblanc, Emily McKenney Cody, Tracey Poole, Jenna Randall, Antoinette Sukkar, Patrick Wells, Christine Welsh, Tanya Welton, Erica Wilson, Kayla Brady, Kelly Dodge, Maxine Coates, Marsha Hudson, Laura Julian, Melissa MacLellan, Teri McGinn, and principal Cindy Astephen. Thank you for your leadership and support during our time of need and always being there for us.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

**AGE OF SAIL MUS.: 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIV. - CONGRATS.**

TORY RUSHTON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the Age of Sail Museum in the community of Port Greville, Cumberland County. The museum overlooks the tidal Greville River and pays tribute to the heritage of the communities along the Minas channel. The mission of the museum is to collect, conserve, and preserve the Parrsboro shore lumbering and shipbuilding history for the purpose to educate and display, so this important part of Nova Scotia history is not lost. Main displays are housed in the 1854 church and a boat-shaped addition with four outer display buildings and genealogy and research area as well as a wharf, walkway, café, and gift shop.

This year will mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the opening of this museum, which has made such an impact in this community, as well as the Province of Nova Scotia. Please join me in congratulating the Age of Sail Museum and all its hardworking volunteers on 25 years of preserving the heritage of this great community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker I beg leave to make an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: In the East Gallery I would like to introduce my constituency assistant, the lead woman in my office, Ruth Wawin; and my part-time assistant Sherri Wessel. April 24<sup>th</sup> will be Administrative Professionals Day, and this is a great opportunity to warm everybody up to make sure they all remember the people who keep our offices running when we're up here in Halifax doing the work of the province and for the people of Nova Scotia. Welcome to the House. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**N. GERMANY ELEM.:  
AUSTISM/TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD - CONGRATS**

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: I rise today to acknowledge a special teaching team at the New Germany Elementary School that received a nomination for the Sheelagh Nolan Awards for Excellence in Teaching by Autism Nova Scotia. This award recognizes the exceptional contributions by individuals who support those living with autism. This teaching team is comprised of Lisa Baker, Christine Redmond, teaching assistants Julie DeLong and Rose Huphman, and principal Angela Gladwin.

These individuals provide the solid foundation and stability that was needed for a seven-year-old student to succeed in a new learning environment. They faced a variety of challenges but made the necessary adjustments, so this young student could progress through the academic year. These individuals are an inspiration as they show the importance of understanding, acceptance, and inclusion when it comes to working with students with autism.

I would ask you and the members of this House of Assembly please join me in congratulating this teaching team of New Germany Elementary School on their nomination for the Sheelagh Nolan Award for Excellence in Teaching.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**WATERDRILLS TOOL FOR PLUMBING MAINTENANCE:  
ONLINE MARKETING - CONGRATS.**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, 13 students are spending their class time at NSCC in Stellarton, Pictou Campus on a marketing strategy for a company that has already been to market for nearly a decade. The strategy is called the WaterDrills Tool for Plumbing

Maintenance, and it uses water from the faucet to blast a high velocity jet of water into anything blocking up the sink.

The instrument is available in Pictou County, nevertheless the applied entrepreneurship class of second year business management students are presently working to make big inroads at online sales in Canada and the United States. The class continues to take a creative innovative approach to expose potential purchases that this product is valuable. The company involved have created an invaluable learning and rewarding experience for members of this class.

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate all members of this class and wish them great success in their future endeavours.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

**BURCHELL, DAVID: COM. SERV. - THANKS**

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a man who lives in my riding who's helping the youth in his community. David Burchell has volunteered at the Filipino Language and Culture Program for the last few years to help set up and provide daily operational support for their language department.

Being of Filipino descent himself, he knows how important it is to teach the youth the value of the Tagalog language and the Filipino culture. David is also heavily involved at Saint Benedict's Church by donating meals, furniture, and clothing to those in need. He also participated in the community clean up at Park West School through the Clean Nova Scotia initiative and the tree planting program sponsored by the TD Bank.

David says the Filipino community is very supportive of those at home and abroad. Mr. Speaker would this House of Assembly thank Mr. Burchell for taking time to help those who are less fortunate in his community.

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

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, seated in the gallery today, we have Julie Chaisson who's joined us. She's a wonderful person who cares about the community. She also happens to be the President of the Nova Scotia PC Party. Welcome to the Chamber. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**CRAWFORD, MARSHA - PHARMACIST: RETIREMENT - CONGRATS.**

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, in January of this year Marsha Crawford hung up her white coat and retired after a 42-year-long career as a pharmacist.

This career included 27 years at Reynolds Pharmasave in Liverpool, where Marsha was not only a dedicated professional - she always had a smile on her face and was willing to go above and beyond for everyone. Her compassion and authentic caring were evident at all times. It goes without saying she is missed a great deal by both her colleagues and her clients.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to Marsha on her well-earned retirement after a long, successful career and I wish her a happy, healthy retirement.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**SMITH, ALICIA: LIFE-SAVING ACTION - THANKS**

KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker last month, Coldbrook resident Alicia Smith was at the right place at the right time to use the first aid skills she learned as a cadet.

Alicia was working her shift as a supervisor at the local Tim Horton's when she was alerted that a customer had fallen outside the coffee shop, hitting his head and rendering him unconscious. Alicia ran outside, noticed that help was needed and without hesitation, stepped in to administer CPR.

That split-second decision bought enough time before paramedics arrived. As Alicia's actions have shown, first aid skills can make the difference in life or death situations that can occur at any time or place. Thankfully, Alicia Smith had those first aid skills and the quick reaction to use them.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in thanking Alicia Smith for her leadership and life-saving call to action.

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

**NSCC STRAIT AREA CAMPUS:  
SHOWCASING INDIGENOUS CUISINE - THANKS**

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, the NSCC Strait Area Campus offers excellent programs and is a tremendous supporter of neighbouring communities. One such support came in the form of a five-course Indigenous culinary showcase which took place on March 28, 2019.

The event was a celebration of Indigenous cuisine and an opportunity for culinary students to receive first-hand experience from one of Canada's leading chefs, Richard Francis. The passion for culinary arts by Mr. Francis has helped to support, motivate, and inspire First Nations communities about reconciliation through Aboriginal cuisine.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of this House to join me in sending our appreciation to the Strait Area Campus staff and students for their forward thinking and innovative programming and activities.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

**LESSER, NANCY: BOOK, *UN-SUPPRESSED CHUCKLES* - CONGRATS.**

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Yarmouth's Nancy Lesser. Nancy was a Grade 1 teacher at Milton Elementary School for many years where she was beloved by generations of students.

Nancy has written and published a book called *UN-Suppressed Chuckles*, a heartwarming and amusing collection of quotes and anecdotes from her 30 years of teaching elementary school.

I'd like to ask this House to join me in congratulating Nancy Lesser on this great accomplishment, and I encourage everyone to pick up a copy of her book. I know she'll appreciate it.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

**HOUSTON, TIM - MLA: BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES**

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, on this day some years ago, there were a couple of happy parents who welcomed a son into the world. They probably never knew what he would go on to do, but like any happy parents they were, I'm sure, overjoyed on this day and I'm sure they are looking at their son proudly today.

I'd like to take this moment to wish the Leader of the Official Opposition a happy birthday. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

**BRIDGEWATER FIRE DEPT. BAND: 431 YRS. OF SERV. - RECOG.**

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize 13 members of the Bridgewater Fire Department Band: Laura Allen, Adam Aulenback, Ian Bolton, Michelle Boyd, Pixie Cornish, Kerri Dorey, Wendell Eisener, Jana Hirtle, Gerald Holmes, Wendy

Keddy, Ronald Langille, Jim Richardson, and Patricia Slauenwhite. Each was presented a Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers last November by the Honourable Arthur J. LeBlanc, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia.

This medal honours exceptional Canadian volunteers who have made a significant and continued contribution to their community. Each of these special volunteers have given between 20 and 68 years, individually, of service to the Bridgewater Fire Department Band, totalling 431 years. They serve as ambassadors of our community, bringing the joy of music locally, nationally, and internationally.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in recognizing the longstanding commitment of these senior members of the Bridgewater Fire Department Band.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**WHALES, JOHN: N. N.S. HIGHLANDERS REGIMENTAL MUS. - RECOG.**

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, Today, I rise to recognize John Whales of the North Nova Scotia Highlanders Regimental Museum. John is the assistant curator at the museum and has been using his research to help add valuable information to the museum and its exhibits.

John has a background in research from working in libraries in Ontario and brings valuable experience and passion to this project in Amherst. With help and dedication from John, future generations will benefit from the valuable history contained in the museum.

The North Nova Scotia Highlanders Regimental Museum is located in the Colonel James Layton Ralston Armoury in Amherst. Both the museum and the armoury are important parts of our heritage in Cumberland North.

Today, I would thank John for his hard work he has put into this project at the museum and thank him for his continued efforts.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

**DEYOUNG, BRANDON: HORATIO ALGER ASSOC. SCHOLAR - CONGRATS.**

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, we all remember the Horatio Alger stories of youth. They're tales in which a young person overcomes obstacle in a rags-to-riches story. They first came to prominence in the late 1800s in the U.S.

Today, the Horatio Alger Association of Canada awards scholarships to deserving high school students ". . . who have overcome significant adversity while demonstrating

strength of character, strong academics, a commitment to pursuing higher education as well as a desire to contribute to society.”

I am pleased to congratulate Charles P. Allen High School student Brandon DeYoung on winning a \$5,000 Horatio Alger Award. Brandon is one of 170 students across the country to receive a Horatio Alger Scholarship this year.

I'd like to thank the Horatio Alger Association for their work assisting worthy students, and I'd like to wish Brandon DeYoung all the very best as he begins his post-secondary studies. Well done.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**HARDY, LEICA - CHOREOGRAPHER:  
INSPIRING YOUNG DANCERS - THANKS**

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Leica Hardy and her contribution to the dance culture of Nova Scotia.

Leica is a master dance educator in choreography, with a national reputation of producing excellence in her students. She holds an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts from St. Mary's University, and over her 40 years of teaching dance, she has seen her students go on to study at prestigious schools like Canada's National Ballet School, the School of Toronto Dance Theatre, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, to name a few, and many have gone on to dance with well-known professional companies.

Leica opened her school in Dartmouth in 2002 and has guided countless students to grow in confidence, skill and a love of creative movement, balanced with the strict technique of the Russian Ballet School. Her students are challenged and also encouraged. They get to show their stuff in a Spring recital and they have the opportunity to audition for the much beloved Nutcracker, for which Leica is also the choreographer.

Even the parents of the students get to take part - and let me tell you, doing across the floor polka with your 6-year-old is a true lesson in humility.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in thanking Leica Hardy for her contribution to countless young dancers and to the profession of dance in Nova Scotia.

[2:00 p.m.]

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

#### GOV'T. (N.S.) - BULLYING IN SCHOOLS - ACTION

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, on Sunday an article was posted in the *Cape Breton Post* outlining a Sydney River boy's experiences with bullying.

The mother felt let down by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. She felt she had to turn to the media to get some help for her son.

The minister says that bullying statistics have been going down, but I don't think that's much comfort for victims of more than 1,000 annually-reported instances of bullying in this province. It's probably not much comfort to their families, either.

My question for the Premier: What action is his government taking in response to this latest account of bullying in our schools?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the honourable member mentioned, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is with our partners across the province and in schools. We continue to ensure that we provide a safe environment for our kids. One case of bullying is one too many.

We are pleased that we are moving in the right direction, but we know there is more work to do. It will take all of us, including the department as well as those communities working collaboratively with parents and kids who come forward, to ensure that we deal with bullying in all its forms.

TIM HOUSTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No child should be afraid to go to sleep at night because they know that in the morning they have to get up and go back to the place where they are bullied - back to school.

This government hasn't demonstrated that they can take the action that's needed. When people come forward, it has to be taken seriously by the government.

Will the Premier provide some peace of mind to the parents and students of this province and give some assurance that the government will stop turning a blind eye to bullying and start to take some actual action when people come forward?



THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious issue that has been going on in communities and schools across our province. The honourable member would know that this government is taking this issue seriously. The inflammatory remarks indicate that he's not taking this issue seriously.

The fact of the matter is, we continue to move and continue to ensure that this place is safe. It's not a political football, Mr. Speaker, that people should try to win political points on this issue.

We should collectively all be working hard to ensure that every child in this province feels safe going into schools. That's what we continue to do, whether it's through our code of conduct or the effort that we're making with their SACs in schools across this province to ensure that they are safe for staff and the students who go into that space. We want parents to feel comfortable reaching out, and when they do, the honourable member is absolutely right - they should be taken seriously and we should respond.

TIM HOUSTON: This is the province where Pink Shirt Day was started. This is the province that commissioned the *There's No App for That* report on bullying, which has since received national and some international attention.

This is the province that has the position of anti-bullying coordinator right within our Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, yet statistics have only decreased minimally since action was started to take on the report.

Can the Premier give us some explanation, maybe devoid of political rhetoric, why this government is coming up so far short when it comes to addressing bullying and cyberbullying in the school system?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member, in his question, actually demonstrates the fact that we are continuing to see decline in that. The work that is happening in communities across this province is having an impact.

We know there is more work to do, but in his own question he answered it. The fact of the matter is that we have taken this issue seriously. The incidents are declining. There's more work to do, and we are going to continue to do that, to work with communities across this province to ensure that our children feel safe in their school environment and, quite frankly, beyond - at home, as well.

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

### **GOV'T. (N.S.): N.S. POWER/EMERA - PROFITS**

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, since 1992, when Nova Scotia Power was privatized, more than \$3 billion has been paid out in company dividends. This is \$3 billion

that could have been spent supporting the transition of our energy infrastructure towards renewables. It could have been spent on lowering people's power costs. It could have been spent on hospitals, nursing homes, or schools.

I want to ask the Premier: Wouldn't it have been better - we here think so - if that \$3 billion had been available for public purposes rather than for the profits of Emera and Nova Scotia Power?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As he would know from his time in government, we began to see an escalation of power rates under their leadership.

I am very pleased to be able to tell the honourable member that we have stable energy rates in this province. We continue to see a path forward to provide those stable energy rates as we continue to green up the grid.

I am not against the private sector, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, they will be the people who will drive the economic growth inside this province - they are the people who are driving the economic growth in this province. We as a government will continue to put in place policies that reflect that, that we see them as an asset. It's how we're going to grow good opportunities for our sons and daughters, and we fully expect the independent regulator from government to ensure that our utility lives inside the regulated environment that it has been set to live in.

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, the government wishes to expand the profit opportunities for Emera shareholders outside Canada without placing any obligation on the company to increase investment here or to provide any benefits for ratepayers in Nova Scotia. What about this does the Premier think is fair?

THE PREMIER: Again, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member should read the bill. It locks in Emera - headquarters will be locked into this province. The language in and around that clearly dictates that the headquarters remain here. It has limited to do with the bill increasing their profits. What it actually does is it allows them to go into an open market, like every other utility, and borrow at the appropriate cost of borrowing money. That is a good thing. It allows them to reinvest back not only in the infrastructure here, but in their international corporate entities which, in turn, will drive investment and revenue back into Nova Scotia.

That is an employer that has been providing opportunities for Nova Scotians. That's what this bill is about: ensuring that they can be viable in the long run right here in Nova Scotia.

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, thousands of people for whom the Premier has responsibility live in Nova Scotia today in energy poverty, which those who are expert in

this field say it means anyone who is paying more than 10 per cent of their income out in household energy and fuel. Many people making \$30,000 or so in our province are paying out \$3,000 or more in order to keep the house warm and to keep the lights on.

Mr. Speaker, the CEO of Emera, if he had to spend 10 per cent of his income to heat his home, his annual heating cost - 10 per cent of \$6.2 million - would be \$620,000 a year. But that isn't how it works because it's not him who is caught in the spiral of energy poverty.

Mr. Speaker, after all these years of ensuring Emera's executive salaries and their profits, doesn't the Premier think the company should be offering to do something for the people of Nova Scotia rather than calculating how to get something more from them?

THE PREMIER: Again, Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation is about borrowing, allowing them to invest in their business infrastructure, which provides opportunity inside our own province. The honourable member though raises an issue around energy poverty, one that his Party did not take seriously when they were in government. They continued to allow power rates to escalate.

We've provided a stable environment. He would also know that we continue to make sure that Keep the Heat continues to keep pace and allows that we continue to help those low-income Nova Scotians who require support. Time after time, he and his Party have voted against initiatives that have allowed us to make sure that we look after the most vulnerable citizens in our province; whether it comes to the issue of electricity, whether it's rent supplements, whether it's providing good opportunities - they continue to vote against it.

We're going to continue to do our role to ensure that we work with all Nova Scotians to provide them with an opportunity to lessen their own costs, but at the same time we're going to work with the private sector to grow good job opportunities in this province. That's the single best thing we can do for all Nova Scotians: provide them with a job opportunity.

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

**PREM. - EECD MIN.: CONDUCT - RESPOND**

BARBARA ADAMS: Yesterday we asked if the Premier had attempted to contact the three former members of this House who had come forward and raised serious questions about the conduct of the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. The Premier said he had received a copy of the letter but since it was addressed to you, Mr. Speaker, it fell to the Speaker to respond.

The Premier also disputed some of what was asserted in the letter, specifically the notion that he had been made aware of the accusations at that time. Since the Premier just told us that one bullying incident is too many and since he said that it was his job to provide a safe environment in schools, I'll call upon him to provide the same assurance to us in the people's House.

I ask the Premier: Why won't he simply pick up the phone and call these former members and ask them to tell him their story?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the honourable member. As I said yesterday, I was cc'd along with the other Leaders in this House on a letter that went to you. I took the issue very seriously. I looked through my entire records to find out if either one of those members had contacted me or the two Leaders who were representing the Parties at the time. At no point, Mr. Speaker, was there any documentation in the Premier's Office or in my constituency office in the riding of Annapolis.

On top of that, I continue to say, and I'll say it to the honourable member, when it was said that I was made aware of this issue back in 2012 or 2013 - absolutely I was not.

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I don't agree that the Premier has taken this issue seriously; otherwise, I wouldn't keep raising the issue. We'll agree that the Premier maybe didn't know back then, but we keep asserting that he does know now.

Yesterday, we asked if the Premier would commit to reaching out to the former members in question; we didn't get an answer. The Premier responded by recounting again, as he just did, all the ways that there has been no communication in the past. The Premier can find no indication that he has made any attempt to get the facts on these incidents and, frankly, neither can we. That's why we keep asking. This issue is not about a political football. If it was, I would call it "Deflect-gate."

Will the Premier do the right thing, call these former members, and get a full account of their accusations? Then we will take the Premier seriously when he says he's taking the issue seriously.

THE PREMIER: In her remarks, she laid out - these are accusations that fall in the purview of Province House, and the honourable member should know by now that I don't control Province House, Mr. Speaker. It falls under you as the Speaker. You are the one who manages Province House, not the Premier.

What I did, though, when the letter came to me, I want to tell the honourable member, is I took this issue seriously. I continue to take it seriously. We continue to make sure there was no contact with me. I want to assure the honourable member at no time - at no time - did anyone reach out to me to tell me there was physical contact with anyone . . . (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: The Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party can yell when he's sitting down. Why doesn't he stand up and ask me this very question? The fact of the matter is we took this issue seriously, and we'll continue to do so, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

### **H&W - HEALTH CARE: MEDIA CAMPAIGNS - ACCEPTABILITY**

TAMMY MARTIN: Stephen Saunders and his family have been through much uncertainty about Stephen's access to the cancer care services he needed. After several rounds of chemotherapy, he was told the only other treatment option was a procedure provided in Boston. He applied for out-of-province treatment and was denied. His family and friends started writing letters and went to the media. Luckily, Stephen's application for out-of-province care was approved and he recently completed a successful round of treatment in Boston.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness: Does he think it is acceptable that patients have to plead their case to the media and to their MLAs, and friends and family have to engage in a letter-writing campaign to ensure patients receive the care that they need?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I believe all members of the Legislature recognize and share the appreciation of the Saunders family and the success of the treatment. What I can assure the member opposite is that, under my tenure anyway, Nova Scotians don't have to engage in letter-writing campaigns or go to the media. I follow the processes in place to consider exceptional treatment programs, as this one was.

Mr. Speaker, I required additional information from clinicians. It was the clinicians who provided the details and the recommendations, as they do any time there's an exceptional request for drugs or treatments that are needed on an exception basis.

TAMMY MARTIN: Sadly, Mr. Speaker, time is running out for the Saunders family, though. When the NDP was in office, we brought in a new out-of-province health care travel policy. It has been almost a decade since that policy was brought in. Much has changed, so has health care. Stephen Saunders's case highlights the need to revisit these policies to evaluate how they have worked and to come up with modern solutions that will make patients' lives easier.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness: Will he commit to review the out-of-province health care travel policy, and will he make that review public?

RANDY DELOREY: First of all, I want to clarify for the members of the House that there are really two topics here that have come up in these questions. One is about treatment programs and options and whether or not they have reached a consensus within the clinical community and the reviews that take place nationally to help inform provincial guidelines for treatment programs. That's one piece.

[2:15 p.m.]

The other piece is specifically about the out-of-province travel program, and that's something that I recognized early this year and currently have staff reviewing that policy. I've already made that publicly known through the media.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**PREM. - MENTAL HEALTH INVEST.: FIRST-VOICE ACCTS. - INCLUDE**

JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. On March 13<sup>th</sup>, the Leader of the Official Opposition asked the Premier if he had read the 60 stories compiled by the mental health advocacy group #HowManyNSHA-IWK. Senior NSHA officials had said these stories would be passed on to the Premier and the Minister of Health and Wellness, but the Premier said he had not seen them. I'll table that. Well, I brought a copy of these stories and I'll table them so that the Premier can read them since his copy seems to have gotten lost.

My question for the Premier is: Now that he has a copy of these important first-voice accounts of our mental health care system, will he read them?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. This is an important issue. When the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party asked me that question, what I said was that I had not seen them, but I also said that they would have been seen by those who were part of making policy in and around part of that. But I would be more than happy to get a copy of the information just tabled and be happy to follow through.

I want to tell the honourable member those voices were part of the decision making that has gone on and will continue to be. Families across this province who are continuing to struggle should know they're being heard. We'll continue to work with them, and we'll continue to rely on our health care experts to provide us with evidence-based solutions that will help those families.

JOHN LOHR: Thank you to the Premier for that answer. This package includes 60 stories plus 13 submitted on March 6<sup>th</sup> in this Legislature about gaps in the mental health care system but, let's be honest, we could have easily collected 160 or 260 stories. Every

day, someone is failed by gaps in our mental health system, yet nothing seems to change. Throwing money at the problem without properly analyzing it will not solve it.

My question for the Premier is: Will the Premier commit to including first-voice accounts of the gaps in our mental health care system when considering future investments?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I just said in my first answer, those voices would have been part of what was going into the work around what Dr. Stan Kutcher did as well as Starr Dobson. The advice that we were given, and the government would include it - those families and many members across this province. We listened to Nova Scotians on all issues and we certainly will continue to listen to those families impacted by this issue.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

#### **EECD - BULLYING: INCIDENT STATS. (2017-18) - ACCURACY**

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. On March 6<sup>th</sup>, during exchange in Question Period, I stated that bullying in our schools is rampant. The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development kindly informed me that I was wrong and that statistics showed that bullying is actually going down. I can table that. I've seen the data and I'll admit there is a slight decrease, but the number of incidents is still too high. This isn't a reduction I'd be celebrating.

My question to the minister is: Based on the statistics that we have had over 1,000 reported bullying incidents in 2017-18, does the minister feel that our work is done in addressing bullying?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: The answer is, of course not. You know, one bullying incident is one too many. It's a complicated issue. We're talking about people's behaviour and there are number of factors that contribute to that.

We have approached this in a really systemic way with interventions, behavioural interventions, with restorative practices and, of course, with disciplinary action - and with strong policies for online behaviour that also come with consequences and teaching our children, using these moments to be learning moments for our students, to help them become better people.

Of course, it's not to be celebrated that we still have bullying incidents, but the fact that we are seeing a trend in the right direction is something to take some comfort in. Of course, there's still a lot more work to do and we're committed to doing that.

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I'll admit I find bullying statistics hard to trust. I don't believe bullying is something that is regularly reported, especially with most of it

moving to online where parents and school staff don't even know it's happening. The minister seems to think that because these statistics show a minor reduction that the situation is improving, but as he has just said - and I agree - one case of bullying is way too many.

My question to the minister is: What is his plan for making significant and sustained reductions in bullying incidents, and what are the levels of the discipline action that he speaks of?

ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'll point the member's attention to the investments that we've made in education. We have put new behavioural support teachers in place; we have child and youth care practitioners in place. We will have further announcements in the very near future on new non-teaching supports.

All of these folks together, work with our teachers, work with our administrators to help students deal with whatever issues they're dealing with; help address issues of bullying; help improve behaviour; and help ensure that every one of these negative incidents can hopefully, at the end of the day, be a learning experience for everybody, to help our kids be better people.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

#### **EECD - SYS. REDESIGN: TEACHERS/PRINCIPALS - TOOLS PROVIDE**

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, teachers and principals are being faced with bullying and cyberbullying that they simply do not have the resources to handle. As cyberbullying gets more creative and advanced, those in charge of keeping our students safe are finding themselves out of their depth. School principals are spending their Monday mornings trying to discipline students over Facebook comments that were written on Saturday night.

My question for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is: As he continues to redesign our education system, what concrete tools are being provided to teachers and principals to combat bullying?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, the member pointed out one of the most complicated factors in the situation: cyberbullying. We have the CyberScan process in place and the Intimate Images and Cyber-protection Act in place. These are new initiatives that our government has taken on. We are seeing some success there, in that we're up at about 73 per cent of reported cases being resolved, I think.

This gives more concrete objective tools to our folks within the system. It creates a law that supports these policies, and at the end of the day, we hope to see the continued success that we're having.



Hopefully the trend continues to go in the right direction. That's not to say our work is done; that's not to say we are resting on our laurels. This is a complicated situation that will continually take constant work and effort to resolve.

KIM MASLAND: Today's bullies cannot be dealt with, or as easily identified as the way they were in the past, we know that. It seems like every day there is a new method of wreaking havoc on someone else's life. As a mother who had a child who was bullied so badly in the school system, I know those havocs.

As this problem gets worse and worse, I think many parents, teachers, and students are wondering about the government's anti-bullying plans. They would have to look beyond this year's budget and business plan, neither of which have made any mention of resources for bullying and cyberbullying.

My question is: Does the minister feel the lack of attention to bullying in this budget is a fair summary of where it falls within the government's priorities?

ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, that's not the case. In fact, the additional funding we're putting into the education system to hire more people - behavioural experts, child and youth care practitioners, and other professionals who help students deal with their behavioural issues, their emotional issues - to help create a restorative process to make these difficult moments learning experiences for everybody. We have invested in these supports every single year that we've been in government.

We've increased investments in education, we've hired more of these folks, and we are seeing the trend heading in the right direction, recognizing there is still a lot more work to do.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

#### **L&F - CLEAR-CUTTING (SHEL. CO.): COM. CONSULT - COMMIT**

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Lands and Forestry. Carmen Williams is a carpenter and a former forest technician in Shelburne County. He's not against forestry but he has joined more than 1,000 people who have signed a letter to the minister calling for a moratorium on clear-cuts in the county. Until the community is consulted, the group would like to meet with the minister.

Mr. Speaker, the Lahey report emphasized the need to improve the public consultation process for harvest plans. The minister has started an internal working group on that topic but has taken no interim steps to engage communities. One step would be to meet with concerned communities.

Can the minister commit to meeting with community members in Shelburne County before any more harvests occur?

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I am aware of that specific stand. There continues to be a process in place for engagement with the community. They have 40 days to submit their views. We take those comments very seriously and our IRM team looks at that, which includes biologists and foresters. We do our best to make the best treatments.

We also are making significant progress on the Lahey report, updating our Forest Management Guide. We will have a workshop and stakeholder engagement in the coming months. We have our external experts that we've reached out to who should be joining our internal teams shortly, so we are making progress. I continue to look forward as I make change to move toward ecological forestry in the province.

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the Lahey report emphasizes “. . . the critical need for the embrace of openness, transparency, collaboration, and accountability . . .” by the department. But public consultation at this point has not gotten better. The one mechanism the public has for viewing harvest plans is through the online harvest viewer. But recently changes were made in what some feel is a crude public relations spin: the term “clear-cut” has been removed and replaced by less-transparent technical terms and past harvests are no longer visible on the map, which makes it more difficult to see the overall number of harvests being approved in a given area.

Does the minister think that these changes qualify as embracing openness, transparency, collaboration, and accountability, like the Lahey report called for?

IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, we continue to take feedback in this interim period before the recommendations are fully implemented. There were some changes based on feedback around upload time, in terms of the past maps. Those have since actually been added back to the maps, so that statement is not entirely accurate. We actually put more treatments, specificity, out there so that there is no debate about what the actual prescription or treatment is on the ground.

We've also made extra changes in terms of our retention quality in the forest and also having setbacks from different areas. If you'll see, there have been changes of treatments based on the reviews that continue to take place, based on the public comments.

We are making progress and I continue to look forward to seeing how we can improve the way that we improve our transparency, as we have done already.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**EECD - DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP EDUC.: EFFECTIVENESS - ANALYZE**

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The 2012 Task Force on Bullying and Cyberbullying called for the implementation of digital citizenship to educate students, staff, parents, and the general public on safe practices online. The intention behind this comes from a good place. On paper it seems like it could be very effective; however, students aren't taking it seriously. It's something they have to listen to, but it's more of a nuisance than anything with impact.

My question for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is: What measures are in place to analyze the effectiveness of digital citizenship education?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: As with any program in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, there's a continual evaluation that does happen to make sure we're achieving our ends. I think the fact that we are seeing some improvements in the cyberbullying sphere is an indication that some of our strategies are having an impact. I know that the CyberScan intervention group has had over 1,100 presentations, I think, to teach our students about the effects and repercussions of cyberbullying and to try to promote more responsible use of that technology that is better for all.

KIM MASLAND: The fact of the matter is that for all the positives technology has brought to our lives, it has also become a silent weapon. Through social media, cellphones, tablets, and everything else, students are waging wars against each other, and family members and school staff have no idea.

Cyberbullying is a terrifying reality for far too many students and the further we integrate technology into the schools, the higher the risk. Technology is important, but it should only be implemented alongside appropriate safety measures.

My question is: What is the government doing to ensure technology is being safely integrated into learning?

ZACH CHURCHILL: The member speaks to a very real challenge. The rate of technological advancement is happening in an exponential way. It's not always easy to keep up with it. We do find ourselves across the globe responding to challenges as they arise. However, this is something our government has been very proactive on.

We passed the Intimate Images and Cyber-protection Act. We do have the CyberSCAN Unit, which has provided over 1,100 presentations to approximately 25,000 citizens; and over 90 per cent of the youth who have completed the survey have indicated that the presentation has actually had an impact on them and made them reconsider their online safety and online use.

That is a stat that we should be encouraged with because this is about helping our young people learn, make their own decisions, and take responsibility for their actions.

[2:30 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**EECD - ANTI-BULLYING COORDINATOR: MANDATE - EXPLAIN**

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is again to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. As you can see, this is a very close subject to my heart.

One of the most concrete steps against bullying that this government has taken is the creation of an anti-bullying coordinator position with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. However, in conversations with educators, the few who had even heard of this position weren't able to name the person who currently holds the job. If those on the ground level of this issue don't know who this person is, what their mandate is, or that the position exists, you've got to call the effectiveness of the position into question.

My question to the minister is: What is the mandate of the anti-bullying coordinator?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: To help proactively deal with reported incidences of bullying, to help ensure that the appropriate supports are put in place for those who are impacted by it, and also to ensure that the appropriate supports are in place and that restorative processes and disciplinary actions are taking place for those who are conducting this negative behaviour as well.

KIM MASLAND: The task force was very clear that the anti-bullying coordinator was to be a high-profile student advocate. It was envisioned as an independent position reporting to several deputy ministers. The current position is nothing like that. They have a low profile and are buried in the bureaucracy of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. School staff don't even know the position exists or what its mandate is. This is a far cry from the level of action needed to combat bullying.

My question to the minister is: Does the minister believe that this position is effective in its current form, or does he believe we should rethink the nature of this very vital position?

ZACH CHURCHILL: I think we need to continually evaluate the positions that we have in any department, particularly the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. I think there is some evidence to show that the efforts we've put in place

around anti-bullying are being successful. We are seeing trends of reported incidences going in the right direction. They are dropping.

That is not to say that there's not more work to do. I think that, particularly in a department that is about learning, we need to continually learn ourselves and adapt our strategies and policies to ensure we're meeting the needs of our students, particularly on something this important.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**JUSTICE - ANTI-BULLYING PLAN:  
HUMAN TRAFFIC MEASURES - CONFIRM**

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. The anti-bullying action plan called for government, community, and law enforcement to work together to address human trafficking. Victims of bullying are highly likely to be the ones who are lured into human trafficking. A young person who's feeling vulnerable, alone, and defenseless and just wants to get away from the ordinary life as they know it is easily manipulated and drawn into human trafficking.

It's a very scary time for them, so my question is: Can the minister confirm that the measures called for in the 2012 action plan have in fact been implemented?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, as my colleague mentioned earlier in previous questions, the creation of the CyberSCAN Unit is education-specific and supports our young people. That forms part of the strategies going forward.

I certainly want to acknowledge the comments from my colleague that this victimization is in itself a cause and contributor to criminality. Those circumstances are being addressed, but specific to human trafficking, this is an area that is very topical. Nova Scotia has some of the highest statistics in the country. We are presently working with our federal government and looking forward to an announcement in the very near future.

KARLA MACFARLANE: I thank the minister for his comments, and he's correct. It's actually quite astonishing that this province is leading in cases of human trafficking in Canada. It's hard to believe, but it's the truth. Discussions with local police have shown glaring gaps in training and education around human trafficking. Some officers that I spoke to didn't even know that purchasing sex has been illegal in Canada for years. They didn't even know.

We are failing the most vulnerable people by not taking concrete action to stop human trafficking before it occurs. We have to be going after the pimps. We have to be going after the johns. That's where it starts. I would like the minister to outline what this government's action plan is to end human trafficking.

MARK FUREY: I think that we would be naïve to think that we will end this major and serious issue, but I want to commit to my colleague and all members of this Legislature that we are committed to addressing human trafficking.

As I indicated earlier, we're working very closely with our federal partners on this. There are existing resources in the province, both integrated units between the Halifax Regional Police and the RCMP, as well as stand-alone positions. Our commitment will be demonstrated in the very near future with an announcement with the federal government.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**TIR - LANCASTER INTERSECTION: REPAIR DELAYS - EXPLAIN**

SUSAN LEBLANC: My question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. This will be the third Estimates process where I will be talking to the minister about the extremely dangerous Lancaster intersection where Highway No. 118 turns into Woodland Avenue.

Mr. Speaker, last Fall I was told that the department was going to measure traffic, and we have heard no report. There was a study done again this winter, but I still haven't heard any results. This is been on the department's radar for longer than the two years that I have been here, and still nothing is happening with the intersection. While traffic is heavy, accidents are common, and the community feels unsafe.

I would like to ask the minister: After all of the studies and talk, what are the delays in fixing the Lancaster intersection?

HON. LLOYD HINES: Rest assured that we are reviewing that. We have a great partnership with HRM in that instance. There are discussions about how the intersection might look if a transfer of that intersection was made. I would be more than happy to share the latest results of the traffic reviews with the member.

SUSAN LEBLANC: I appreciate that answer, although I feel like I have been hearing that answer for many, many months. My community hasn't heard anything from the department and is feeling frustrated and angry that this seems to barely register on the province's radar.

This is the busiest corridor in Dartmouth. The lights do nothing to slow traffic coming in off the highway, parents are afraid to let their children cross the street to get to Crichton Park Elementary, and a four-year period saw 60 traffic collisions. HRM councillor Sam Austin has made the apt observation that a roundabout would be a traffic calming strategy, as the minister has alluded to. The city is willing to do it if the province would just give over the land to the city with a little bit of a bonus package to help them get it done.

When I left Estimates last year, my understanding was that that was the route the province was ready to go down. When does the minister plan on following through with this plan?

LLOYD HINES: Discussions around such a transfer and a reconfiguration of that intersection are ongoing.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

### **COM. SERV.: MENSTRUAL HYGIENE - COST SUPPORTS**

KARLA MACFARLANE: My question is for the Minister of Community Services. Last May, a national survey by Plan International Canada found that 70 per cent of Canadian women ages 18 to 25 have missed school, work, and social events, because of their period, and I will table that survey. One third of Canadian women under 25 struggles to afford menstrual hygiene products to manage their periods. No matter the strides that we are taking in gender equality, this will always be a cost that women bear the burden of.

My question for the minister is: What current action is being taken to make this natural part of a woman's life more affordable?

HON. KELLY REGAN: There is no doubt about it that probably every woman in this room has, at one time or another, been caught unprepared, and most of us just go out and buy something. The fact of the matter is that there are some people who cannot do that, and that's why one of the pilot projects that's under way right now in our Building Vibrant Communities program is looking at one option for making sure that products get out to women who may be in need.

It's a program that's under way in Sheet Harbour, and we're in the process now of looking at the results of that. There are a number of other different ways that that can be delivered as well and so, we are looking at what's the best way.

KARLA MACFARLANE: I thank the minister for her concern and attention to this because it is important for us all to remember that menstrual hygiene products are not a luxury. They are a necessity. The federal government removed the tax on menstrual products in 2015 and we know private groups and pharmacies across this province, schools even, are looking to stock their rooms and promote and give out free products. But we must do more, and we can do more.

My question to the minister is: Will the minister expand the special needs provision in the Employment Support and Income Assistance Act to include menstrual hygiene products?

KELLY REGAN: I want to thank the honourable member for that question. That's absolutely one of the options that we're looking at. What that will do is help women who are on income assistance, women and girls actually, we should make that point, buy those particular items. But it doesn't help people who are living on lower incomes who may not be in receipt of income assistance. So, this is why we're looking at what is the best way to meet the most people.

I would also be remiss, Mr. Speaker, if I did not give a shout-out to our colleagues in the NDP who when they were in government, Mr. Speaker, removed the provincial portion of the tax on sanitary products as well.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**JUSTICE - THERE'S NO APP FOR THAT REPORT:  
IMPLEMENTATION - WHEN**

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. When the government commissioned the *There's No App for That* report on bullying, it took a progressive first step into ending bullying.

The recommendations covered a wide range of areas from changes in our schools to changes in our communities. Yet, here we are seven years later, and still there are glaring gaps in the implementation of many of the recommendations.

My question for the minister: Is the government still planning to implement the recommendations in this report?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, one of the objectives of government specific to cyberbullying, is to mitigate the events and circumstances. We recognize the impact cyberbullying is having on our young people and quite frankly, across the adult population as well.

With the earlier comments around online bullying, we see this to be front and centre, Mr. Speaker. As has been mentioned in this Legislature, the creation of the Cyber Protection Act and the Cyber Protection Unit, is addressing some of that. But I want to acknowledge here, we're prepared as a government. We will continue to work towards addressing this broader issue, but at the present time these initiatives are demonstrating significant progress. Of all the students, over 25,000 participants in a survey, 92 per cent indicated that it changed their online behaviours. That is the foundational step in addressing this particular issue.

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, in order for us to move together as a province we need to equip ourselves with the best information possible. This report has been cited



nationally and internationally. It has been relied upon by the Senate of Canada and the Supreme Court. Yet, the government has paid little attention to it outside of a first glance.

It seems like a slight drop in reported incidents is all it took for this government to consider it a job well-done. So, my question is this: If this report is good enough and relevant enough for the Supreme Court of Canada, why isn't it good enough for the government of Nova Scotia?

MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I want to speak again to the progressive efforts that are being made specific to the Cyber Scan Unit and the Cyber Protection Act.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize and acknowledge that this is a major issue, but, like any issue, you can react or you can respond. We believe responding with an educational foundational program through the Cyber Scan Unit education principle to resolving this issue. The youth, in response to the surveys, 92 per cent of them have indicated it changes their behaviours online. That is first and foremost the important element to finding a solution through those education meetings.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**PREM.: N.S. YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL - RE-ESTABLISH**

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. As technology continues to develop, the dangers of bullying and cyberbullying grow in ways we couldn't imagine. Growing and adapting alongside these changes is the only way to stay ahead of them. In *Speak Up, An Action Plan to Address Bullying and Cyberbullying Behaviour*, one recommendation was the reestablishment of the Nova Scotia Youth Advisory Council. Who better to keep us informed on the latest changes in social technology than the young people who use it every day?

My question to the Premier is this: As the Minister responsible for Youth, I wonder if he can provide the House with an update on the status of this advisory council?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, he would know that, through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, we have a connection back through to the youth in schools across this province.

I also want to inform the House that I have been meeting with young people, ranging from the age of leaving school to their mid-thirties, dealing with some of these very issues. The most recent one, actually, was with a group of young people from Halifax, some of whom are still in school and some of whom are actually out in the workforce dealing with issues that impact them directly. I'm looking forward to travelling across the province.

I have other arrangements set up to continue to meet with young people to ensure that their voice is heard at all stages, not just when they are in P-12 education but as they move through post-secondary and into the workforce.

[2:45 p.m.]

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I agree that it is indeed important to continue on with those conversations with our young people. We know that bullying and cyberbullying are not slowing down, and I believe the government has missed many opportunities to make our schools safer. There is no one who knows the impact and the strategies of bullies and cyberbullies more than the students who are on the ground every day experiencing them. They are the first voice.

It is our responsibility to do everything we can to keep our students safe at school and online, and including them in the discussions is a simple first step.

My question for the Premier is: Will he establish the Premier's Youth Advisory Council, as he promised to do in the 2017 election, to hear directly from students about what is going on in our schools?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my first answer, we're in the process of doing that. There is an avenue for the P-12 students. What we're looking for is to ensure that we hear multiple youth voices. That's why I said to the honourable member in his first question that I met more recently with a group here in Halifax. I'll be reaching out across the province to get both an urban and rural perspective.

The challenge is associated with not only finding them a way through our education system but with some of the challenges they face after they leave our education system and find their way into the workforce and trying to get a fulsome view from young people across the province.

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

### **LAE - DAL. UNIV.: INTL. STUDENTS - TUITION INCREASES**

LENORE ZANN: My question today is for the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. Yesterday international students delivered a petition to the Dalhousie Board of Governors and held a sit-in to oppose massive increases in international student fees. I questioned him about this in Budget Estimates.

Over the next four years, Dalhousie is set to increase those fees by as much as \$10,000. Many of these students need food banks to eat, and one student, Lovepreet Singh

Dhillon, said that most international students have to borrow money from their banks back home and pay high interest rates to be able to afford these tuition fees here in Nova Scotia.

In response, the minister told reporters that limiting international student fees would be overstepping the government's role. I'll table that.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister admit that increasing tuition fees by \$10,000 will discourage international students from choosing Nova Scotia for their university education?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: I'm actually very proud of the work our universities have done in keeping our international student fees low. Nova Scotia is less expensive to go to university for an international student than B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, or Quebec, as well as P.E.I. We are the third least-expensive place for an international student to go in Canada.

As well, Mr. Speaker, our data shows that the rate of increases in Nova Scotia are less than the average in Canada. Not only are we leading the way in Canada in terms of how expensive we are for international students, but the rate of increase is actually lower than the rest of Canada.

LENORE ZANN: In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, that's a complete fabrication. International students are a huge contributor to our economy.

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River will retract that statement.

LENORE ZANN: Will you ask me to leave this room again today, Mr. Speaker? Yes, I'll retract that.

Mr. Speaker, in 2014 international students spent \$324 million, resulting in 3,200 jobs and \$142 million in wages. The province should be doing everything it can to attract and retain international students, not pushing them away with high fees. International students have been calling . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers has expired. We'll now move on to Opposition Business.

### **OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

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

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the order of business, Private Members' Public Bills for Second Reading.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING**

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

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 108.

**Bill No. 108 - Green Jobs Act.**

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

GARY BURRILL: I am excited to be able to address the Green Jobs Act this afternoon at the second reading.

Let me first note about the legislation before us, the Green Jobs Act, begins by placing itself in the tradition and placing itself in the context of the signature legislation which was passed here with all-Party support a dozen years ago, the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act. I would like to begin by noting that the Green Jobs Act begins itself as a piece of legislation with these words which come from the EGSPA itself, namely, that "the health of the economy, the health of the environment and the health of the people of the Province are interconnected." From the place of that foundational understanding laid out in the preamble for the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act, the bill before us this afternoon, the Green Jobs Act, addresses two foundational facts about our provincial situation.

Foundational fact one - we have in Nova Scotia a pressing need for good, well-paying jobs in every part of our province. We have the lowest median income of any province in Canada, and we have 40,000 people each year unable to find work. Statistics Canada's population and employment data for March indicate that our province, although we have only 2.6 per cent of the population of Canada, nevertheless at the moment, accounts for 6 per cent of the population in receipt of EI benefits in the whole country. That's foundational fact one, that we have a pressing need in our economy for good, well-paying jobs.

Foundational fact two addressed in the Green Jobs Act - simply, we face a climate emergency. There are so many fronts in Nova Scotia on which we confront this truth. We confront it at the level of floods. We confront it at the level of drought. We confront it at the level of variability and vulnerabilities in agriculture. We confront it at the level of extreme weather in a whole series of forms.

Certainly, we confront it on the front of the sea level. This is a dimension of the climate emergency which we in Nova Scotia ought well to have top of mind. Here in our province, to a great extent, we are defined by our patterns of settlement. Our patterns of settlement are really molded by our 7,500 kilometres of coastline. Here in our province it's not an abstraction. It's not a distant or remote consideration.

Last year in the U.K., the National Oceanography Centre warned of a cost to the world of damage due to rising sea levels of \$14 trillion by the year 2100 on account of global warming. We can think in our own experience of places like Queensland, Lawrencetown, East Chezzetcook, the Isthmus of Chignecto, and there are many other Nova Scotia names that, in the last couple of years, from the point of view of damage and concern related to sea level, come to mind.

The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change special report on global warming, which burst on the consciousness of the world last October, established that limiting global warming to 1.5°C is something that is possible. It requires, however, greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced to net-zero by the year 2050. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050, the goal which is consistent with the pathway to maintaining global warming within 1.5°C, is something that requires, in the view of the many scientific authors of the UN's report, something that requires rapid and far-reaching government action in the upcoming decade. Also, the authors of the UN report underline and indicate in many, many different forms, it requires not just government action but that this government action has the capacity to create unprecedented economic development and prosperity.

The Green Jobs Act, as our Party has put it forward, establishes a policy framework for this prosperity here in the context of Nova Scotia, as it has been described by the authors of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The Act establishes the policy framework for that prosperity and for that transition and it does this by means of providing for a singular economic mobilization in the direction of the transition that the Intergovernmental Panel is speaking about.

Therefore, we have the purpose of the Green Jobs Act which is stated in its Clause 2: "The purpose of this Act is to make an ambitious economic mobilization plan for the Province that will create good green jobs, promote economic fairness and improve the quality of life enjoyed by everyday Nova Scotians, while reducing the Province's greenhouse gas emissions to at least 50% below 1990 levels by 2030, and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050."

The bill before us does this by means of creating a committee of experts to develop the plan to create the thousands of jobs in renewable energy; the thousands of jobs in retrofitting; the thousands of jobs in clean public transportation and in climate change mitigation infrastructure. All of these jobs will place us dynamically within the new green economy that the world is moving to with such speed all around us.

We need to be clear about this, that the economic era of fossil fuels is in its late innings. It is rapidly yielding to a new economic era defined by renewables. You see this reflected in many facts about the international economy, one of which is that about \$367 billion U.S. was invested in green energy in 2015 compared to \$253 billion U.S. for fossil fuels. And, over the next two decades, the U.S. is projected to see \$7.8 trillion in investment in renewable energy, in comparison just to a fraction of that in fossil fuels. This is a development spurred by the facts that new solar and wind energy are, already today, cheaper to produce than new power from coal and gas plants; and, is spurred on by the fact that the cost of renewable generation, dropping so rapidly, is slated to plummet by another 60 per cent or 70 per cent over the next three decades.

The matter of being successful in making a transition is something that in Nova Scotia we really can't overstate. Much of our economic history post-Confederation has been moulded by the fact that, to a great extent, our province failed to successfully navigate a transition in economic eras in a previous generation; that is the transition from the era defined by transportation based on wood, wind, and water in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, often is the age of sail as it's referred to; the transition from that economy to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century new economy, which was based then on steel and coal and steam.

In our failure to effect that transition in the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in an economically successful and dynamic way, we see the foundation for the many economic challenges which held back our economy and held back the people of our province throughout the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century up until the Second World War.

At the same time, however, there are instances that we're all aware of, of transitions in economic eras where the government has played a major role in contributing to that transition, and as a result, the transition has been successful.

[3:00 p.m.]

Probably the most well-known example would be the Marshall Plan of the 1940s by which the resources of the American economy were focused on the post-war economic reconstruction of Europe. Probably a closer-to-home example and just as clear is the whole mobilization of the Canadian economy through the efforts of the Canadian Government towards the efforts of the Second World War. This created a transition for us which was in fact successful from the long period of the Depression towards the war to the new economy we entered into following the war, which was really the longest sustained economic expansion in the history of the western world. So, transitions matter.

Government's leadership in making the move from one period of economic transition to another is very important. Therefore, the Liberal government's failure to provide the leadership required for this current transition from the era of fossil fuels to the era of renewables exploding all around us, the Liberal government's failure to provide the leadership as we move into this current transition is a matter of growing and great concern.

I want to say this with precision: the Liberal's advocacy for oil and gas drilling in marine-protected areas is entirely inconsistent with the target of maintaining global warming within the limit of 1.5°C. It is inconsistent with that goal.

It is inconsistent with what the UN calls a favourite word in that landmark October 18<sup>th</sup> study, "pathway" - so inconsistent. Also inconsistent with the pathway of containing global warming within 1.5°C, is proceeding with the current \$11 million public investment we have in Nova Scotia in drilling-related mapping; also inconsistent as that \$11 million investment is, as providing for oil and gas drilling in marine-protected areas, so also inconsistent with a pathway towards net-zero by 2050, inconsistent with a pathway towards containing global warming to 1.5°C is the government's emissions reduction target of only 45 to 50 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030.

Nor is it at all encouraging that this government faces a Progressive Conservative Official Opposition on the basis of whose contributions to discussion of this subject in recent months, we ought to be able to conclude that their view is that the public discussion on these issues should provide more room for things like fracking or for uranium exploration. Something entirely different from this is what is required. This is the transition that the Green Jobs Act provides for.

A green economy network has calculated that over 30,000 jobs can be created in just five years through a major Marshall Plan-level investment in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and clean public transit. Our own Efficiency Nova Scotia established in 2009 by the NDP has already created 1,400 jobs and has saved people in Nova Scotia \$166 million annually while cutting 840,000 tons of carbon pollution per year.

It is not, I'd like to say in conclusion, a question of whether or not we in our province can afford to invest in this transition, because a new deal, a green new deal, is not a drain on our economy. As we make this transition and marshal our resources of doing it successfully, a green new deal is a gain. Every dollar spent on energy efficiency generates \$7 of GDP and every expansion of employment expands government taxation income. It's not a question of capacity; we have that. It is rather a question of government commitment. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to rise in my place to provide comments on the bill, an Act Respecting Green Jobs. I want to thank the Leader of the NDP for his comments on this topic and look forward to the comments from my colleague, the member for Sackville-Beaver Bank from the PCs.

It is a very important issue for all of us. If you look at the Act that has been drafted here, it references 2007, and it's true that this has been a conversation for successive governments for a long time. I have said in previous comments that we all deserve a bit of

credit as Parties in this House and as representatives who have formed governments over the years. Nova Scotians, for a very long time, have told their government that the environment is important to them, that we need to do our part to be national and international leaders in reducing our carbon footprint. Nova Scotians have stepped up to the plate, and governments continue to do so.

I have the honour of representing the Department of Energy and Mines, but I know that there's great work that is done by the staff in my department, the Department of Environment, the Department of Lands and Forestry, and the Department of Municipal Affairs. The work that's done around green jobs is important, and there's a lot of work being done by staff within government. I want to recognize them for the work that they do for Nova Scotians on a daily basis.

In Nova Scotia, when it comes to green jobs, the member mentioned Efficiency Nova Scotia. They do tremendous work across the province, and as the Leader of the NDP referenced, they create employment all over Nova Scotia, particularly in rural areas of Nova Scotia. Some numbers have been cited multiple times here in the House: 1,400 jobs have been created through the efficiency programs we provide to Nova Scotians. That's saving \$180 million a year on energy bills for residents in communities across the province. This is outstanding work. This continues to grow annually, the numbers that are involved in the efficiency side, the home efficiency side, and the commercial efficiency side.

We have seen 700 applications for the solar program. There are actually more applications in the system now than there is solar across the province. That is a significant message that is being sent, that Nova Scotians are wanting these options. As a result of that, immediately, 60 new staff had to be hired across the province to look at what those solar programs mean and the implementation. We continue to see growth in the jobs that we provide to Nova Scotians in the sector.

If you look across departments, if you look at the Department of Environment, and you look at solid waste, there are 4,000 people working in the solid-waste sector. That number continues to grow as municipalities continue to diversify their waste options. These numbers are significant.

As well for students across Nova Scotia - there are hundreds of students who are involved with over 100 companies that are allowing them to learn more about energy through the energy training program. These are important for our future leaders.

Looking at businesses across Nova Scotia, through efficiency, there are over 200 businesses that employ Nova Scotians that are connected to a network that we work with on a daily basis in our department to ensure that as programs become available. As we expand our programs to support Nova Scotians, they have access to training and the information needed so they can expand their businesses, they can hire more Nova Scotians, and ultimately be successful as new leaders in green energy and in creating green jobs.



As a government, we're going to continue to diversify the programs we offer. We have seen that this year alone in looking at expanding our efficiency programs into First Nations communities. That has been big. That has been great news across the province. We have had over 2,000 installs in Mi'kmaw communities across the province. We now have Mi'kmaw communities stepping forward looking to start their own businesses in energy efficiency. We work closely with them, and it has been very successful. I congratulate those communities for stepping forward to support their communities and to support entrepreneurship and economic development.

I also have the privilege of seeing the work done and the millions of dollars invested in the potential of the Bay of Fundy and what the tidal sector potentially could mean for Nova Scotia. We've seen major investments from our federal partners to support companies that are looking at their designs and their innovations to support tidal technology. Millions of dollars are being spent in rural Nova Scotia supporting vendors and supporting other skill sets to support what could be one of the greatest legacies Nova Scotia could provide to the world in the power of their tides. We continue to work with them. Investments continue to be made by all levels of government that we support on a daily basis.

I go back to my old department that I had the honour of representing, the previous one, the Department of Municipal Affairs, and I look at the work that is being done around the waste-water infrastructure, in partnership with the federal government. Millions of dollars are being spent in communities across Nova Scotia to meet federal regulations when it comes to discharge, so I look specifically to the CBRM and some of the work that is being done on Sydney West. That's a \$20 million investment. That's jobs, that's work, that's just one of many projects that will happen in Cape Breton to support cleaner oceans and more green jobs.

To go to the bill for a moment, I notice in the bill there are a number of organizations the bill references in regard to what they look at as a potential task force. I can say that the list they have provided, we work with many of those organizations on a daily basis. I mentioned our strong relationship with our Mi'kmaw communities around energy efficiency. As I've said, we spend \$14.2 million a year. We'll spend it again this year on our HomeWarming program, expanding that into Mi'kmaw communities and expanding that into rentals to drive those savings down into residents who are renters. That has been significant, the work we do with Mi'kmaw communities.

We're constantly working with our municipalities and how we can support programs that they want to implement, whether it's through the money that we're going to spend this year. We're going to spend \$5 million on green infrastructure projects that's allowing us to leverage an additional \$7 million with the federal government. That's going to be looking at projects regarding electrification of transportation. That's going to be looking at active transportation options for residents. It's going to be looking at solar

programs for community buildings. It's going to be looking at research into battery storage. These are all very exciting and these all equate to green jobs.

Millions of dollars are going to be invested across Nova Scotia to support new and innovative ways for communities to connect with one another, to move away from fossil fuels, to support the electrification of their transportation. I have the honour of having these conversations with them every day, so I'm very excited about the work that we're going to be doing with municipalities through the programs we offer.

We work with business organizations and other community organizations because there are other programs that we offer through our community solar programs. Community organizations can apply; we work with them very closely. I've had the opportunity to work with many of you about projects specific to your communities, whether they are schools or community halls, important pieces of infrastructure in municipalities. Again, these all equate to significant investments in communities, which equate to green jobs.

I look again at the list. When we look at our anti-poverty organizations, this is why we're making some of these changes this year to our HomeWarming program, to expand into renters so landlords will make those energy efficiency upgrades to their units and their buildings, which again equate to green jobs, which drives the savings actually into the residents who are renting.

I've provided a few examples therein. Of course, we always have a close relationship with the Department of Lands and Forestry and the Department of Environment to determine if there are ways we can capitalize on our resources, which we have seen through our solid-waste initiatives and I've seen through our solar programs. We ensure that everything we do is ultimately about continuing to be a national leader in reducing our carbon footprint.

What it is also resulting in is jobs right across Nova Scotia that Nova Scotians are now taking specific training to complete those tasks and, as well, are opening businesses across our province that will drive the future, because we all agreed that this is the path that we're moving towards.

[3:15 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, I'll conclude here that I'm very optimistic about what we've done as a province. As I've said, Nova Scotians fundamentally want their government to be leaders in climate change. They want our government to be a national leader in reducing our carbon footprint, and we're doing that. We're investing millions of dollars more, and as a result of being a national leader, we're also a national leader in creating green jobs to support communities across the province.

I see a long future of growth in regard to our efficiency programs. We're going to continue to modify them to support all Nova Scotians. We're going to continue to have strong relationships with all communities to ensure that as innovative new technologies come forward, we will be prepared across the province to ensure that the infrastructure is in place to support those services that Nova Scotians use every day. I can say that in partnership with the federal government, you will see a significant amount of green infrastructure projects that come forward that are going to make our communities better places to live and are going to create significant employment opportunities in our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to rise in my place to offer a few comments for this debate. I appreciate the comments from my colleague from the NDP, and I look forward to the comments from the PCs.

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

BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I do want to recognize and thank the member for Halifax Chebucto for bringing this forward. The one thing I certainly agree with is that both he and members of his Party continue to keep us focused on a green focus. I applaud them for that.

Having said that, though, there are a number of issues in regard to this particular bill that's coming forward that I think we cannot support at this time for a variety of reasons. We'll go through those in just a minute.

I do want to say that many of the facts that that member did bring up, I do agree with in regard to the outcomes that were laid out in the Intergovernmental Climate Change Report. I do agree with that. I do agree with the concepts that were discussed in regard to climate change, the flooding and the droughts and the effects on agriculture and everything else. I think I've stated here in the House in the past that you pretty much have to have your head in the sand to not realize what's going on today.

I find it somewhat ironic because I don't think there is any member - regardless of Party - in this House who doesn't recognize what's happening with climate change currently. I don't think there's anybody in this House who would say that they don't want to see a greener, cleaner economy and a greener, cleaner environment. Unless your name is Tim Burton or Donald Trump, I think everybody here would agree that those are priorities we want to see, so we work towards those things.

There are a number of different things that are stated in the bill that we want to raise some concerns with, and why we're not supporting this coming forward. Although, as I've stated, there are a lot of merits in where the bill wants to go, it falls short and doesn't have very many specifics to it.

I have some concerns. One of the things I wanted to note was that the bill does state that the task force would be comprised of 15 members. It then goes ahead and lists 13 of those. I would think that that's somewhat limiting for something such as this. I do recognize that all those groups that are listed there do have merit and would provide significant input as we went forward looking at green jobs. My concern would be representation from an environmental organization. Mr. Speaker, I can think of 10 environmental organizations, standing here right now, off the top of my head that should all be consulted. They all probably have some very valid input that they would be able to provide when looking at transitioning to a green economy, but that would also be fighting, saying that they should be the one that's sitting at that table. I am somewhat concerned from that perspective.

I'm also concerned about the groups that I think should be consulted that would have merit and have something to add that are not on that list. I think that we do have to recognize that, although our goals are to hopefully move to a greener economy, currently we are still an economy that is based on fossil fuels. I think that part of that transition to a greener and cleaner economy is going to be done somewhat in consultation and conjunction with the existing infrastructure. We don't want to see people who are currently in the coal industry or the oil and gas industry all of a sudden not able to make that transition. I do think that in moving to a greener economy and green jobs, there is a role for fossil fuel organizations and industry to play as we move forward to that.

In Germany right now, there's a company by the name of Sono. They're currently manufacturing the first totally solar powered vehicle. It actually has solar panels on the roof and on the front and on the trunk. It is an electric car that is powered 100 per cent by solar. We are seeing where economies are starting to change. There are some creative initiatives that are coming out. We see that as carbon taxes, cap-and-trades, and other things are put on residents of Canada, people are looking at greener and more cost-effective alternatives.

I think you're going to see business start to drive this way, as well. We certainly see that in the HRM area with the installation of solar panels and the Solar City program. I think business will eventually start pushing that as well. But to specifically leave out fossil fuels and the gas industry - a number of the listed organizations there, although they're wonderful organizations, their goals, their directives, and their mandates are not necessarily with creating green jobs. They're not the economic movers, in some cases. I think that the list that's there is somewhat narrow. We do need to broaden that. That would be one issue that I have with that.

There's one line there that really stood out to me, and it's in regard to excluding, specifically, a member of the public service. My interpretation of the public service has always been somebody who's a government employee. Although there have been many times in my political career where I'm on an opposite end of something that a government employee suggests or feels, I do recognize the expertise that they bring forward and the hard work that they bring forward. I think that to identify a number of different groups and

then specifically say that we are not interested in having somebody from the public service sitting on that task force is remiss, even if it was in an ex-officiary way. The expertise that staff do bring to projects like this, I don't think that that should be underestimated, and I certainly do value when staff bring forward suggestions to me. I think that we're remiss in that.

The bill talks about transparency and inclusive consultation. This comes back to some concerns about when we list only certain groups. When you include certain groups, you're excluding other groups, and I think that for us to move toward a real sustainable green economy, we do need to have good consultation. I think that consultation needs to be transparent and inclusive. My comments earlier with the oil and gas industry – I think we do need to look at everything - all industries, and work together to come up with the best policies that we can.

I do think that climate change and what is happening now globally across this world is significant. I personally find that by having all these little sub-Acts and sub-bills, we really are - divide and conquer, I guess, where they're dividing. I think where this should be talked about and addressed would certainly be through the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act. I think that's more of a place that aligns with this and it could probably be worked into there.

I have heard the Minister of Environment, both here in the House numerous times as well as answering some questions during Estimates when we were in the Red Room, and she has indicated to me that the department is coming forward by the end of this year.

I think that there is a recognition that it is overdue to have EGSPA updated. The minister has certainly recognized and acknowledged that publicly in the House, as well as across the room, and has stated that by the end of this year there will be amendments coming forward to that Act.

It specifically says in there - and I believe that the member for Halifax Chebucto did talk about this –about the green economy, environment, and all that within the EGSPA and I think that's where this needs to be encompassed as well.

Because of the effect globally that carbons and global warming is having , I think it's not a one-Party issue and I do believe it affects everybody. I certainly hope that the government extends the opportunity to the Opposition Parties that before the final amendments to that EGSPA do come back before this House, I would encourage and hope that the Minister of Environment and the department reach out to the Opposition Parties. Ask us what our opinions are to make sure that if we have concerns that perhaps they can be encapsulated in that final draft because I think that, similarly to when it was brought before the House initially, it would be nice to see. I think it would say a lot if all Parties in the House were able to get behind that Act, like they did a number of years ago when it was initially introduced in the House.

With those comments, Mr. Speaker, I do thank everybody for the indulgence. I would suggest to any member in this House that one of the things that has served me well since taking my seat here is getting up often and walking over, if I have a concern about something, and addressing it with a member across the way. Although sometimes we don't agree, it's funny how many times we are able to get something started or ensure something is looked at.

I certainly hope that when EGSPA comes forward we will have an opportunity to do the same thing at that point in time. With that, I will take my seat. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, On March 15<sup>th</sup> we witnessed a pivotal moment around the globe. From Oslo to Delhi to Cape Town to Halifax, youth walked out of their classrooms right around the world in protest of climate inaction from their governments. Why? Because the youth of today recognize that there is, in fact, a climate change crisis going on and it is not being addressed quickly enough.

[3:30 p.m.]

You may recall a young man from Amherst who wrote the following words in *The ChronicleHerald*: "We're going to be the age demographic whose children will never know the joy [sic] a white Christmas morning, whose children won't be able to drink clean water, or breathe clean air, because of pollution that could have been prevented."

That's Dan Osborne, a Grade 10 student who helped organize a climate strike in his own community of Amherst. Dan is right. The thing is, it's people like Dan and his peers who will be sitting here in this Legislature or in others around the globe in the not-too-distant future, dealing with a climate crisis that we did not deal with properly and that is even more advanced than what we're witnessing now.

But setting aside the reality of catastrophic climate change for the moment - and don't even get me started on the rising sea levels around here and the threat to our own province, including the Isthmus of Chignecto and my hometown of Truro, which is unfortunately on a flood plain - I want to focus for now on the economy: the green economy, a green new deal for Nova Scotia.

Here is something else Dan said that was interesting: ". . . we want a plan to bring green jobs to all young Nova Scotians." I think young people today in our province are hopeful about the future. I'm hopeful about the future. We are hopeful about the future. We're hopeful despite the fact that Nova Scotia has the lowest median income in the country, the lowest minimum wage in the country, and among the highest post-secondary

tuition fees. I think people like Dan see all of this as possibly changeable, and it is changeable. Ironically, somewhere amid these two crises of irreversible climate change and economic depression is a solution that we can all be optimistic about.

What actually are green jobs? There's a huge green industry emerging across the world. It spans from engineering to technology to education to the arts, including film and television - which I think is sorely lacking in imagination here in the province and needs much more investment - to agriculture and so much more. In fact, we have green jobs in Nova Scotia. We just need more of them. We have environmental scientists, educators, renewable-energy consultants, urban planners, project coordinators, builders, growers, artists, tourism operators, and food service workers. We do have a green economy. The only problem is that it is still too small.

We have a government that doesn't see this as the huge opportunity for investment, growth, and putting us on the track to join the rest of the world in heading towards carbon neutrality. We have to nurture it, we have to cultivate it, just like a garden. We don't have to wring our hands in despair when we look at our poor little province - what is going to sink us first, rising sea levels or low wages? No, thank you. There is a way forward, and it's called green jobs, a green new deal.

One initiative that really demonstrates where we could be heading in Nova Scotia is the Clean Leadership Program. Through a partnership between the Clean Foundation and the provincial government, this program offers both summer internships and professional internships in the field of sustainability. Their website says, "We help the businesses, organizations, and government agencies championing low-carbon growth to invest in students and grads age 15-30 by placing them in internships in the clean sector for a sustainable, thriving economy."

In 2017, the program employed 60 students. Check out some of the job descriptions: product R&D, traditional Indigenous knowledge-sharing, energy efficiency, fish passage improvement, sustainable aquaculture, environmental education. These are the kinds of green jobs that we could be extending, not just to 60 students a year but to youth and adults throughout our province, throughout the year, throughout a long-term approach of investment in education, training, and employment.

Think of the generation of environmental leaders we could be cultivating if we just put the resources and the energy into making a conscious shift towards a clean green economy. Think of the opportunities for righting historical wrongs, like environmental racism. Right now there are grandmother water protectors being arrested by the RCMP on their own unceded territory, by the Shubenacadie River, which they are bound to protect.

Is this justice? Is this right? Is this leading this province in the right direction? Is this giving Nova Scotia the kind of universal viewpoint that we want to be spreading around the world, about what we believe in? No. I say no. But it is exciting to think about more

opportunities in traditional Indigenous knowledge sharing and the education that connects the health of our planet with social justice, equity and community self-determination.

Think of the opportunities that there are still in the creative economy, and I'll tell you right now, the First Nations people are wonderful at this. This is part of their culture: their dancing, basket weaving, beautiful regalia, beading, jewellery, storytelling, stories, art. I know many, many First Nations artists whose works are not known in this province, but they are better known outside this province. That's a sad statement of affairs.

I lived in Vancouver for many years and there the artists were well known. They were famous - their works adorned many of the street posts - the lamps, they were hanging from them so that when you drove in from the airport, they were the first things that you would see, all that beautiful Haida art. Where is that here in Nova Scotia? We're not supporting them and we're not pushing it as much as we could be, and we should be.

Think of the opportunities for young Nova Scotians who want to get involved in sustainable forestry, in sustainable fishing and local sustainable food production. Silviculture is another place where many First Nations young people would like to work. I'm glad to see that we are finally starting to do something more about silviculture, but we need to press on the forestry association that in fact, silviculture is the way forward, not spraying with glyphosate spray and other herbicides that could be and in fact, most likely are cancerous, and are causing many illnesses and cancers in our province today.

Clear-cutting - why do we need to clear-cut when there are other ways that have been done in sustainable forest fashion in many other countries? We need to be doing more of that here in Nova Scotia.

Consider what organizations like the Pan Cape Breton Food Hub Co-op could accomplish with some government stimulus. How producers across Cape Breton Island and across all regions would benefit from a framework that encouraged and promoted their efforts.

In Colchester County, where I live, there's an abundance of agricultural activity and incredible potential for sustainable rural economic development. The Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture - which I'm so proud of, situated in beautiful Bible Hill - offers numerous environmental programs including environmental landscape horticulture, environmental sciences, integrated environmental management, environmental biology, and sustainable development. These are the ways of the future.

This is what young people are looking for and this is what we need to promote, not the old-fashioned, same old, same old, extraction resource economy. This is the way of the green economy and if we don't do this soon, unfortunately, our province is going to be sorely sorry. It is time, and it is beyond the time.



Imagine if we could ensure that the students graduating from these programs could find jobs right here in Nova Scotia. The government is always talking about going from university to jobs, so let's create those green jobs for them. That they can work in our communities to develop homegrown solutions to the climate crisis and build that green economy, that I think all of us in this House could agree is a future worth working towards.

It may seem today that we're far from that future and if you look around, on the one hand, the situation in Nova Scotia is pretty grim: unregulated clear-cutting, the threat of fracking, tire burning, the threat of uranium mining. By the way, the tire burning will begin in Nova Scotia this June, a huge step backwards for our province. Instead of embracing a green transition, this provincial government is giving the green light on decisions that take us backwards. So, how do we get from here to where we want to be?

I think for a lot of people doing something about climate change can feel scary but actually addressing climate change is an exciting opportunity to make our lives better, more convenient, more affordable. When big companies and old-school governments are in charge, then fighting climate change seems - like they say, it's a burden on regular people. It is not. What will be a burden on regular people will be not addressing climate change. These people will be in flood situations, in severe storm situations, and if we don't do something now and do our part, this is the future for Nova Scotia. We'll be an island.

The Green Jobs Plan is all about putting the people in charge. When Nova Scotians are in charge, addressing climate change will make all of our lives better. Why not make that commitment now? Make it together to take the future into our own hands, it's never been more important that we do so. Again, to share the words of Dan Osborne, "We're the group that's going to have to - after today's crop of politicians is long gone - try our hardest to recover what's left in order to leave something for the generations after ours."

So, what are we waiting for? The time for a Green Jobs Plan is now. Let's be a leader and let's show other jurisdictions what is possible when a society comes together around a shared vision. Let's do it for our children, for our grandchildren, for our nieces and nephews. And let's do it because it's just the right thing to do.

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

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 141.

**Bill No. 141 - Health Services and Insurance Act.**

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

TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased and proud today to rise to speak to Bill No. 14, which provides for a universal public dental hygiene program for all primary and secondary school students in Nova Scotia.

Cavities are the most common childhood infectious disease. They can cause significant pain and infection and disrupt eating, sleeping, proper growth, ability to socialize, concentrate, and learn. Tooth decay can seriously compromise a child's overall health. Over 500 children are currently waiting for a consultation or treatment of a dental issue at the IWK; almost 30 per cent of all surgical time at the IWK is dedicated to the treatment of dental disease; 36 per cent of children in Nova Scotia have cavities by the age of six; and 2.26 million school days are missed each year in Canada due to dental-related illnesses.

A school-based oral health program for all children registered in public schools, and including high schools, could go a long way toward improving the oral health of Nova Scotians. It would immediately ease the burden on parents of getting children to and from appointments and would standardize the frequency with which kids get access to preventative oral health care helping to address health inequality.

A school-based program would not require the elimination of the children's oral health program. Kids could still see a dentist for an annual check up, but providing these services in school would ensure all kids get the preventative care that they are entitled to and improve the rate at which kids see a dentist on an annual basis. Dental hygienists in Nova Scotia are also authorized to provide care in public health settings without being under the supervision of a dentist, making this approach to getting kids' teeth cleaned more cost effective.

While we currently have some support for children's oral health in Nova Scotia, it's clear many families still face barriers to getting good oral health care for their kids. The uptake on the existing children's oral health program has typically been under 50 per cent of eligible children. The program includes coverage for basic treatment, one routine exam, one fluoride application, two routine x-rays and, in addition, one preventative service per year such as scaling, as well as molar sealant, fillings, and medically required extractions.

However, if any additional services are received throughout the year, these are not covered by the program and the dentist may charge the client at their own rate. Children are eligible for this coverage up until their 14<sup>th</sup> birthday. Studies of similar programs in other provinces show that when parents don't know the scope of a program like the COHP they may not bring their children to the dentist for fear of out-of-pocket expenses they just can't afford.

[3:45 p.m.]

Research in other jurisdictions have shown that school-based programs are very effective in improving oral health and helping students to overcome barriers to getting oral health care because the service meets the child where they are rather than requiring the child to get to an appointment somewhere else. Mr. Speaker, most other jurisdictions in Canada provide oral health care to children through allowing private dental clinics to build a provincial insurance for specified services.

However, it hasn't always been that way. Before 1974, when the precursor to today's program of privately delivered but publicly funded children's oral health programs began, the province provided dental health services to rural areas through a team of salaried dental hygienists and dentists. The teams would travel to public spaces in rural areas to ensure that neither geography nor income prevented kids from getting their teeth cleaned and it worked.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Saskatchewan had a school-based preventive program that parents loved. During its 13 years of existence, the school-based program achieved significant success in providing necessary dental care for children. It was cancelled in 1987 by the newly elected provincial Progressive Conservative government which was not supportive of such social programs.

Right now, the Yukon is the only jurisdiction in Canada with a school-based dental program. It's available to all students from kindergarten to Grade 8, and to students from kindergarten to Grade 12 who live in communities without a resident dentist. Services include dental examinations, X-rays, oral hygiene instruction, cleaning, scaling, fluoride application, and sealants. Initial examinations are conducted by dentists who complete recall exams every two years. In alternate years, the exam is conducted by a dental therapist or hygienist. Mr. Speaker, currently a number of U.S. schools, usually in conjunction with local health departments or community-based programs, offer oral health care services consisting of dental screening, fluoride treatments, application of fluoride varnish and/or the application of dental sealants. The majority of these services are provided in rural schools and to children in elementary school. School-based oral health services for older children and adolescents are not as common, and even less common are school-based clinics that offer restorative services.

Over the course of the past 30 years, oral health has faded into the background in our province. Our health care system is focused on below-the-neck care. Optometry, dentistry, and psychological services have remained largely private in Canada. Nova Scotia's investments into public health dentistry are among the lowest in the entire country. We have a total of 14.2 full-time-equivalent dental hygienists employed by the public system and no other professionals. Nova Scotia once hired a dentist to work part-time as the province's dental public health consultant, but the position has been vacant for many years.

While the NDP plan to expand the children's oral health program to cover kids up to 17 by the year 2016, the Liberals halted that plan on advice from the Minister's Advisory Panel on Oral Health, who insisted that \$7.8 million per year, by the time it had been fully expanded, or 0.2 per cent of the annual budget, the program was prohibitively expensive - imagine 0.2 per cent to prevent oral decay in children's mouths.

Between 1995 and 2005, Nova Scotia was the only province in Canada whose spending on public health dentistry declined. We seem to be failing in a lot of areas lately. Extending preventive dental care to every young person in Nova Scotia is the first step to changing attitudes and approaches to funding oral health care. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this important bill. How many times do we see people that can't afford to go to the dentist and have to take up our emergency rooms? They have to take the children to the emergency room in order to get pain medication or an antibiotic, not to mention the social aspect and impact that it has on children who have less than what children expect now, perfect teeth.

Speaking of a mother who spends \$6,000 on braces and regular cleanings and checkups, I can tell you for children who don't have access to those benefits, their social well-being is severely challenged. I would suggest that again this is a bill to be proactive, to invest in young Nova Scotians so that they have the confidence and the ability to be successful going forward into adulthood.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: I wasn't expecting to stand up right away, but I appreciate the member for Cape Breton Centre's comments on this bill. Obviously, our youths' dental health is extremely important.

There are a few things I wanted to talk about. First of all, I think most dentists are starting to really come forward and take it upon themselves, and I want, in particular, to recognize a friend of mine, Dr. Amanda Demsey who runs Nova Dental in Bedford. It's actually an all-female clinic and she does a fantastic job. On several occasions she has opened up her clinic to allow for free cleanings, free dental work. We've worked with her a few times. You can't imagine the lineup and the calls she gets for free dental work. We all know that it can be very expensive and there are a lot of reasons why we need to take care of our teeth and our oral health.

In my own personal experience, it is kind of a learned behaviour thing; you learn from adults what is important. Teeth and your oral health aren't always something that at a young age you are taught are as important as your physical health or even your mental health. I think sometimes your teeth kind of get left behind - sometimes literally and figuratively - but your teeth get left behind in the whole conversation about health.

I know that the very first conversation as a youth that I had outside of the home - because you always get, brush your teeth, I think it is three times a day. It was only when I was younger that they first started saying how important flossing was. Now I try to floss twice a day and I teach my children to floss and teach them the importance of brushing teeth and taking care of their teeth.

It wasn't actually until I think Grade 9 and my teacher at the time gave us a big lecture. I don't know if we were a class full of bad teeth or what, but he actually gave us a big lecture on oral health care and why it's important. Outside of bad breath - I'll never forget him saying that, he said that outside of bad breath - there's many important things and how your body is actually connected, and the health of your body is connected.

Scientists and doctors and professionals in the industry are starting to link, and they have linked, oral health and heart disease. People who have severe cases of gingivitis and things like that, it's not just your mouth that is impacted, it's actually the rest of your body that is impacted.

It's also one of the things that gets left behind, aside from the physical health, it is also a confidence thing. It's a huge confidence thing when you have teeth that look good. I think back when I was a kid I had really bad teeth and I had to get braces. I remember how self-conscious I was of my teeth at the time. My teeth were all sticking up here and they were all twisted and things like that. Until I got my braces, which I absolutely hated, I actually got my braces on December 23<sup>rd</sup> because I think my dentist didn't like me, so I couldn't eat Christmas dinner. It was a love/hate relationship, that's right.

It goes along with your health, but it also goes along with your mental health, and your self-confidence. We have been able to do some things obviously for this program. I heard the member for Cape Breton Centre talk about governments. I think all governments have had a hand in moving some of these health initiatives forward. I think we all, everyone in this room, appreciate how important it is.

We have the Children's Oral Health Program. It does cover, as the member said, the basic dental care. I'm just going to look at some notes here, Mr. Speaker. So, it said here that it has been expanded, absolutely been expanded. Last year more than 56,000 children accessed this program, and I'm trying to see here - there were some comments about what it included, and while the member was truthful with what was included, part of the program, especially when it comes to - sorry, I'm all over the place with my notes. I can't understand my own writing, unfortunately.

Around the fluoride treatment, where the member had said there is only one fluoride treatment per year, that's absolutely not true. The children at high risk for developing cavities are eligible for more treatments. Obviously that's something that they are not going to be turned away from.

How it was in the past was that only children with cavities were eligible for the annual fluoride treatment, and those with deep molar grooves were only eligible for sealant. The program was changed so that all children 14 years and younger are now eligible for molar sealants and annual fluoride treatments, and like I said, anyone who is at high risk of cavities is eligible for more treatments.

If we want to talk about cavities, I think, when it comes to health, especially when it comes to your teeth, it's bigger than just brushing your teeth and flossing. It's also about the food that you put in your body. It's obviously well known that foods that are high in sugar have a negative impact on our teeth. Pop and things like that have a negative impact on our teeth. We're seeing now where those products are starting to be removed from our schools. When I went to school, for lunch you would go grab a chocolate chip cookie and a can of pop or something like that for a couple of dollars. Now we're starting to see a move away from that from our schools. We're starting to see healthier foods put in schools. This is all part of the big picture, if we want to look at this holistically.

We've recognized the importance of access to healthy food and that's why we've expanded the breakfast program. The breakfast program is now available in all schools right across Nova Scotia. This is a very important thing. It gives the youth access to healthy food every single morning - and let's be honest, not all of them have that, unfortunately. That's why this program is so important. Also, I think back to when my son first went to school this year, and he walked in and saw the breakfast program, he was really surprised that there were apples and oranges and things like that. Even he realized that that was a good thing.

I talk to a lot of parents with young children. It's not just around poverty. Sometimes it's just around time. Unfortunately, some people are rushing out the door and they don't have the time - you know, we can't all say it doesn't happen - to make a big huge healthy breakfast. I'm not going to say I'm not guilty of it. So it's good to see that when they go to school, they do have access to those healthy fruits and vegetables.

AN HON. MEMBER: And dental care.

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: And dental care. I want to talk about that. There are some programs that are set up - I think of Rockingstone Heights, in my own community, which I think has become a model for all schools right across Nova Scotia. If anybody doesn't know about this school, it's located in the Greystone area. There are definitely some kids who go to that school who have high needs, like any other school.

It doesn't matter where the school is situated. My kids go to William King Elementary. There are schools in Bedford and in Pictou - there are schools all over this province that have kids with high needs or different needs.

They have done some incredible things up there. Leanne March, who is the principal up at that school - they've taken the programs that they have been given through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and with hard work, volunteering, ingenuity, and some help from the private sector, and help from government, they've expanded on those programs.

They were one of the first schools, I think, in all of Nova Scotia to have what is now called the pre-Primary school. I remember six years ago attending with the then Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, Ms. Karen Casey. We went up and we visited . . .

[4:00 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. I'd like to remind the honourable member not to use proper names of other members of this House.

The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic has the floor.

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: I'm not going to lie, Mr. Speaker, I couldn't remember what community she was from, so I hoped that I could sneak it by.

They've gone on to do some pretty incredible things there. They're doing wrap-around services at that school, and what they fully believe is that the care for those youth doesn't end when those children leave the school because what happens at home and what happens in their free time has an impact on those youth.

They're one of the first schools in all of Nova Scotia to have what's now called the pre-Primary, it has been extremely successful. Those kids are getting fed healthy meals. They also brought in some child psychiatrists to help the children through some issues that they may be facing, but they also brought in resources for the parents, which I thought was incredibly smart. If you think about it, it's not just the youth who are facing issues, it's also the parents, so they've brought in some resources for the parents. One of the resources they bring in is a dentist once in a while to check on the children.

I think a big part of it, like I said, is it's a holistic view. We have to have the resources in place - I'm not saying we don't - but we also have to have education around how we eat and where we eat. We have to have the resources to get that food, let's be honest.

One of the great things that we have in our community, in the North Preston community, in the North End community, is the Mobile Food Market which allows for healthy food. I don't know if everyone here knows about this, but it's a really incredible program that delivers healthy food right to communities, especially food deserts like Harrietsfield, which is one of those places in our community that has no bus, no corner

store, no grocery store - nothing - so it's very difficult for individuals in the community to go and get healthy food.

It's about education on oral health that starts at home and can continue within the schools. It's also about access to healthy food and that starts at home and in the communities. Government has a large role to play in that and we've seen, like I said, over the last few years with investments in the Poverty Reduction Strategy. We've seen a lot of the stuff that's come out of that has come around programs to help people access healthy food, so government definitely has a role to play in access to that healthy food. Of course, it's also access to programs like the oral health program. We're seeing more and more uptake in it. We're seeing more and more children going through that program and realizing the importance of their teeth when it comes to their body and their overall health and mental health.

I do think there's always more to do. I don't think any one issue in this province or in this country or in this world has been completely fixed; there's always more that we can do. I'm happy to see that it has been expanded. There are lots of conversations to be had between the Department of Health and Wellness, the Department of Community Services, and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to continue with this. Also, these conversations should be had at home with your children about oral health.

With that, I want to thank the members opposite for bringing this forward. I also want to thank everyone for the lively discussion. I look forward to the Progressive Conservatives.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

KARLA MACFARLANE: As always, I'm pleased to stand in my place and speak, particularly to this bill - Bill No. 141 - and I thank the NDP member for Cape Breton Centre for bringing it forward.

There are those who talk about people who are wine snobs? Well, I'm a dental floss snob. You could reach into any pocket of mine, in my car, in my purse, wherever, I have dental floss everywhere. It has actually come in handy for other purposes than flossing my teeth.

Moving forward and speaking to this bill, I think it's a good bill in the sense that we are addressing a sincere concern for oral health care in Nova Scotia - or I should say, the lack of attention to oral health care in our province.

When I was newly married, my ex-husband and I were purchasing health insurance. He had nice teeth and I didn't have braces either and we said, oh, I think it's hereditary so, when we have kids, we won't check off the dental portion of our health care because if it's hereditary; hopefully our children won't need braces either.



In the last six years, we've spent almost \$13,000 on braces. I believe our health care plan contributes \$1,500, but that is a luxury. That is a cosmetic, and we feel very grateful and privileged that we were able to provide for our children to get braces.

Moving forward and talking about the need of those who perhaps are not as attentive, or aware, of the services out there, I would say that this bill would be moving in that right direction.

I have concerns right now with regard to, the age that we service. We really need, in my opinion, to increase that to 18. Most students graduate at ages 17-18, and I believe that we should be increasing the age so that every youth and child receives one free cleaning a year.

That should be increased because that 500 number that my colleague, the member for Cape Breton Centre spoke about - I believe there are over 500 children currently waiting - we say children, but those are 16- and 17-year-olds who have fallen between the cracks.

Unfortunately, we need to do a better job at campaigning in this province. I say that because recently I had a family - a lovely family - a couple who are both working so hard, making \$12 to \$13 an hour, and have four children. Recently their teenaged daughter, the oldest one, had come to me and all she wanted for Christmas was to get a couple teeth removed because they were infected, and she couldn't eat. It was so, so sad. I must give a big shout-out to our local dentist for helping me in that situation. Through the conversations I had with this family, they had no idea that their children could receive one free cleaning.

I think there is a bigger issue here that we are not addressing. When someone has a baby, they should be given a package before they leave the hospital addressing what the concerns would be around oral health care.

I started taking my children at six months, just when their first tooth was barely coming through. We need to do a better job of letting individuals know that they have that opportunity to take their children to the dentist once a year for a cleaning.

I do question around the cost involved in sending hygienists into the schools. Would it be, perhaps, more economical and beneficial if we increased the number to 18 and do a better job at campaigning and letting people know that they can go to their local dentist for that one free cleaning?

I question when you go to your dentist for your one free cleaning a year, the hygienist spends most of the time with you cleaning, providing a fluoride perhaps or other needs, but before you leave, the dentist comes in and checks. That is probably my biggest concern with this bill, that we're not going to have a dentist present in the school to check. Are we duplicating something? That is one of my concerns around this.

I do believe that we all have an opportunity to do better, even in our constituency offices. It certainly is a great concern because I have a number of people who come to my office who are looking for assistance with oral hygiene care. We all need to do better. We need to learn - that's the number one thing we need to do. Two, we need to collaborate together. We need to screen, and we need to advocate together.

My colleague, the member for Cape Breton Centre mentioned some of the stats that were actually out of the childhood oral health care that was presented for Nova Scotia. In 2017, it was part of the report. Baby teeth - I think parents have a huge responsibility to make sure that they get into a habit, a practice of making sure that as their child grows up, they realize the importance of oral health care.

We can't deny or underestimate the importance of oral health care, proper oral hygiene. We know that it affects us in so many ways. To set a good example, we need to guide and educate kids by brushing, by flossing, and by visiting the dentist annually. That includes that one visit right now that government allows, but it only allows it up to 14. It really should be increased up to 18 years.

The Canadian Dental Association recommends that children visit a dentist by the age of 12 months. I said six months - that's when I started with my children - but I would believe that 12 months is fair as well. I think we also have to look at the fact that every child's first visit should be a positive and fun one. It's certainly an opportunity, as parents, to introduce good oral hygiene to make these regular habits. In the long run, it will prevent dental problems before they develop.

Moving forward as well, I would hope that we all take a sincere look at what's happening right now, budget-wise, with regard to the investment that's put into dental hygiene care in Nova Scotia. I think there are those dentists who are deeply concerned about the fact that sometimes they don't feel they are being paid enough for having to provide the annual cleaning. That has been a concern that has been raised with me, and I think it's one that we need to sincerely look at and make sure that they are compensated as well because we don't want them to be discouraged by taking more children into their practice. There are some out there who feel that, oh, I get a five-year-old in the chair, I'm struggling, doesn't want to be in the chair, and should only take a half-hour but it ends up taking an hour and now I've put another patient behind and messed up their daily agenda. I do believe we have to give that some consideration.

We've all been children before. That first time in the dentist chair can be overwhelming and scary at times. I remember I was seven and getting my first filling. It was Dr. Wong in Stellarton, and when he pulled out the needle to freeze my mouth, I grabbed it out of his hand, and I literally said, you will not be putting this needle in me. Then of course the assistant with Dr. Wong at the time had to run out and get my mother and calm me down. It is an opportunity for all of us to try to promote better oral hygiene.

Again, I say that I think this bill is a step in the right direction. I think there are some other clauses that could be included to strengthen it. I know that last night I went to the member for Cape Breton Centre and had a few questions, but we were both in a rush to get to other places and I wish we had a bit more time to talk about it, so I could have learned a little bit more. Perhaps we will have that opportunity. I want to thank her again for addressing it because it truly is a big concern and one that we should all take very seriously.

[4:15 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, thank you to my colleagues who have spoken on this bill so far today. I appreciate all of your comments and it gives me great pleasure to add my comments.

Dr. Norman Bethune in the 1930s said, “Medicine, as we are practising it, is a luxury trade.” That was an observation in 1930, but it’s an observation that rings true today when we talk about dental care in our province. With this bill, the establishment of a school dental health program moves us towards a world where dental care could be less of a luxury and more of a service.

I think there are two major realities that we have to consider when we talk about this bill. The first one is that 10 per cent of Nova Scotians don’t get the dental care they need because they can’t afford it. This is not surprising. Minimum wage jobs rarely include benefits. When you factor in the fact that we have the lowest minimum wage in the country, and if those workers are spending 30 per cent of their income on rent - well, I can do the math, sometimes I can’t but this time I can, and we can figure out that they might not be spending the little money that they have left on their teeth.

I can speak to this reality personally. For many years, I have had no benefits. Until I actually was elected as an MLA, I did not have benefits. There was one time when I went seven years without visiting the dentist. I was lucky that I didn’t have too much trouble when I went back to the dentist after seven years, I was shocked, I couldn’t believe it, and neither could she. But the fact is that my parents had benefits, my Dad had benefits, we had good oral care when I was young. I had a good foundation of oral health care because of my upbringing.

When I ended up in a career where one does not get health benefits for being an actor, even though your teeth are very important as an actor - and I’m not alone in that. There’re so many people who don’t have health benefits and frankly don’t go to the dentist.

We know the Canadian Institute for Health Information released statistics to give us the 10 per cent number of people who can’t go to the dentist, and it seems like it will only get worse if you’re in any kind of a precarious employment situation. Not only do you

not have the money to get dental work done but you have to wait up to 299 days in parts of the province just to get a consultation for dental surgery. That's pretty hard to plan for when you work irregular, unpredictable hours. You can see how dental care for people in this situation might be thought of as a luxury.

ESIA recipients do have some coverage for dental work but, based on a case we've been working on in my office, my understanding is that the coverage that the department covers is not keeping up with inflation. The Green Shield Canada insurance company today covers the same amount that it covered in 2014.

Those rates have not changed but, of course, as we all know, yesterday's dollar is today's two. If only \$71.20 of a \$135 filling procedure is covered and you're living on income assistance, then you're probably unlikely to make it to the dentist chair. You'd be hard pressed not to think of dental care as a luxury.

I see people in my office all the time who have issues with poor oral health. I can think of one woman who we helped for an entire year who went through a terrible process. Her situation when she first came to us was that she had a few teeth that needed to be extracted. Over the course of a year and some bureaucratic issues in the Department of Community Services and beyond, in fact, this woman went from having a few teeth that needed to be extracted to losing all of her teeth, to having a severe infection in her jaw, to losing pounds of weight so that she was a tiny, thin woman, to losing her job. She had a job where she had to be in front of people and then she wasn't able to do that job anymore.

Finally, after a year, she was able to get new teeth, bridges put in, her outlook on life has changed. She ended up on income assistance as well, I might say. Now she is able to join the workforce again.

This is not an uncommon issue. It is something that I noticed the day I was elected and opened my office. People who live in poverty often have poor oral health; it's connected. If you throw kids into that mix, then the whole situation gets even more difficult and that's essentially what this bill is addressing.

This brings me to my second major point. It's something that we, in our caucus, have time and again sounded the alarm on. We have the highest child poverty rate in the country - the highest. These families are doing their best not to send their kids to school hungry - my colleague from Halifax Atlantic pointed that out. Sometimes there is not an option to get to eat the healthiest food - or food at all, in fact - is what I'm saying.

They're doing their best to keep the power on, the heat on. If their child gets sick, they're going to ERs or walk-in clinics and if the cupboards are bare, they're going to a food bank and not a grocery store. Many of these families and many of these children living in poverty live in Dartmouth North, in my riding. When their baby teeth start falling out,

there is no guarantee that the tooth fairy is going to bring any cash to slip under their pillows. So, you can see how these families might see dental care as a luxury.

The luxury of dental care has built up a great socio-economic divide in our communities. In her book, *Teeth*, Mary Otto tells, “Shame is common among the millions of Americans who lack dental care. More than one out of three low-income adults avoid smiling . . .” and that, “. . . their teeth will continue to mark them as broken people.” As we know, the consequences of poor dental health go well beyond that of cosmetics and pain. It’s time that we start thinking about teeth differently. It’s time that we call dental care what it is - health care.

In January of last year Dr. Erin Hennessy, President of the Nova Scotia Dental Association, spoke about the current landscape of dental care in our province. We know that the Children’s Oral Health Plan is good. It was long overdue when it came in and it is helping those families I was just describing. But, as Dr. Hennessy put it, it’s fairly focused on emergency care and getting people out of pain and out of danger of infection, but the concern is, really, with any dental care, the way it operates outside of the medical system.

The mouth as we all know, is a portal to the body. Throat, nasal passages, brain matter, they are all a very short distance away for an infection in the mouth to travel. We know that cardiac health has been connected to periodontal disease in the gums. I just heard a radio show on CBC a month ago that connects now bad oral health with Alzheimer’s disease. These are issues that when advanced, tax our already over-taxed emergency system and health system. Dental care is a preventative health issue.

In 2013, the Canadian Pediatric Society released a call to action on children’s oral health. They highlighted the prevalence of early childhood caries or ECCs in pre-school children, particularly in low-income Indigenous communities. They make the recommendation - and remember, this was six years ago - to ensure that all children in their respective jurisdictions be afforded equal access to basic treatment and preventative oral care, regardless of where they live or their family’s socio-economic status. I fail to see how in a province with the highest child poverty rate in the country, we are not rushing to act on this call from the Pediatric Society, and where better than schools to ensure all jurisdictions are afforded equal access?

Mr. Speaker, I’ve talked to a number of friends about this bill that we put forward. Again, I will reiterate that most of my friends are people who don’t have dental or medical coverage at all. Self-employed artists, or people who have their own small businesses and just haven’t gotten to the level where they can get coverage. The idea for them to have this program for their children in schools was really important, and they understand that they already can go to the dentist once a year and get the things done that need to be done.

Here’s a personal story of mine. I also understand that story, or that fact. My daughter went to the dentist in June - we usually take her around her birthday to remind us

when to go - and within nine months, my daughter was at the emergency room with an abscessed tooth and needed six extractions over the course of many following weeks. Shout-out to Dr. Andre-Michel Guay - then at the IWK, who now practises in Dartmouth North - who's seen her through this experience.

In nine short months, she went from a clean bill of dental health to that issue. She was in significant pain. She had a terrible infection. She had to take the worst medicine that was ever invented to get rid of the infection, and she went through several extractions. By the way, I will say that I did have to pay for some of the services, even with my own coverage now as an MLA, because - wait for it - MSI covers all of the things around extractions and fillings and all that, but they don't cover sedation for children. So every time she was sedated, there was a charge of \$100-some dollars.

That in and of itself will prevent people from taking their children to get that work done. Why not prevent the need for that work and make sure that they're getting proper checkups at school?

There has been some progress made; I do give the government credit. This year, it was announced that the coverage of certain preventative procedures would be expanded in the Children's Oral Health Program. This is a really good step. I know that this is an issue that matters to the government, which is why I'm so happy to be talking about it today, advancing this bill down the line in hopes that the government will take notice and help us get it passed.

This bill levels the playing field for children when it comes to dental health. Examinations, tooth scaling, polishing, fluoride treatments, preventative oral counselling - all of these services would be available to public- and private-school kids by next year if we get this bill through.

The benefits extend beyond those of health. It tackles the stigmatization that has been created by treating teeth as a cosmetic issue and not as a health issue. It gives parents confidence when sending their children to school and relieves one part of an immense weight that families are carrying.

Mary Otto writes, and I'll quote again, "The teeth are made from stern stuff. They can withstand floods, fires, even centuries in the grave. But the teeth are no match for the slow-motion catastrophe that is a life of poverty: its burdens, distractions, diseases, privations, low expectations, transience, the addictive antidotes that offer temporary relief at usurious rates." Amazing.

I'm not making a case for a universal dental care program, at least not today - I may in the future. But we can begin to close the gap that exists between medicine and oral health. We can begin to help children so that later on down the line, they'll have been afforded the chance to not be marked by job interviews, teachers, or peers as broken people.

We can save them from hours in the emergency room and years on wait-lists. We can begin to treat dental health care as a health service - which it is - and less like a luxury, which it never should have been.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a child growing up in Prospect Bay, we did have a dental hygienist program. I don't know if it was a county program or what, but every year, the dental hygienist would set up a chair in the gym. It was the best day of the year. You'd get to have like an hour out of your class, you'd get your teeth cleaned, you'd get those little pink things - the little pink pills that would show where your plaque was - you'd get a toothbrush, a thing of toothpaste going home. It was truly an exciting day, and it made kids - made me - excited about dental care. This is something that is very doable in this province. It would, like I said, level the playing field so that all kids have the same start.

I will just quickly say in my last minute that my colleague for Pictou West suggested that it is the parent's responsibility, but don't forget, even parents - this has happened to me as a parent who was conscious of my child's dental health, so number one, there's that. People with all the access in the world still have kids with rotten teeth.

But secondly, getting your kids to the dentist when you work a precarious job or you work an unpredictable job or you work a job where you can't take off time, a minimum-wage job - you can't get your kids to the dentist, right? So there is that issue. Why don't we bring the hygienist to the kids?

AN HON. MEMBER: And the dentist.

SUSAN LEBLANC: And the dentist to the kids.

I do agree, this program is not to substitute the trip to the dentist every year, this is to augment that program, but it does level the playing field for every student and every child in the province.

[4:30 p.m.]

Before I go, I want to again shout out Dr. Andre Guay, Dr. Maud McEvoy, who keep clippings of my artistic endeavours in my file in the dentist's office, and to Careen Whorrall who cleaned my teeth for many years and I went to high school with. Thank you, good night.

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

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I want to express my appreciation for the debate that we've heard today and also just highlight a couple of great organizations that I'm certainly aware of and grateful for: the North End Community Health Centre, which is also providing actually free dental care through collaboration with the Dalhousie School of

Dentistry; and, also the Dalhousie School of Dentistry, which I went to for a number of years when I was precariously employed and without benefits.

I think in the end, as wonderful as it is to recognize, be it individual dentists or organizations, for stepping into the breach, it's our job as government, to actually try to fill some of those breaches, to try to fill some of those gaps. In the end, we don't want to live in a society where a child's access to health and to a full life unencumbered by awful teeth is entirely a result of the accident of birth and a deeply unequal society. I think we can aspire to do better than that.

Really this government, with the expansion of SchoolsPlus, has recognized that placing resources in our public schools is a wonderful way of truly expanding access to health care services that all residents of Nova Scotia should have access to in their childhoods. I really think that this particular proposal is one that really merits attention and could have wonderful repercussions for our strained health care system for Nova Scotians, and one that really any government should consider and want to pursue.

With that, Mr. Speaker, that concludes Opposition Business for today.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, this concludes business for today. I move that the House do now rise to sit again tomorrow, Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. Following the daily routine and Question Period, business will include the continuation of Estimates and the Committee of the Whole on Supply and, with time permitting, we will move to third reading of Bill Nos. 106, 119, 121, 135 and 139. As well, Committee of the Whole House on Bills, Bill Nos. 122, 133 and 136.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to rise to meet again tomorrow, Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

We have now reached the moment of interruption. The topic for late debate as submitted by the honourable member for Dartmouth North is:

‘Whereas 40 per cent of Nova Scotians live in energy poverty;

Therefore be it resolved that Nova Scotia Power be required to prioritize substantive investments in the sustainability, quality of service, and affordability of electricity in Nova Scotia over profits for external shareholders.’”



**ADJOURNMENT****MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**GOV'T. (N.S.) - N.S. POWER: SUSTAINABILITY, SERV. & AFFORDABILITY -  
PRIORITIZE**

LISA ROBERTS: My apologies, there's a lot going on. I think this is the moment to begin late debate - can I confirm that, Mr. Speaker?

THE SPEAKER: You are correct.

LISA ROBERTS: All of a sudden, I had this moment as novice Deputy House Leader wondering if I had stood up at the right moment to do the thing that I thought I was doing. Anyhow, it is my pleasure to speak to this resolution brought by my colleague from Dartmouth North.

Forty per cent of Nova Scotians live in energy poverty. One of the things I am noticing in our public discourse is that we are starting to specify and break down poverty into the different ways that people are experiencing poverty. I don't think, until a couple of years ago, I had heard the term "period poverty." Yes, people experience period poverty; yes, people experience food insecurity; and yes, people experience energy poverty. In the end, those are symptoms overall of a very unequal society where some people simply do not have enough income to make things square, to make things work in their household finances.

Particularly in Nova Scotia, I think we are challenged at this moment where we know that we need to dramatically make a change as part of a world where all of us are grappling with climate change and living its impacts where we have a power monopoly in Nova Scotia Power.

The challenge becomes for us, how do we regulate Nova Scotia Power in a way that enables us to make that great transition that we really must and that is so urgent and that young people - and not just young people, but everybody who loves those young people - are demanding of us? That's what the purpose is of this late debate tonight.

In many ways, Nova Scotia has done some great stuff going over several governments, when it comes to addressing energy poverty.

Although I found it shocking in that climate change was not mentioned in the Budget Address, there is some good stuff, kind of buried in the budget a little bit, but announced for addressing energy poverty, in particular the energy savings for affordable

rentals and homes of Mi'kmaw people program which has been doubled to \$2 million under the Department of Energy and Mines.

I've highlighted that to my own constituents and said to them, talk to your landlords, because my concern is that at \$2 million, that money could be spent fairly quickly. This is a program where the kinks have been worked on over a number of years so that energy retrofits can be done in multi-unit buildings, such that the benefits don't only flow to the landlord. The people who actually live there also get to benefit because we know that more people living in rental housing are living on lower incomes than people who own their homes and yet, up until now, almost all of the province's programs related to energy efficiency have been directed at homeowners.

I think that this is a wonderful step. I know some of the people, kind of at the community level, who have been advocating for it and working on it, and yet \$2 million - \$2 million in this province's budget seems like so little, but it's the same amount that the Department of Energy and Mines is going to be spending on petroleum resources.

There is other money for clean energy and a green future. But, at the same time, I look at the numbers and I see that \$2 million is going to be spent on petroleum resources, which is described in the Budget Estimates as providing "leadership for developing petroleum regimes along with strategic direction for the delivery of program initiatives and measures that support responsible petroleum resource stewardship. Incorporates innovation, research and opportunities to promote, capitalize on and expand both offshore and onshore oil and natural gas exploration, development and production."

We are getting to a point, to be perfectly frank, where there will be no such thing as responsible petroleum resource stewardship because the responsible thing is to turn the ship and to start really doing things dramatically differently for our children's future.

If you think about the challenge before us as turning around an ocean liner, in Nova Scotia we're pretty small, so I envision it more like turning around a kayak. If anyone has ever paddled a kayak you know that you have the two pedals at the front that control the rudder. Increasingly, I feel like Nova Scotia is a place where we don't realize that to turn the kayak you actually have to ease up on the left-hand pedal in order to press down on the right one. It's like we're pushing on both at the same time, continuing to do what we have done at the same time that we're starting to do something new.

We're not actually transitioning; we're kind of stuck going in the same direction. That is frustrating, and I think we're going to have to be politically brave and actually lead change. By talking about the changes that we need to make and all the many good reasons why we want to do that and also how appealing making that change can be for the good of the environment, for the good of our children's future, for the good of livable communities, for the economic benefits that come with it. For all of those reasons we actually have to be ready to press down on one pedal and let go of the other one.

To speak a little more specifically about what that would look like in terms of our relationship with Nova Scotia Power, there has been talk in the past about performance-based regulations. How do we continue to have a power monopoly where we actually rely on it to deliver power to our homes and yet we don't want that to be entirely linked just to their sales of energy? We want it to also be attached to how well they're doing at reducing emissions. How reliable is our power when we know there are increasing climate events? Also, how well are they working with Nova Scotians to actually share the wealth that comes with generating power, be it a solar panel on my roof, be it a small-scale community-owned wind power assembly, be it tidal power. All of those things.

How can we actually put the incentives in place, put the regulatory framework in place, so we are incenting Nova Scotia Power to work with us and not just to make the most money they can? Even though they are a private company and understandably their goal is to maximize returns for stakeholders, we need to align their interests with our interests and our interest is for a green future, reliable energy, quality of service, and sustainability.

That is the challenge, and I think it's the challenge that I would like to see more leadership from this government on. I think, frankly, it's a challenge many people even within Nova Scotia Power are wrapping their heads around because this is where we're going across the world as anybody who's involved in the energy sector is looking at what is coming down, looking at what's coming over the next 20 years.

As much as the conversation around power in Nova Scotia has been around power rates, power rates are a very narrow window through which to look at our power bills. We want to be looking at our power bills. When I actually see a power bill, is some of that money actually maybe going back into my community? Is some of it going into a co-op that I'm a shareholder of, that I'm a member of? There are so many more ways to look at this sector moving forward so that we get what we want out of our relationship with Nova Scotia Power. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

ALLAN MACMASTER: I think it's ironic that the Party that is bringing this resolution forward today is responsible for the largest increase in the shortest time on Nova Scotians' power bills. I think about in three years power rates went up 25 per cent from 12 cents per kilowatt hour up to 15 cents per kilowatt hour.

Mr. Speaker, affordability was not included in the NDP energy policy when they were governing this province. I know that because I specifically looked for it. It was a concern to me at that time and I raised it many times in this House, where the government was making decisions around energy policy that completely ignored affordability, and we saw the result, a 25 per cent increase in power rates in just three years.

[4:45 p.m.]

This resolution rings hollow to me. I think the spirit of what is being raised holds great merit. I recall when we were debating energy policy in the House at the time, I remember we were debating the price of coal. I know in Nova Scotia, we continue to burn coal. It is a significant portion of the energy mix for the province because of the infrastructure that's in place and because of our history as a coal producer. This province has burned a lot of coal over the years to generate electricity, and that's just part of our history. Times change and maybe that will change at some point, but I recall because the price of coal was such a significant component of power rates at the time. I remember raising this with the NDP government at the time and they always would look back and smile and say, that's simply not true. Does anybody remember those words?

It used to frustrate me because one day I even tabled for the Minister of Energy at the time a chart that showed that the price of coal over the past 10 years had actually not gone up, if you looked at it in terms of American dollars. As the price of coal was rising around the world, the Canadian dollar was rising in value. If you looked at it in terms of American dollars, there was no increase in the price of coal. I tabled it in black and white, and do you know what I was met with? The same, simply not true. Coal has gone up 70 per cent in the last number of years and it was just ignored.

I think that was a point that was lost because at the time the philosophy was move away from coal. However, what that philosophy failed to see was that it was going to significantly increase the power rates for Nova Scotians and affordability for power. I think the spirit of what is being proposed here has merit, but I think this highlights the fact that before governments take action, they have to consider the consequences of their actions. If they want energy to be clean energy, better for the environment, and they also want it to be affordable, they have to look at both sides to ensure that both of those goals are being accomplished.

I think about the practicality. I think it certainly has been demonstrated that the emissions fossil fuels cause have an impact on our environment. What I would ask is: Is it practical to turn them off like flicking a switch? I would say, at this point in time, it's not practical. If you were to do so you would experience two things - at least one of two things: you would have blackouts because there would not be enough power to be able to be generated right now in this moment; and if not blackouts, you would see substantial increases in power rates.

We saw a 25 per cent increase in three years. If you totally eliminated fossil fuels from the energy mix of this province right now, people's power rates could double, triple, quadruple. It's hard for me to speculate, but I know that they would at least double or triple. I don't think that's practical, so in presenting solutions - and in this resolution, I think it talks about affordability and helping people. It says 40 per cent of Nova Scotians live in

energy poverty; well, if we actually care about that, we'll need to care and consider how turning off fossil fuels today or tomorrow is going to impact those people.

Mr. Speaker, I think about industries in my area. I think about tourism. I think about the fishery. I think about papermaking. Those are three of the biggest industries in our area. But it's not just people who work in those jobs. People around the province, people working in the city here may be working in a job that has nothing to do with fossil-fuel consumption. But if you connect the dots, the cheques and income they receive come from an economy that is generating economic activity from tourism, the fishery, papermaking and so on.

We're all in this together and if we can find ways to run fishing boats without using fossil fuels - one of the biggest exports of the province is our fish products. If we can find ways to make paper, which is highly energy intensive - it uses up to 10 per cent of the power in the province at Port Hawkesbury Paper alone. If we can find ways to do that without fossil fuels, I think that would be wonderful.

Tourism, people flying here - one of the greatest contributors to the greenhouse effect is people flying in planes. Many people coming to our province are flying here.

We have to find solutions, but we can't ignore that people are going to have to use fossil fuels, today and tomorrow. This is why I don't understand why governments come forward with carbon taxes and ways to punish people when many times people don't have a choice. If you have to heat your home or if you have to drive to work, and if you live in rural Nova Scotia, in fact, if you live in certain parts of the city, it may not even be practical to take public transportation. But if you have to heat your home and if you have to drive to work, why should you be punished for that with a carbon tax? Government should be working behind the scenes to try to develop more affordable renewable energy. That would be the real answer. Why punish people when they don't have a choice, is what I would say.

I think about some good things in the province that have helped people: LED light bulbs, heat pumps - significant reduction in energy usage for people. Those were beneficial to people not just in terms of reducing their energy consumption, but it actually was more affordable for them. I don't think governments designed heat pumps or LED bulbs. I know incentives have been put in place, and that's a good thing, but the marketplace, we hope - and maybe there's a role for the government to support the marketplace in developing new technology to create things like heat pumps and LED light bulbs. Those are things that make energy more affordable and reduce emissions, and that's where I think we want to be.

I also want to mention as I close, even renewable energy. I visited Annapolis Tidal Station, and as I think I've said in the House before, it feels when you visit the site like you are in a James Bond movie. When you go into the bowels of some of these places, they look like something you'd see, some kind of a hidden place that most people don't get to see that is very unique, in the sense that it's underground, there's people moving around,

there's all kinds of gauges and things. I can tell you, even though it is generating renewable energy, it did have an impact on the environment. I sometimes wonder if such a place, if such a utility could be built today and the public might not stand for it. We have to keep our minds open.

I think to close, I would just highlight that renewable energy is great, as long as it's affordable, and that's what we should work towards. We shouldn't be penalizing the public with carbon taxes and things when the public doesn't have a choice. Let's help create affordable renewable energy.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I appreciate the opportunity to provide a few words to the debate. I'll start by recognizing both my colleagues. The member for Halifax Needham, your passion shows for your community every time you speak about topics. Today was no different than some of the conversations we've had either in here or during Estimates or outside the Legislature. I appreciate your comments. You actually made a great point about how you can't just look at the rate; you have to look at the bill, and I'll talk about some of that in a moment. That is very important as part of the conversation.

To my colleague from the happiest place in Canada, the member for Inverness, your comments are true about that balance. When we look at energy policy and the system and what the system can handle and that balance between our fossil-fuel use and bringing renewables in, it is very important, because we have brought a lot of renewables into the system. I talk about our carbon footprint and the reductions that we're going to see by 2030. That's all part of the renewables that are coming into our system as well. It is very important for us and it goes to the affordability for Nova Scotians.

I guess I'll start by just looking at the question here, which talks about working with Nova Scotia Power to ensure their sustainability, quality of service, and affordability - and we do have a strong relationship with Nova Scotia Power. In my time, we've been very open in our dialogue about what my goals are as the minister for the department and what we want to see in stability for Nova Scotians, because stability is key. We've enjoyed that for a number of years, the work that government has done, and my goal is to continue down that path so that Nova Scotians know they have a level of comfort and what rates are going to look like into the future.

I'm sure I can say, from a service standpoint, that we've all had our experiences as MLAs. We deal locally with Nova Scotia Power, and I can tell you from my own personal experience dealing with a major event in Sydney, during the flood and in my time as minister, there was a major event. They were quick to respond to me both as an MLA and as a minister. They were quick to deliver information to government to ensure that we were part of the conversations as they looked to solve the problems. Hundreds of Nova Scotians

work for Nova Scotia Power and they go out in the worst of times to ensure that our families, and families across the province, can still have access to power. To all of them, I probably want to thank all the employees of Nova Scotia Power. They do great work for communities across Nova Scotia every day.

I've had the opportunity to speak a few times now about some of the programs that we offer through the Department of Energy and Mines. We're constantly looking at ways that we can change programs to help Nova Scotians, low-income Nova Scotians, with their energy bills and tackle energy poverty. I think one of the biggest changes came in the last year. My colleague, the member for Halifax Needham talked about how we're expanding into rental units. That's important. We want those savings to flow to residents who are renting to incentivize those landlords to look at buildings for energy efficiency upgrades and keep rent rates stable.

As a local MLA, one of the biggest changes I've seen, of course, is we're investing millions of dollars for low-income Nova Scotians when we look at energy efficiency upgrades. That's on top of what Nova Scotia Power does. Nova Scotia Power actually spends about \$3.7 million a year in their own programs for efficiency for homes that are electric. As well, they have the Good Neighbour Energy Fund. I believe that number is a few million dollars now that they've spent in regard to looking at - residents can apply for it and they can receive a rebate on heating their homes. But for us, I want to talk about that \$14.2 million specifically.

One of the most significant changes that we made that I've seen an immediate impact with Nova Scotians is traditionally those funds were used for homes that were heated by electricity and residents could apply. When we opened that up for non-electric heated homes, that's when we really started to see a big intake. I know, as a local MLA, we received a lot of requests from residents before we made that change that we couldn't support because the programs just didn't fit. Now, hundreds more homes qualify for the program. They're taking advantage of it and we're seeing a really significant uptake for families that need the help.

This is all based on successive - we're making decisions to revise programs. Previous governments have made decisions to revise programs, and that's what we're going to continue to do. That's why we've seen such a big uptake in our Mi'kmaq communities, as well, by adding additional money this year, looking at the work they are doing in their communities, and we've seen thousands of installations in communities, as well.

That is ultimately the goal for us. We need to do whatever we can to ensure that if we can expand a program and provide a program, work with our federal partners, we are going to do it because it's important. We want people to live comfortably in their homes. We want to ensure that as MLAs, all of us, that I'm doing my job to ensure you have the

information at your disposal for the residents that you represent so that they can access these programs.

We're going to continue to look at the expansion of them and we are going to make investments in other avenues to support some of the topics the member for Inverness talked about regarding fossil fuels, because there is a transition.

THE CHAIR: Order. I just want to remind the member to talk through the Chair and not directly to the members.

The honourable Minister of Energy and Mines has the floor.

DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want to talk about the points from the member for Inverness. He's absolutely right when we talk about that balance, because there is a balance there. We are making transitions. We are bringing renewables onto the system and it has to be affordable as we do it.

As a department, we are working on some great initiatives when it comes to electrification of transportation with our municipalities, but we are also looking at the day-to-day products that Nova Scotians use in regard to hot-water tanks and how we can look at moving those towards electrification and some of the services residents use on a daily basis in their homes.

It's important work and we are always looking for feedback. These programs are going to continue to exist. We are going to continue to make significant investments to support the work that the department does in concert with other departments and other levels of government, and for all of you, I look forward to your feedback. I really enjoy these opportunities to talk about energy in these debates because it is always evolving.

I know Nova Scotia Power is always looking at their own ways of how they are going to evolve. Their business model is evolving; it's obvious. You see it with the Maritime Link and some of the decisions that have been made over the years.

It is important that all members of this House keep an open dialogue to ensure that if there are programs and ideas to help families with their energy consumption - not just their bills but their consumption, because ultimately that will drive down bills - I want to do whatever we can to support that work.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words regarding this debate, and I appreciate the member for Dartmouth North bringing it forward.

THE SPEAKER: I want to thank everyone for a lively debate.

The House will meet again tomorrow at 1:00 p.m.



Have a good night.

[The House rose at 5:03 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 1051**

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston-Dartmouth)

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

Whereas Mr. Bill Hilton, owner of Independent Print on 21 Dundas Street, Dartmouth, has made the decision to close his long-standing business; and

Whereas he started working at Independent Print at the age of 12 as an errand boy, to later purchase the company, and has now made the decision some 77 years later to retire; and

Whereas he did business the tried and true way, based on quality work, fair pricing, and on-time delivery, and this earned him the respect and the business of many individuals and companies over his lengthy career in the printing business;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Mr. Bill Hilton for his years of service in providing quality printing for individuals and businesses from Newfoundland and Labrador to Alberta.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1052**

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 - 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 honored Ian MacDonald for Officer 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. 1053**

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 the Wayne Waugh Memorial Hockey Tournament was held in March 2019 at the North Shore Recreation Centre, with the Tatamagouche Titans Bantam C squad representing the hometown, made up of 10 boys and 9 girls of all different skill levels; and

Whereas Game 1 of the tournament saw the Titans rout the Glace Bay Miners 10-4, but in game 2, the Titans ran into penalty trouble and suffered a 5-4 loss to the Miners, followed by a 2-2 tie with Stellarton; and

Whereas in the final game the Titans trailed 2-1, with Kaiden Johnson scoring their lone goal, and then a late-game goal by Cody MacKay tied the score, and in overtime - on a pass from MacKay - Kaiden scored the winning goal;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Tatamagouche Titans for capturing the winning banner for the first time in 13 years.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1054**

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 Master Corporal Cody Matthews from North River, Colchester North, is a reserve master corporal with the Nova Scotia Highlanders who worked in Latvia last year with several hundred Canadian soldiers guarding the tiny Baltic nation against possible Russian invasion; and

Whereas Matthews spent many hours manning the C-6 light machine gun atop his army G-wagon in temperatures that sometimes plummeted to -40°C; and

Whereas his unit was deployed just outside the capital of Riga, and Matthews got to see the humble buildings of the local towns, reflecting the poverty of many Latvians;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly show their appreciation for the important work the Nova Scotia Highlanders do, as well as all other soldiers who participated from around the world.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1055**

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 the Double C Truck Stop in Lower Debert has been run by Debbie Cock and family for 21 years and has the reputation of being an old style diner, a reputation spread by transport drivers, both local and all across Canada; and

Whereas the restaurant's food is made fresh daily from scratch, with a baker who comes in at 4:00 a.m. every morning to make the restaurant's own bread on site; and

Whereas the homemade pies and desserts are made from recipes belonging to Debbie's late husband's great-great-grandmother;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize the Double C Truck Stop owner and staff for having earned the spot on the Peterbilt Atlantic's top three diners in Atlantic Canada, quality food/excellent service.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1056**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Halifax Armdale)

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

Whereas the sharing of food, music, and cultural performances brings communities together and strengthens our understanding of people from different backgrounds than ourselves; and

Whereas on Saturday, March 23, the Pakistan Canadian Association of Nova Scotia hosted Pakistan Food Festival 2019 at St. George's Greek Orthodox Church, presenting a fantastic showcase of Pakistani, Indian, and Middle Eastern cuisine, live music from a local Pakistani band, a multicultural dance group, and a children's performance of Pakistani's national songs; and

Whereas many families came from across the city to take part in the festival, and attendees were treated to chai, henna tattoos, crafts, draws, and plenty of games and activities for the kids;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking organizers Anila Najaf, Ismat Ali, Tabassum Qureshi, Mehmooda Farooq, Taquiuddin Hashmi, Afshan Memon, Arslan Khan, and Mohammed Ali Raza for their hard work putting together this event.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1057**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Halifax Armdale)

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

Whereas Nova Scotia is served by an impressive complement of judges who bring their expertise to important questions of law; and

Whereas the Honourable Chief Justice J. Michael MacDonald, Nova Scotia Court of Appeal, and the Honourable Chief Justice Joseph P. Kennedy, Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, have both had long and exemplary careers marked by their leadership on different levels of our courts; and

Whereas on April 6, 2019, I was pleased to attend a celebratory gala in honour of both Chief Justices hosted by the Advocates' Society at the Halifax Convention Centre and attended by distinguished representatives from courts across the country and with greetings by the Right Honourable Richard Wagner, P.C., Chief Justice of Canada;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Chief Justice J. Michael MacDonald and Chief Justice Joseph P. Kennedy on their retirements and thank them for their years of service to our province and contributions to our justice system.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 1058**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Halifax Armdale)

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

Whereas small business of all sorts contribute to the distinct character of our communities, and in this regard the community of Armdale is no exception; and

Whereas Armdale is home to Halifax's Largest Retro Arcade, the Chocolate Lake Arcade, operated out of the Best Western Hotel by local company Silverball Games, which offers a great selection of over 20 games for players of all ages; and

Whereas on Heritage Day, Silverball Games celebrated their third birthday at the arcade with games set on free play and cake for community members;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Silverball Games on their third birthday and expansion and thank them for offering a fun and unique place for Armdale to play.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 1059**

By: Hon. Lena Diab (Halifax Armdale)

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

Whereas on February 11, 2019, a special ceremony was held at Province House to celebrate the bicentennial of the Nova Scotia Legislature, featuring a three-scene historical sketch presented by Jamie Bradley of Armdale and Jeremy Webb; and

Whereas Jamie assumed the role of Province House architect John Merrick, and Jeremy the role of Mason and Master Builder, Richard Scott, and both provided an endearing dash of humour and levity to the ceremony, while offering a fascinating recounting of the history of the place; and

Whereas Jamie Bradley is well-known in Halifax as a playwright, actor, puppeteer and voice actor, and is the creative mind behind productions such as KAMP and Before the Leaves Turn;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Jamie Bradley and Jeremy Webb for their excellent performance, and wish them well with their future projects.