



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2019

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2019

Sixty-third General Assembly

Second Session

9:00 A.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

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, in my capacity as Minister of Justice for Nova Scotia, I hereby beg leave to table the 2018-19 Electoral Boundaries Commission, Final Report, *Balancing effective representation with voter parity*, dated April 2019, which was filed with the Chief Clerk of the House of Assembly on April 15, 2019.

THE SPEAKER: The report is tabled.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 1253

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): Mr. Speaker, I hereby give notice that on a future day I shall move the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas the Canadian Cadet Program has been offering training and leadership development to young Canadians, teaching life and work skills since the late 1800s; and

Whereas Nova Scotia's 85 cadet units and over 3,000 cadets active in air, sea, army, and navy units, are involved in their communities through volunteering and citizenship activities and make a significant contribution to Canadian society; and

Whereas Cadet Day was made an official Act by the Nova Scotia Legislature in 2010 and is celebrated to recognize these youth and their contributions to the province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly recognize October 5, 2019, as Cadet Day in the Province of Nova Scotia.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 1254

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

Whereas on August 1st to August 3rd, Antigonish successfully hosted the 55+ Games for seniors with more than 700 participants; and

Whereas participation in these games afforded the athletes with a great example of how important and fun it is to stay engaged and active as we age; and

Whereas the 55+ Games for seniors align with and help advance the goals of SHIFT: Nova Scotia's Action Plan for an Aging Population;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating the organizing committee and all the participating athletes, including the member for Kings West, who won a gold medal playing for a South Shore men's hockey team. (Applause)

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 Environment.

RESOLUTION NO. 1255

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

Whereas the Mobius Awards of Environmental Excellence recognize leaders in recycling and waste diversion across the province; and

Whereas this year's recipients include Michelin, the Wolfville Farmers' Market, Beyond Food Inc. in Halifax, be aMAZEd! art maze in Bridgewater, and the Sisters of St. Martha of Antigonish; and

Whereas Dylan Yates of Glace Bay has been recognized as an emerging environmental leader, and Lise LeBlanc of Lower Sackville has been entered into the Mobius Awards Hall of Fame;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize these Nova Scotians for their leadership and commitment to protecting our environment.

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 Labour and Advanced Education.

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

LABI KOUSOULIS: Today in the East Gallery, we are joined by Danita Curwin, mother, grandmother, and this year's Nova Scotia Council of the Federation Literacy Award recipient. I will be presenting her award today at 11:30 a.m. downstairs, and all members are invited.

Danita always cared for her family and she started volunteering at a school in her community, and it became her personal goal to obtain her GED, which she did in March. She is now working as an education program assistant and volunteering as a tutor for other adult learners.

Also in attendance today is Danita's spouse, Robert Cameron. I'd like to ask them to stand to receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1256

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

Whereas the Council of the Federation Literacy Award is presented annually to adult learners across the country who demonstrate an exceptional commitment to literacy; and

Whereas Danita Curwin, the winner of the 2019 Nova Scotia Council of the Federation Literacy Award, is setting a positive example for her grandchildren while making a difference in her community; and

Whereas Danita's strength and resilience are admirable, and her journey is an inspiration to all adult learners;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature congratulate Danita on her continued success and wish her all the best in the future.

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 Education and Early Childhood Development.

RESOLUTION NO. 1257

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

Whereas Saturday, October 5th, is World Teachers' Day, which provides an opportunity to recognize the teaching profession; and

Whereas Nova Scotia has more than 9,000 teachers who do important work to support over 120,000 students each year; and

Whereas through their commitment and service teachers are helping to prepare young people to be future leaders in our communities and successful in their own lives;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature recognize Saturday, October 5th, as World Teachers' Day and to also recognize the difference that teachers make in the lives of our young people each and every day.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

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

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

RANDY DELOREY: I draw the members' attention to the East Gallery where we are joined by Josie Ryan, the Executive Director of Long Term Care at Northwood and also Chair of the Health Association of Nova Scotia Continuing Care Council; and Janet Simm, the President and CEO of Northwood Long Term Care.

Would you please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Legislature.
(Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

RESOLUTION NO. 1258

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

Whereas Nova Scotians deserve to be comfortable and well taken care of in their home or in long-term care; and

Whereas there are so many continuing care assistants, nurses, physicians, family caregivers and volunteers who provide compassionate care to Nova Scotians; and

Whereas October is Continuing Care Month, a time to thank the dedicated people working in long-term care, home care and supporting Nova Scotians in communities across the province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House recognize the remarkable difference those working and volunteering in continuing care make for people in care.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted

DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I just wanted to recognize, too - she was just recognized here - my Aunt Josie is here today, Josie Ryan. I just want to thank her for keeping me out of trouble. She has been a big part of my life growing up. Josie it's good to see you.

Bill No. 175 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 32 of the Acts of 2015. The Marine Renewable-energy Act. (Hon. Derek Mombourquette)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw the members' attention to the gallery opposite where today I'd like to welcome Annette Harpell of Antigonish, Larry Haiven of Halifax, and Judy Haiven of Halifax.

Mr. Haiven is a member of Equity Watch, a diverse group of concerned citizens campaigning to make the Nova Scotia governments and employers more accountable concerning workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination.

After a long struggle as the result of a workplace bullying, Ms. Harpell has been working with Equity Watch to ensure that Nova Scotia's occupational health and safety laws protect people from psychological harassment at work.

Please join me in welcoming them to the House. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

Bill No. 176 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 7 of the Acts of 1996. The Occupational Health and Safety Act, Respecting Mental Health. (Tammy Martin)

Bill No. 177 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 380 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Public Utilities Act. (Hon. Derek Mombourquette)

Bill No. 178 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 12 of the Acts of 2011. The Public Procurement Act, Respecting Fair Wages and Community Benefits. (Lisa Roberts)

Bill No. 179 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 226 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Industry Closing Act. (Tammy Martin)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney-Whitney Pier.

RADIO DAY: SUPPORTING CANCER CARE - RECOG.

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday was Radio Day in Cape Breton, put on by the Cape Breton Regional Hospital Foundation and hundreds of volunteers across our community.

Yesterday Cape Bretoners raised money to support cancer care in Cape Breton. Hundreds of volunteers were involved; we've seen a number of businesses step forward and we've seen youth raise over \$10,000 to support the fundraising drive.

Overall, yesterday, Cape Bretoners raised over \$1 million for cancer care at home. (Applause)

I rise in my place to congratulate Brad Jacobs and his team at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital Foundation, the hundreds of volunteers who were involved, and, most importantly, all the donors who raised over \$1 million in our community.

Cape Bretoners are excited about the work that the foundation does. They always step forward to support cancer care at home and, as a government, we look forward to the next step, which is building a new cancer centre for Cape Breton.

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

**HART, ASHLEIGH - RECIPIENT:
LEDWIDGE SCHOLARSHIP - CONGRATS.**

LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend Ledwidge Lumber Company, in Enfield, on the establishment of an annual scholarship in memory of company founder, Laurie Ledwidge. The scholarship will typically be awarded to someone who displays an entrepreneurial spirit or a passion for giving back to the community.

Jim Ledwidge, Laurie's son, states that his father admired anyone who has the ambition to get ahead in life and the willingness to work for it. Such is the case with the first recipient, Ashleigh Hart, who has a passion for nursing and is pursuing post-secondary education in that field.

Congratulations to Ashleigh on her scholarship, and best wishes to her in her chosen career path.

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

SMB ELEM. STUDENTS: MOVE AS ONE - CONGRATS.

HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and encourage the students of St. Margaret's Bay Elementary, who will participate this afternoon in a Walk Run Roll event, as part of the Let's All Move as One activity for World Cerebral Palsy Day. The official date for World CP Day is this Sunday, October 6th. This year the Cerebral Palsy International Sports and Recreation Association is promoting the benefits of sport and physical activity on the quality of life for people with CP.

Today the students of St. Margaret's Bay Elementary will walk, run, or roll for 30 minutes while wearing their favourite green attire, like I am today, to support World Cerebral Palsy Day.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating the students and staff of St. Margaret's Bay Elementary for participating in this important event and showcasing the importance of simple physical activity for all citizens of Nova Scotia.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

CHISHOLM, JIM: RETIREMENT - CONGRATS.

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jim Chisholm on his retirement. Jim was the superintendent of the Town of Pictou's Public Works for over 30 years before he retired on June 21st of this year. Jim's unwavering commitment to improving the Town of Pictou has been greatly appreciated by the community and its leaders for the years he's served our town.

He was present to oversee various important events and infrastructure projects in our community. He certainly made a positive impact on the Town of Pictou as it flourished into a bright little shire town. Thank you, Jim, for your years of service to the Town of Pictou and for being a friend.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

RHULAND, DONNA - COOPER: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise to honour Donna Rhuland, who sadly passed away on June 29th of this year. Today Donna would have been celebrating her 62nd birthday.

Donna was considered the Queen of Dock Street in Shelburne, where she worked at the Shelburne Barrel Factory for 41 years. She was the only known female cooper in the world.

Donna loved meeting visitors from all over the world, and was a great ambassador for Shelburne and for Nova Scotia. An animal lover and avid gardener, she was a true character who will be sorely missed.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts go out to Donna's family and friends for their loss. I think it is safe to say that her memory will live on in the hearts of all those whose lives she touched.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**MAHONE BAY LEGION HALL:
AGE-FRIENDLY DESIGNATION - CONGRATS.**

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Mahone Bay Legion Hall, which was recently designated as an age-friendly facility. Being awarded this designation means that all of the standards set forth by the Nova Scotia Community Links Aging Well Together program have been met.

Lloyd Westhaver and Wade Rhuland spearheaded the team of volunteers who, over the past three years, have worked hard to upgrade the facility, making it more accessible

for seniors and those with disabilities. Some of the upgrades include wheelchair-accessible bathrooms, improvements to signage around the building, painting, and extended handrails.

Mahone Bay Legion Branch 49 president Helen Whitehouse acknowledges the hard work it took to make the changes but is pleased to be the first facility in Mahone Bay to receive this designation.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you and the members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Mahone Bay Legion Hall on receiving the age-friendly facility designation.

[9:30 a.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY: DEDICATION - RECOG.

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, October 5th, marks World Teachers' Day. It's important to celebrate the teachers in our province. From elementary, junior high, and high school, we are so lucky to have determined, caring, and compassionate teachers in Nova Scotia.

As a parent, my mind is at ease knowing that my children are in the care of awesome teachers all day. As an educator, I'm proud of the work being done by my former colleagues in classrooms across Nova Scotia. We all know that a positive learning experience with a teacher who takes the extra time and goes the extra mile can be the difference-maker in a student's life.

Mr. Speaker let's say thanks to the teachers in our province today. I ask all members of this House to acknowledge the outstanding dedication, compassion, and professionalism of our teachers.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY: EDUCATORS FOR SOCIAL JUST. - RECOG.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, on World Teachers' Day, I would like to recognize the important work of Educators for Social Justice Nova Scotia.

Founded in 2015, Educators for Social Justice is an independently organized caucus of Nova Scotia Teachers Union members and allies whose goal is to advocate for greater social justice in our schools and communities. Our caucus shares their vision of a robust, well-rounded public education system that supports social justice and actively challenges colonialism, racism, sexism, and all systems of oppression. ESJ is an excellent example of

the important contributions that teachers make to our communities inside and outside of their classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud them for their dedication in working towards a fairer, more equitable society for all.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

J.D. COMPOSITES: PLASTIC-BOTTLE HOUSE - RECOG.

HON. GORDON WILSON: I would like to add my voice to the recognition that JD Composites received this summer when they unveiled their house - the first house 100 per cent constructed of plastic bottles.

The partners, Joel German and David Saulnier, had been discussing the project for three years. Mr. Saulnier has a background in composites and boat building and wanted to use composites to build houses. Their house in Meteghan River, an energy efficient house that can withstand Category 5 hurricanes, was made using an estimated 612,000 plastic bottles.

I was at the company's open house and don't think either man had foreseen the worldwide interest this one house would generate. Part of the reason for this interest is the use of hundreds of thousands of used plastic bottles needed to build a house - plastic bottles that now may fill landfills as well as wash up on our shores. Also, this technology could be used to build smaller homes and disaster relief shelters.

This shows that concrete ways to save the environment issues can sprout from any industry and be developed anywhere, including a beautiful village far from urban centres like Meteghan River.

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

**MOORE, TAYLOR/HOADLEY, KAYLEIGH:
CONSTITUENCY ASSISTANCE - THANKS**

BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Taylor Moore and Kayleigh Hoadley, two local students who were hired to work with us at our office over this past summer.

Taylor and Kayleigh did a wonderful job helping my constituency assistant and myself by conducting critic research, answering calls, and helping constituents. Kayleigh was a co-op student who was at our office from October 2018 to February 2019 and so impressed us with her abilities and work ethic that we decided to hire her as a full-time student over the summer. Taylor was a student who graduated from Avon View High

School - a hard-working, intelligent young woman who also joined our team over the summer.

Both girls are now attending their first year at Saint Mary's University where Kayleigh is taking a political science degree and Taylor is playing on the university's female rugby team.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to just take an opportunity to thank Taylor and Kayleigh for their hard work and contributions to our office and my constituents over this past summer and wish them luck as they attend their first year of university at SMU.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston-Dartmouth.

BOUCHARD, PAM - HON. CHAIR: TERRY FOX RUN - THANKS

HON KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Ms. Pam Bouchard, who has donated six years tireless organizing and promoting the Lake Echo Terry Fox Walk/Run event. The five co-chairs of the organizing team have named her as the honorary chair and president for 2019 as a way of acknowledging her accomplishments.

She has been retired for 10 years yet gave selflessly of her time to make the Lake Echo 39th Annual Terry Fox Walk/Run event a great success. I want to recognize and congratulate Ms. Pam Bouchard for her dedication to our community and the annual Terry Fox Walk/Run event.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

RUSHTON, LES AND NANCY: 50TH ANNIV. - CONGRATS.

TORY RUSHTON: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Les and Nancy Rushton of Oxford.

In 1969, on September 4th, they were married. Les and Nancy resided their whole lives in Oxford, and while operating their own machinery and welding business they brought up three young men and a daughter.

Mr. Speaker, this weekend I would like to congratulate Les and Nancy Rushton on their 50th wedding anniversary, and I ask this House to join me in celebration with my parents this coming weekend.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

PREST, SHARON: FDNS. FOR LEARNING - THANKS

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, today I am going to speak about a special lady in our community whose sole goal is to help young people.

Twenty-five years ago, when Sharon Prest's son, Daniel, was seven years old, he couldn't read. He had excellent teachers, but somehow just couldn't understand. Not finding the resources they needed here, Sharon took the remarkable step of taking Daniel to California to a renowned learning centre. There he could receive the help he needed, and Sharon could get the training she needed to be able to teach him. This trip had an enormous impact on both their lives.

Today, Sharon runs Foundations for Learning, tutoring children in math and reading comprehension. Foundations for Learning has grown from Sharon's one-man show to two locations with now eight tutors. Sharon's determination to help her son has grown into a successful business, helping many children in our community and beyond.

I would like to ask the members of this House to join me in thanking Sharon for her continued work in helping struggling youth to reach their potential.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

SURETTE, LENORA: EDUC. OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

COLTON LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Lenora Surette of Abram's River, Nova Scotia on being awarded the FSL Educator of the Year Award by Canadian Parents for French Nova Scotia on September 28, 2019.

Lenora teaches Grades 4 and 5 French immersion at Meadowfields Community School. She excels in French Second Language teaching and truly demonstrates innovation and initiative in her classroom. She strives to motivate her students to do their best and is a strong advocate of the French language and culture.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating Lenora Surette on her award and thank her for her continued dedication to our education system.

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

MARTELL, LEON: KIDNEY TRANSPLANT- BEST WISHES

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to extend best wishes to Arichat resident Leon Martell.

Mr. Martell has battled his kidney disease for many, many years which severely affected his lifestyle but never his sense of humour. With so many Nova Scotians receiving dialysis, it is a miracle that Mr. Martell found his match and was able to receive his much-needed kidney. On September 29th Mr. Martell was told he would receive a kidney, and on September 30th he became a successful recipient.

I am very pleased to say that he is recuperating well with his wife Anne and friends, and family. When I asked if he had a message to share about this surreal experience, because both he and his wife Anne are hearing-impaired, he asked for me to share in sign language: I love you.

The community of Isle Madame is extending their love, support, and best wishes to Leon and I ask the members of this House to do the same.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

CANN, CRISSY: RETURN TO WORK - CONGRATS.

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, like any mother, I found the return to work after maternity leave challenging and after my second child, in fact, I did not return and began several years of juggling child care with part-time gigs and freelance work.

On the occasion of tomorrow's World Teachers' Day, I want to salute Crissy Cann, the Primary French Immersion teacher at St. Joseph's-Alexander McKay Elementary School in my constituency.

Last April she returned from her second maternity leave to a special assignment. She stepped into an English Grade 5-6 split class, whose amazing teacher had had to go on leave after a personal tragedy. Ms. Cann knew the students because she had visited the class regularly with her infant through the Roots of Empathy Program.

This was a very challenging return-to-work assignment, and Ms. Cann rose to it with energy, commitment, and great affection for her Grade 5 and 6 students.

I join her colleagues and parents and the St. Joseph-Alexander MacKay community in recognizing Crissy Cann for her work and I wish her a very good year back in her Primary French immersion class.

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

4-H CLUB: YOUTH LDERS. - COMMEND

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of our local 4-H Club. I had the pleasure of meeting some of these awesome kids - and not the billy goat kind - at an event this summer. Although I did get to meet Root Beer, their goat.

The 4-H is an important program for our youth in our province and has been here since 1922 when the first 4-H Club was organized. The 4-H focused on developing kids in leadership, taking care and responsibility for resources, building helpful life skills, and working towards a sustainable future for us all.

The Manchester 4-H Club keeps rabbits, chickens and goats, focusing on taking care of the animals to keep them healthy and hearty. Agriculture is an important part of our communities and economies in Nova Scotia and I commend a new generation for taking an interest in farming, growing and keeping animals, and for their learning how enriching a rural way of life can be.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the local 4-H club and leader Lorraine Brymer for participating in our community expo this past summer and wish them all the best for their future competitions and animal husbandry efforts.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

CAMP ALDERSHOT: CREW SUPPORT, HURRICANE DORIAN - THANKS

JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the hard work and commitment put forth by Camp Aldershot during Hurricane Dorian when 150 personnel and 75 vehicles arrived in our area of Kings North to work on the restoration of power services in the local region.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Camp Aldershot base staff for quartering and feeding these crews during their time here and I am sure their hospitality was very appreciated. Having somewhere for these crews to stay and be fed during this time certainly helped to get things up and running for those people who were without power.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

JONES, WENDY: HARNESSING COM. SUPPORT - THANKS

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Mr. Speaker, every day Nova Scotians impress me with their compassion. One great example is the selflessness exhibited by Wendy Jones of Armdale. Back in June an electrical fire broke out in her neighbour's home, destroying the residence and the possessions of the family of seven living there. Although Wendy did

not know the family, she felt for her neighbours and offered her assistance to them in the days following the fire.

When a flyer she shared with her neighbours asking for donations was posted on Facebook, people across HRM were quick to lend their support. Indeed, she woke up the next day to hundreds of texts and emails offering help. Wendy spent weeks collecting and sorting donations of furniture, clothes, toys, even bicycles and helped the family with their hunt for a new place to call home.

I ask all members of the House of Assembly to join me in thanking Wendy for her actions and generosity.

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

**HOMEVILLE WOMEN'S INSTIT.:
HEAD-COVERINGS DONATION - CONGRATS.**

BRIAN COMER: I rise today to congratulate the Homeville Women's Institute of Port Morien on their donation of head coverings which are available at the Cape Breton Cancer Centre. The members began this project three months ago and since then have made over 250 coverings, which are made for women battling cancer and going through treatment.

This idea was brought forward to the group by a friend of the late Judy MacLeod, who recently passed away from cancer. In turn, her family donated the fabric for the project.

It is a true honour to stand here today and take this opportunity to congratulate the Homeville Women's Institute and their members on their dedication to such a meaningful project and continued community involvement.

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

**TOWER, DEBBIE/COLVEY, KEVIN:
LAWN BOWLING TOURN. - CONGRATS.**

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the sporting achievements of a constituent of Cole Harbour-Portland Valley in the national mixed pairs lawn bowling tournament recently held in Saskatoon. Constituent Debbie Tower, with just six years' experience in the sport, and her lawn bowling partner Kevin Colvey, who has three years' experience, played against teams with international status in the sport, while proudly representing Nova Scotia in the event.

Many of the teams had up to 40 years experience but that didn't stop Kevin or Debbie from becoming strong challengers throughout the tournament. They won two of their games, both of which were played against veteran teams. They placed 9th overall in the tournament and, while they both acted as great ambassadors for Nova Scotia, many of their tournament players expressed interest in coming to visit Nova Scotia. In fact, several teams and members have already visited, due to Debbie's ambassadorship.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Debbie and Kevin for their great ambassadorship for Nova Scotia.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

MARSHALL, DYLAN: FUNDRAISING FOR PEERS - THANKS

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge Dylan Marshall, a 12-year-old boy from Amherst. This young man started up his own bakery business, called Dylan's Dylicious Dylectables. During the summer, every Friday morning he set up in front of his home to sell baked goods and this summer helped to raise over \$400 to send three children to YMCA day camp. This was done through a campaign by local business, ARC Social Media. He was able to accomplish this goal in just a few hours.

Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to thank Dylan, who has a very generous heart, in helping other children in his community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings West.

14 WING GREENWOOD: WING WELCOME - THANKS

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I rise today to applaud 14 Wing Greenwood on hosting another successful Wing Welcome. Over the course of five days in September, 14 Wing Greenwood welcomed new military families and those who have relocated to the community through hosting a multitude of events and activities, all

September, 14 Wing Greenwood welcomed new military families and those who have relocated to the community through hosting a multitude of events and activities, all while enabling residents to become familiar with what the community has to offer - popular events included a family movie, bowling, the Terry Fox Run and much more.

Many families appreciate the opportunity to be volunteers associated with various sports and recreation clubs to find out more information or even sign up on the spot. All in all, it's a wonderful opportunity for the community to come together, get to know their neighbours and promote community engagement that extends beyond the base.

Mr. Speaker, I request the members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking 14 Wing Greenwood on hosting yet another important Wing Welcome that fostered a strong sense of community spirit and feeling of warm welcome to all in attendance.

[9:45 a.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

PRINCE, CLARENCE: CANCER TREATMENT - BEST WISHES

MURRAY RYAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to send best wishes to CBRM Councillor Clarence Prince as he begins treatment to fight a recent cancer diagnosis.

Clarence is no stranger to Northside-Westmount. He previously served as mayor of Sydney Mines, and has since been a long-time councillor for many years. He has spent the majority of his life serving our community and working to make our lives better. So, in this moment, it is our opportunity to come together and do what we can to support Clarence Prince and his family.

The entire community is keeping him and his family in our thoughts and prayers as he undergoes this battle. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

BEAUTIFICATION PROJ.: WELCOMING TOURISTS - THANKS

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a special group of community-minded and highly motivated volunteers from the Prospect Road communities - under the leadership of Maureen Yeadon, Frank Johnston, Bob Dooley, and Shirley Jollimore - who have teamed up with provincial and municipal offices, through the assistance of my constituency office, to spearhead a beautification project.

The project is designed to enhance and beautify the appearance of the industrial development that has evolved in the Goodwood area. Recognizing that Goodwood is the access point that leads to our picturesque coastal communities and our most iconic tourist attraction, Peggy's Cove, this community group is working to provide a more welcoming and inviting experience for the hundreds of tourists and residents who pass by this location every day by diminishing the sight line of the industrial businesses in the area.

In addition to enhancing the appearance of this area, the committee is developing a rest area along the active transportation lanes that have been installed by the province this year. I ask the members of the House to join me in thanking Maureen Yeadon, Frank Johnston, Bob Dooley, and Shirley Jollimore for their dedication to the community and for their recognition of the importance of our province's growing tourist industry.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MACKAY, EMILY - RECIPIENT: ST. F.X. GOLD MEDAL - CONGRATS.

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, congratulations to Miss Emily MacKay of East Margaree who recently graduated from the nursing program at St. F.X. University. She won the university gold medal for the highest average in the final three years of an honours, advanced major degree program.

These are the kinds of hard-working Nova Scotians we know will bring the best of care for those among us who are sick or experiencing discomfort. Let us acknowledge Emily for her achievement and wish her a rewarding and successful career here in her home province.

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

NICHOLS, MOLLY: GIRL GUIDE TRAVELS - BEST WISHES

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an incredible young resident from Fairview.

Molly Nichols, a Pathfinder Guide, travelled to Switzerland and the U.K. with the Halifax South District Girl Guide group this Summer. As part of the travel plans, Molly visited the Girl Guides chalet in Switzerland. While there, she met other like-minded youth from across the world and participated in many activities and adventures.

During the second half of her trip, Molly stayed at the Pax Lodge in London and participated in a week-long event called the Journey Through London. The purpose of this event was for the Girl Guides to discover London, participate in a community service project, and to celebrate the international spirit of Guiding and Scouting.

I ask the members of this House to join me in wishing Molly the best in all of her future endeavours. I'm sure this is just a glimpse of what is yet to come.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

MANCINI, TONY: COM. SERV., HURRICANE DORIAN - THANKS

STEVE CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud HRM Deputy Mayor, Councillor Tony Mancini.

During Hurricane Dorian and its aftermath, Deputy Mayor Tony Mancini showed tremendous leadership by keeping the residents of the Halifax Regional Municipality apprised of storm warnings, closures, and general information leading up to and during the

storm. Following the storm, he visited the communities and the homes of those residents who were affected in order to see the damage first-hand.

I would like all members of the House to join me to take this opportunity to compliment Deputy Mayor Tony Mancini for his efforts in keeping the residents of the Halifax Regional Municipality informed of Hurricane Dorian's impacts before, during, and after its journey through HRM.

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

**INNER STRENGTH TAEKWONDO:
PAN AM MULTI-MEDALLISTS - CONGRATS.**

BILL HORNE: I rise today to congratulate Wellington's Inner Strength Taekwondo Academy on its success at the 2019 Pan Am Open & Para Taekwondo Championships held in Oregon.

Mr. Speaker, the club members brought home four medals. Katie Cox won the silver; Jaidyn and Katie Bartlett both won gold; and Raya Porter won gold in the Open portion of the competition.

Congratulations to these athletes and the club for sending four athletes to the Pan Am Games and to the success of the games.

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

**HAWTHORNE, JAMES - COLONEL:
RETURN TO SHEARWATER - WELCOME**

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome 12 Wing Commander, Colonel James Hawthorne.

In 1994, Colonel Hawthorne enrolled in the Canadian Armed Forces. After obtaining a degree in civil engineering from the Royal Military College of Canada, he went on to earn his wings. Colonel Hawthorne completed an aerospace systems course in Winnipeg, Manitoba, before he came to Shearwater, eventually being seconded as the Wing Commander's Executive Assistant. In 2016, he was promoted to Colonel. Colonel Hawthorne was then posted to Toronto where he completed the National Security Program from the Canadian Forces College.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in welcoming Colonel Hawthorne to his newly appointed position as 12 Wing Commander and celebrating his return to Shearwater, Nova Scotia.

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

CONROD, SUZANNE: 7TH ANNIV., HOOKED RUG MUSEUM - CONGRATS.

HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Hooked Rug Museum of North America on their seventh successful year of operation in Queensland, Nova Scotia.

Suzanne Conrod, founding director of the Hooked Rug Museum, declared that to celebrate their lucky seventh anniversary, the museum would host not just one, but three artists of the year to showcase during the 2019 season. Ruth Downing of Nova Scotia and Jackie Sheppard-Alcock of Newfoundland and Labrador were designated as the Canadian Artists of the Year; Brigitte Webb, of Dingwall in the Scottish Highlands, was named the International Artist of the Year.

If you visit this wonderful Hooked Rug Museum, you'll find on display carefully saved and preserved examples of rug hooking, which has evolved over the centuries in North America from utilitarian craft to fine art.

Mr. Speaker, I invite the members of the House of Assembly to join me in recognizing and congratulating Suzanne Conrod, founding director, on the seventh anniversary of the Hooked Rug Museum of North America.

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

**SCHOP, ARIE/FOWNES, BROCK:
55+ GAMES MULTI-MEDALLISTS - CONGRATS.**

KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud Arie Schop and Brock Fownes of Baddeck who continue to show their passion and athleticism in track and field.

Both men competed in the 2019 Nova Scotia 55+ Games provincial meet in Antigonish on August 2nd. Arie competed in the 65 to 70 age category while Brock was in the 70 to 75 division. Arie won six medals: gold in 200m, 400m, 800m, and 1500m races and silver in the 5000m and 4x100m relay. Brock won 5 medals: 3 gold, 1 silver, and 1 bronze in race and field events. Brock also won gold in shotput and discus, silver in 4x100m relay, and bronze in 100m dash.

I ask all members of the House to join me in congratulating Arie and Brock on their accomplishments and for remaining ever young.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

DAVIS, REENA - ORG.: KIDNEY WALK - BEST WISHES

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, many people's plans needed to change after Hurricane Dorian set its sights on us, and indeed, across Nova Scotia many people are still looking forward to a return to normal.

The Kidney Walk, a fundraiser for the Kidney Foundation of Canada, was scheduled to happen on September 6th in Port Hawkesbury, Sydney, and in Halifax and, of course, had to be postponed. Halifax's Kidney Walk will happen tomorrow in DeWolfe Park in Bedford. It is largely organized by Reena Davis, a kidney recipient, volunteer with the Kidney Foundation, and my constituency assistant.

This is an important occasion to raise awareness and funds and for those affected by kidney disease to come together. I appreciate Reena's great energy and efforts and wish all who will be walking well.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

GARRISON, DOUG: COM. SERV. - THANKS

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I recently asked people in the Spryfield, Sambro Loop, and Purcell's Cove communities to put forward names of individuals and organizations they felt deserved recognition in the Nova Scotia Legislature.

Lots of names were put forward but one kept coming up: Doug Garrison. Doug lives in Sambro with his wife, Jackie, and has three adult children - Steven, Cindy and Terry. Doug made a living in the fishing industry. He owns Sambro Fisheries and employed many people in the community; I even once baited trawl for him.

Doug has retired but that hasn't stopped him. Doug is active in the local church, he has raised funds to make the church accessible. He has raised money to keep an historic cemetery open and he is constantly volunteering, even singing once in awhile.

Doug is part of the backbone of Sambro, one of the most beautiful communities in all of Nova Scotia. Doug is a role model and someone I go to for advice. Thank you, Doug, for all you do.

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

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, in the West Gallery we have 22 students from the Grade 12 Global Politics class at Prince Andrew High School. With them today are two outstanding teachers, Ms. Adrienne Glasgow and Mr. Ben Sichel. I had the honour of working with these two outstanding professionals for many years at Prince Andrew High School.

I'll ask all the students and teachers to please stand and receive the warm welcome of the House of Assembly. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

PELLERINE, GUY - INDUCTEE: N.S. HALL OF FAME - CONGRATS.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I know you are a sports enthusiast and recognize talent when you see it. I would like all members of the House of Assembly to congratulate Guy Pellerine, a former power-hitting shortstop with the Pictou County Albions, who was inducted into the Nova Scotia Intermediate Baseball League Hall of Fame.

During their championship tournament weekend on August 31st, Guy was a threat to go deep any time he came to the plate. He was an all-star for the majority of years he played in the league and anchored a deep infield that took the Albions to three consecutive Triple A provincial titles.

A gentleman on and off the field, he played with intensity 100 per cent of the time. He supported an impressive lifetime average and his power and numbers were incredible. He was definitely a class act. Congratulations, Guy Pellerine, on your induction into the Nova Scotia Intermediate Baseball League's Hall of Fame.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

BAILEY, RACHEL: 55+ GAMES MULTI-MEDALLIST - CONGRATS.

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, in honour of Seniors Week I felt it fitting to recognize Lunenburg Mayor, Rachel Bailey, in her accomplishments at the Nova Scotia 55+ Games hosted this past summer in Antigonish. The 55+ Games are a great way to engage seniors - or, as they are referred to, "seasoned citizens" - from age 55 upwards, in a variety of mental and physical activities that encourage staying active.

Mayor Rachel Bailey competed in a variety of races, receiving a gold in the 200-metre dash, 400-metre run, and the 1500 metre run. She also received a silver in the 100-metre dash. As a member of the 4x100 metre relay team, Rachel received another gold medal.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you and the members of this House of Assembly join me in recognizing Mayor Rachel Bailey for her accomplishments in the 55+ Games and for being a positive role model for living an active lifestyle.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**VAN DER MEER, GEORGE AND BEERTA:
BARREL FACTORY RENO. - THANKS**

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize George and Beerta Van der Meer, the new owners of the Shelburne Barrel Factory, which is located on Shelburne's historic waterfront. The Van der Meers have undertaken the renovation of this treasured building, being mindful to preserve the traditional appearance of the factory, which was built in 1917. After having it propped up on I-beams to install a concrete foundation, they then worked on a new wooden floor and roofing and have reconfigured the interior so that visitors can watch the barrel makers at work. Many more improvements are planned.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Van der Meers and all those involved in this very worthwhile project. They have indeed given the Shelburne Barrel Factory a new lease on life.

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

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, has the time for Statements by Members lapsed?

THE SPEAKER: Pretty much. Go ahead.

GARY BURRILL: I wish to move that the business of the House be set aside for the purpose of discussing a matter of urgent public importance under Rule 43(1) of the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly, which matter is the closure of the Boat Harbour effluent treatment facility. This is a matter of urgent importance as per the following reasons:

(1) As per the Boat Harbour Act: "On and after the earlier of January 31, 2020, and the date on which the Northern Pulp Nova Scotia Corporation ceases to use the [Boat Harbour Effluent Treatment] Facility, the use of the [Boat Harbour Effluent Treatment] Facility for the reception and treatment of effluent from the [Northern Pulp] Mill must cease."

(2) At present, it is unlikely that Northern Pulp can meet the January 31, 2020, deadline and maintain operations. As a result, there is great uncertainty and tension in the province about what will happen with regard to the closure of the Boat Harbour Effluent Treatment Facility as outlined in the Act.

(3) The focus report from Northern Pulp regarding the environmental assessment for the effluent plant, which will replace the Boat Harbour facility, released yesterday, October 3, 2019, outlines that a new effluent plant will take 21 months to build, taking us past the January 31, 2020, deadline.

(4) Given that there is a 30-day public comment period on the focus report, plus up to 39 days for the government to make its decision, there will not be an opportunity to discuss the impact of this process on the closure of the Boat Harbour Effluent Treatment Facility during the current sitting or before the January 31, 2020, deadline.

(5) While there is legislation on the order paper regarding the future of the forestry industry if Northern Pulp were to close, there is no legislation addressing the closure of the Boat Harbour Effluent Treatment Facility on time as per the Act.

THE SPEAKER: I received the notice from the member for Halifax Chebucto yesterday evening, requesting a debate on a matter of urgent public importance, which is more than the two hours required before the start of today's sitting, as required.

Upon reviewing the notice, I have to say it's not clear to me what the emergency is. As the member notes, the House has passed a law in the Boat Harbour Act that fixes the closing date for the facility. It is open to the member or any other member of this House to introduce a bill to change that date, but other than by legislation, the House is not in a position to change that date by way of emergency debate.

I do not see what change could be carried out by the House having an emergency debate. Therefore, I will not allow this request for the emergency debate.

We will now move on to Oral Questions Put by Members to Ministers, and I will add three minutes to the end of Question Period.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM. - HURRICANE DORIAN: CRANE REMOVAL - COST ESTIMATE

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, a week ago my colleague, the member for Northside-Westmount, asked a question about the crane that fell during Hurricane Dorian. We asked if there was a cost estimate for the potential liability. We accept that it's a moving target, but surely there is a range of even worst case, best case. There must be some range that the province could potentially be on the hook for; at some point, someone must have taken a look at the potential risk to the province.

It's a week later, and we're now into our second localized state of emergency. My question for the Premier is: Does he have a cost estimate for the removal of the crane?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. He has highlighted the issue around the crane, which is a unique situation from Hurricane Dorian. It became apparent for the safety of the residents in that community that government step in to ensure that - the safety of those residents was paramount whether they were in the condo or in those businesses - and to ensure that we could get that crane down as quickly as possible.

The work is ongoing, as you know. We've had two companies that strapped that crane to the existing building, and now we'll start the removal of the crane with the company that has been hired to do that.

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question was about the cost estimate: Has the province done one, and can they share it with this House? This weekend, it will have been four weeks since Hurricane Dorian. Businesses and residents in the area of the collapsed crane are running out of patience and they're looking for information.

So far, we've heard that the Department of Labour and Advanced Education is responsible for the investigation into the collapse; the Emergency Management Office is responsible for the localized state of emergency; the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal is responsible for the actual work of taking down the crane; residents and businesses have been directed to their insurance companies by the Premier; and the national government may step in if there are uninsurable losses, and EMO will administer that when the time comes.

Mr. Speaker, is there a single point of contact people can reach out to if they have questions and concerns?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member raises the question - you know that the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education is responsible for safety in all worksites. He is the regulator when it comes to ensuring whether this particular worksite, or any worksite in our province, is safe for workers.

He would also know that the state of emergency that would have been applied falls under the Emergency Management Office, and the minister responsible for that would be the person who would execute that. He would also know that the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal would be the person who would deal with the issues associated with the contracts related to taking down the crane.

The reality of it is that this is an unprecedented situation for the province. We are working with our partners. There were issues around the site, indemnifying that site. We believed it was in the best interest and safety of Nova Scotians to respond. I look forward to that street and that community getting back to normal.

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it reminds me of Public Accounts when it used to meet on a regular basis and we might have a topic of health in there - we'd have the Nova Scotia Health Authority, we'd have the Department of Health and Wellness, probably Doctors Nova Scotia, the college, maybe the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal - and when you ask a question, everyone looks at each other, because nobody wants to feel accountable and responsible.

In this situation, we have four ministers who are responsible, and everyone knows what happens when four ministers are responsible: nobody's responsible.

My question for the Premier is: If there are massive cost overruns or other issues, when we're looking back in six months, who should we ask? Who should we hold accountable for getting this done and getting it done right?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I also want to thank Nova Scotians for giving us the privilege of governing for the last six years. I want to remind the honourable member - I remember when we came in, we had a half-a-billion-dollar hole annually in the finances of this province.

We delivered our fourth balanced budget. We will deliver our fifth. We will cover the costs associated with ensuring our communities are safe, and at the same time investing - more young people are finding a future for themselves in this province. Our population is at an all-time high. The average age is going down. We're seeing the economy grow. We're the largest-growing economy in Atlantic Canada.

We're going to continue to make sure we grow this province in a positive way. They can continue to be pessimistic about the future of this province. We're optimistic.

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

PREM. - NORTHERN PULP: BOAT HBR. CLEANUP - DEADLINE

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, at this very hour, members of the Pictou Landing First Nation are gathering with their supporters and friends at the Band Office to walk together the kilometre to the bridge in solidarity and hope for the closing of Boat Harbour on deadline.

In the documentary *There's Something in the Water*, Michelle Francis-Denny speaks of the sorrow her family and community have endured over Boat Harbour for 52 years. She says: Everybody has to believe in something. I believe in January 31, 2020, A'se'k.

On Tuesday I asked the Premier to reaffirm that belief, and the answer he provided was not the unequivocal affirmation that the people of Pictou Landing are seeking. So I ask

him again: Will he say plainly that not one drop of effluent will flow into Boat Harbour after January 31st of next year?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I also want to recognize the people of Pictou Landing, who have been tremendous in dealing with this issue that is now decades old. There is a piece of legislation that has been passed unanimously in this House that has that closing on January 31, 2020. There is no other piece of legislation here to change that.

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, 1,607 days ago, the Boat Harbour Act was passed with all-Party support. In the course of the debate about that legislation, the current Minister of Labour and Advanced Education said, on the government's behalf: "We believe that five years is a reasonable time frame to close Boat Harbour." I will table the Hansard of his remarks.

Yet here we are, with Northern Pulp's focus report released yesterday, hardly any closer to a real solution. I want to ask the Premier: If his government believed five years was a reasonable time frame to get this done, why, with just 119 days left now before the deadline, is the whole Northern Pulp situation a matter of such uncertainty and anxiety and pressure?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, one of the challenges facing the issue is that for decades, successive governments continued to be a moving target when it came to the mill and to Boat Harbour.

This House has put together a piece of legislation that was passed with a deadline in it. The mill has the responsibility to look for an EA. That is before the regulator and has nothing to do with me. If he wants to know the length of time the mill is taking to get in, that's a question for the mill operator.

The reality of it is, I made a commitment to clean up Boat Harbour. We set aside money to finance the cleanup of Boat Harbour, and we will do so.

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, finally, this week, after all this time, an application for an environmental approval was received from the company. Yesterday it became available for public scrutiny, and as has been suspected all along, it says that it is not possible to build a new facility in four months. It says, in fact, that it will take 21 months for the facility's construction.

At this moment, two paths are diverging: one where the Boat Harbour effluent facility stays open, and one where it is closed.

In addition to the people of Pictou Landing, thousands of people who work in the woods and in this mill and in other mills and on the water, and who live in the rest of the

communities in Pictou County and beyond, are looking to the Premier in this moment not for an evasion or for a bureaucratic diversion or for a shrug but for leadership towards an honourable resolution of this situation.

What does the Premier have to offer?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member would know that there's a regulator in this province that deals with environmental assessments. It is not the Premier. The honourable member knows that.

The company, like every company that wants an environmental assessment in the province, has the responsibility to do the work to ensure that it goes to the regulator. They will assess it and they will base the facts on science.

The honourable member would know that there was one put in before that was rejected by the regulator. I have no idea what the regulator will do with this piece of information. They are working to put it together. It will be based on the facts around science. That's what will take place.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM. - CANNABIS RETAIL: NSLC RPT. - DELAY

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the Premier if he had received a report from the NSLC on the first phase of cannabis retail. This is a report that the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board had previously said would identify best practices and what the government could or maybe should do differently on the cannabis file. It sounds like this was a pretty consequential report, particularly as the legalization of cannabis edibles gets closer.

Yesterday the Premier didn't sound too concerned about the fact that the government hadn't received this report almost three months after it was expected.

My question for the Premier is: Has his government followed up with the NSLC on why the cannabis phase one retail report, promised months ago, has not been received?

THE PREMIER: The Minister of Finance and Treasury Board, who is responsible for the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation, has been in constant contact with the distributor. The reality of it is that what we have said from the very beginning when this product became legal was that we were going to ensure that distribution was held tight by the government. That's why we've chosen the vehicle of the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation to distribute that product. What we also said is that we would look at other opportunities for retailing later on.

As the honourable member would know, we've been delayed with the edibles, and now that is coming this year. It was supposed to be done a few months ago, but it was delayed. We are trying to find out from the National Health Organization which products will actually be made available, but that doesn't mean that we are going to agree to sell all of those in our province. What we have made sure of is that the distribution product will be held tight by our regulator, by our utility, and we will ensure that as we go forward.

I will say that, as other provinces are having to adjust how they've been distributing that product in the last number of months, the Province of Nova Scotia has stayed steady and committed to our distributors.

TIM HOUSTON: I appreciate the Premier's commitment to the distribution channel, but presumably this report would have so much more in that about what went right, what went wrong; it could be around staff training, could be around packaging, could be around marketing. There could be so many things in that report.

I know the Premier said yesterday that he fully understands what is happening in the cannabis marketplace, but the fact of the matter is that it is not possible to fully understand what's happening unless you receive and review the report from the people who are selling it at the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation. This is an important piece of the puzzle.

I would like to ask the Premier: Does the Premier feel that Nova Scotians have a right to see this report, digest this report, understand this report, and understand the conclusions of the report? If so, when he finally gets around to getting the report, will he table it for this House?

[10:15 a.m.]

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I'm not sure where the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party is going. The reality of it is, many of the things he referred to are actually rooted in regulation when it comes to the packaging.

We were in control of distribution. We made sure that we would control that distribution in a safe manner. It was about protecting our kids. That's why the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board and the Minister Responsible for the Liquor Control Act has reached out to the national government - the health organization - to find out what they are doing around the distribution of that product, what products are going to come online. That does not mean we'll sell them all.

We want to make sure that what we put in our stores is done so in an environment that is protecting the youth of this province, as we all begin to experience what it is like to have this product become legal within inside of Canada. We're going to continue to make

sure that we work with our regulator. If there any changes associated with that, we'd be more than happy to tell Nova Scotians and this House.

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

EECD: SCHOOL SITE SELECTION PROCESS - TABLE

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. In response to a Freedom of Information request, we have learned that as recently as last year the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal was using a manual for school site selection that was last updated in 1999.

The correspondence in the FOI reveals a general state of confusion about how to proceed with new school builds. A February 2019 email from the Director of Education Facilities Project Services says: TIR will assist in any way we can, but need to have direction on the general area within which we are to search for an appropriate site.

Will the minister commit to tabling a new school site selection process before the end of this sitting?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Of course, I am happy to do that. As I mentioned before, the new site selection process is going to help us streamline this so we don't have schools built late and can mitigate risks of having extensions to the construction season. We want to make sure that we focus on the technical evaluation first, before we go to the community for feedback, because we don't believe it's fair, and it has also created some delays when the community is discussing sites that are potentially viable.

That's why we're doing the technical engineering evaluation first. We do believe this will help us improve that process to get our schools built on time for our communities.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I look forward to seeing the new process. In the same FOI package, Mr. Speaker, there is an email about a meeting of staff from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and TIR with the member for Bedford, about the siting of a P-9 school. The email states: At the end of the conversation, the agreement was that we have two basic potential approaches.

Can the member confirm if the new school site selection process includes consultation with all MLAs or only members of the government caucus?

ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, the new process will ensure public consultation at large. I can table a document that highlights the differences between the old process and the new, and why we believe we can save some time. It's very practical.

Before we go to the community with potential sites, we want to make sure those sites are viable, safe, and that we can service them with power, water and busing routes before we engage the community in conversation. That's the responsible, appropriate thing to do, and we believe that it can enhance this process and improve it and that there are schools built more quickly and on time.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

URB ACT - SUPPORTIVE HOUSING: BARRIER REMOVALS - ENSURE

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister Responsible for the Utility and Review Board Act. We all know access to housing is a major issue impacting metro and all of Nova Scotia. It's critical that steps are taken to ensure regulations do not restrict non-profit supportive housing from expanding. Government and the regulated utilities have a responsibility to consider their policies and eliminate all barriers and red tape for the development of non-profit supportive housing.

In March 2019, HRM voted to waive all municipal permit fees for non-profit supportive housing. My question for the minister is: Has the Utility and Review Board Act been examined and thoroughly analysed to ensure it does not create barriers for the development of supportive housing?

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for the question. What I can say is that in the department, we have taken a number of steps to encourage community housing to support the current stock that we have with our housing across the province. We're investing millions now in home efficiency to support them. We're supporting and looking at initiatives around community solar not only to drive those prices down to give these community housing cooperatives the opportunity to benefit from energy efficiency, but also to ensure that the residents can live more comfortably in their homes.

TIM HALMAN: While I appreciate the minister's response, I'd like to point out to the minister that when the award-winning Affirmative House - located in Dartmouth East - was developed in 2007, it was designed to help provide affordable supportive housing for those battling mental health issues. It is located in Dartmouth's Main Street district.

Since 2007, development permit fees in HRM have increased by 1,000 per cent and 70 per cent of these development charges are being levied by Halifax Water. Mr. Speaker, these costs are a huge obstacle for affirmative ventures in their plans to expand more supportive housing.

My question is this: Will the minister commit to examining the Public Utilities Act and consider making changes to regulations in order to allow discretion in waiving fees for non-profit supportive housing, just like HRM has?

DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, again I thank the honourable member for the question. I can assure the member and all members of this House that on any initiatives that happen within this province, we are more than happy to sit down. You talked specifically about some projects in Dartmouth; I am more than happy to have a conversation with the member.

Again, with our department in looking at the utility and the rates and how they impact our communities, we're going to continue to expand programs, we're going to continue to look at ways we can be more innovative to support these important community organizations that provide homes for our families.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

TIR - KINGS COUNTY: INADEQUATE CULVERTS - REPLACE

JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

At the end of August parts of Kings County experienced six, possibly seven, inches of rain in a 24-hour period. The extreme rainfall event caused a lot of damage - basements flooded, roadsides washed out, many culverts washed out. Route 358 from Scots Bay was the hardest hit, where numerous culverts were washed out - and one culvert actually completely disappeared.

The extreme rainfall exposed many weaknesses in our drainage system and it's clear that many culverts need to be improved. My question, Mr. Speaker, for the minister: Will the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal commit to replacing the inadequate and undersized culverts in Kings County?

HON. LLOYD HINES: I thank the honourable member for the question. Rain events tend to be very significant in terms of our infrastructure and, of course, we're very well aware of the extreme rain event that we experienced very recently.

I again want to thank our people in the field who are working diligently to address these matters across the province. In review of these kinds of activities we're constantly looking at ways to improve the drainage system. I'd be happy to speak with the member about any specific instances he would like to bring to my attention.

JOHN LOHR: I'd like to thank the minister for that answer. I would echo his comments on the local DTIR staff who worked very hard post this rainfall event. I am very appreciative of how hard they worked.

I have many homeowners in my constituency who are deeply concerned about basement flooding, and in many cases these undersized culverts are a direct factor. Some

basement flooding in one area happens several times each year. This is particularly true in North Kentville in the Governor Court extension area and also in Centreville.

Will the minister commit to reviewing the culvert policy in helping these homeowners who are affected by these undersized culverts?

LLOYD HINES: I'd be very happy to work with the member on specific areas where homeowners feel they might be affected by the infrastructure from the department. I'd be happy to do that.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

COM. SERV. - IA RECIPIENTS: SPECIAL-DIET FUNDING - INADEQUATE

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Community Services.

Anyone going to shop for groceries these days knows the cost of a healthy diet. The importance of such a healthy, well-rounded diet is even more critical to those among us who suffer from health issues. We hear from constituents in our area who are among those who require specific dietary special needs. For those who are recipients of income assistance, the issue becomes almost impossible with the funding they are eligible for under our present policy.

My question to the minister: Does the minister recognize how inadequate the present policy is with respect to special-food allowances for our Nova Scotians on income assistance?

HON. KELLY REGAN: We want all Nova Scotians to be able to grow and thrive here in this province and that's why we do make provision for a special diet for people who do require it.

Folks will have to have some documentation, but it does not have to be from a doctor. It can be from a nurse practitioner, a dietitian or someone like that. There is provision made for that. In January 2020, we are bringing in our standard household rate which will be, when annualized, three times the largest increase to income assistance ever provided in this province.

PAT DUNN: I thank the minister for that answer. Our hope and expectation is that even when someone finds themselves depending on income assistance, that there should be consideration for medically ordered dietary needs.

Sixty-five dollars extra a month just does not fill that need for fresh, healthy food at today's prices, and this leaves assistance recipients with tough choices. Do they take the

risk of moving off their prescribed diets? Do they have to forego heat or prescriptions or other necessities?

My question to the minister is: Does the minister think that the announcement that she just made with regard to January 2020 will be a reasonable allowance to enable people on income assistance to eat healthy?

KELLY REGAN: I'd like to thank the honourable member for the question. To be clear, it isn't an announcement I've just made. We've previously indicated that this would be the start date for the standard household rates so that our recipients will see those changes on their cheque that comes out in late December.

We've also made a number of other changes to income assistance, including but not limited to, the doubling of allowable assets, the doubling of the poverty reduction credit, as well as allowing those income assistance recipients who are able to work to keep more of the money that they earn. We do believe that this is helping to build income security for the people who do rely on income assistance.

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

EECD - COLE HBR.-E. PASSAGE: CANCELLED BUS ROUTE - ADDRESS

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is responsible for ensuring fair and equitable access to courses and opportunities for all students in Nova Scotia.

For more than two years since we've been here, this government has refused to accept the fact that students from Cow Bay and Eastern Passage were going to be disadvantaged because the government cancelled the school bus from our community to Cole Harbour High School to get those students who have to travel out of area to get the courses that they need. To my knowledge, no buses were cancelled in the Liberal HRM constituencies and the bus count of around 303 buses in HRM has remained the same.

My question to the minister is: Can the minister tell the students and parents from my constituency why their bus from Cow Bay to Eastern Passage is the one route that I'm aware of that was cancelled, and when he will see correcting this inequality?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Neither the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development nor the government decides bus routes. Right now, we've brought that back in-house in the Regional Centre of Education; those are operational decisions that are made every single year. It did used to be the purview of Stock Transportation, so I know that there have been some routing changes this year.

In this particular case, I can get the details from the region for the member and make sure that she and her community receive them, but I'm sure the region has been proactive in communicating any changes to the community.

BARBARA ADAMS: This goes back to who's responsible. According to Stock Transportation and Elwin LeRoux, it's you who's responsible, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Order please. I'd like to remind the honourable member not to refer to members directly.

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker I would like to remind the members of this House that it's the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development who's ultimately responsible for where the buses run.

There are no skills trades classes or the International Baccalaureate Program offered at Island View High School, so the students who want these courses must travel out of area. There is no public transportation for students living in Cow Bay, and the students living in Eastern Passage have to take a 75-minute bus ride to get to Cole Harbour High School, with three bus transfers. The result is that the minister has left over 20 hardworking students in my constituency stranded.

My question to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is: Will he commit to coming out with me next week to take a drive on those buses - which may be an inconvenience because of the protest going on down by the bridge, which will impact the busing - and will he agree to meet with me next week to talk about a transit solution for the students from my constituency who've been stranded by this minister?

[10:30 a.m.]

ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'll remind the member that this government built a new school for her community and perhaps that has impacted on some busing routes.

Now part of building a new school and part of the delivering of courses is contingent on student enrolment, so of course when (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development has the floor.

ZACH CHURCHILL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member has misrepresented the facts and the process for course delivery and for transportation, so I do want to clarify that for the House and for her community, if they are listening.

The Regional Centre for Education makes those decisions, the operational folks. It was never in the purview of the school boards either; the operational folks make those decisions.

In terms of course availability, that is contingent on student population. The same with transportation. When you build a new school for a community, like this government has done for the member - I wonder if she supports that decision or not, perhaps she can get on the record for it because she has given me very different opinions when she speaks to me privately, but perhaps we can get her on the record - that impacts the student population and that impacts the delivery of courses.

We will accommodate any students who do want to ensure that they can access courses, if they want to transfer.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

L&F: WILDERNESS AREAS - PROTECT

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Lands and Forestry. According to a recent UN report, more than a million species are at risk of extinction in our lifetime.

While I was glad to hear about the new protected areas announced on Monday, it is clear there is still much to do. Nearly all the areas announced came from a list of almost a hundred wilderness areas that were mapped, studied and identified under the NDP government more than five years ago. The remaining areas are also deeply important to Nova Scotians and, if protected, would help us meet and exceed the government's target of protecting 13 per cent of our land mass, which is a target I would suggest needs to move.

Mr. Speaker, when will the government protect those remaining wilderness areas?

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Thank you for the question. We share the concern that Nova Scotians have, and the member has, for the decline of species at risk in the province and across the globe. It is threatening numbers when you see 60 per cent of the wildlife being reduced over the last 40 years on the globe; that's why we're taking action. The department actually hired an extra two biologists within the last year to focus on this very topic, as it is of concern. We are updating our recovery teams, we continue to protect more land, as the member referenced.

So, the Minister of Environment and I got together and put together a list that had the highest biodiversity values; 7,400 hectares of land was just protected - 17 sites - with another 7,000 hectares on the way. We continue to work hard on those sites. It is important to our government. We are going to continue along the list and make sure that we're

looking at the areas that have those species at risk and the important habitat that needs to be protected.

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, one of the areas the minister announced will be protected, pending further consultation and survey work, is the St. Mary's River. The Atlantic Salmon Federation, salmon biologists, and the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans have all said that protecting the St. Mary's River is key to recovery of the salmon population.

Yet, the gold company, St. Barbara Ltd., is proposing to build an open-pit gold mine in the area that would process ore, store toxic tailings, and draw thousands of litres a day from the St. Mary's River watershed.

Mr. Speaker, if the government is concerned with protecting the important salmon habitat in the St. Mary's River, how can it, at the same time, entertain a proposal for an open-pit gold mine that would directly threaten it?

IAIN RANKIN: I'm glad that the member references the St. Mary's River. It's an important piece that is in the next batch that we have committed to protecting. It just needs some work around surveying and such, and that's one of the reasons why it does take time. Once the land is put into the pending category in the parks and protected areas plan - many of those sites were put in right before the election, the NDP put it in before all that due diligence work needed to be completed - the public consultation needed to be looked at.

We are committed to protecting St. Mary's River. It is one of the largest corridors, over 30 kilometres of wildlife corridor within that space so we're committed to that. We'll have more news in the coming months.

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

H&W - NURSING HOMES: BLISTER PACKS - PHARMACY AGREEMENTS

KEITH BAIN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Many nursing home residents are on medications provided by the pharmacy in blister packs, which are a safe way for residents in the home to get their medications.

Many Nova Scotians have long-standing relationships with certain pharmacies to provide these blister packs. The same is true of nursing homes, they have relationships, often exclusive relationships, with a particular distributor.

My question to the minister is: Does the department have a policy or agreement with the nursing homes as to where these prescriptions should come from?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the important question, especially noting that this month is Caregiver Awareness Month. The care and safe support of our aging residents of Nova Scotia in facilities like this is of the utmost importance.

With respect to policies for prescriptions, the rules around nursing homes are about the safety of the supplies and securing them and making sure the right people have the medications that are prescribed to them and that they're not accessible to other people, keeping them secure. Where they're actually procured is not one of the requirements we govern.

KEITH BAIN: On July 29th, a lady from Whycocomagh in a nursing home in Chéticamp was transferred to Alderwood Rest Home in Baddeck, which was her home of choice. A week prior, she paid \$188.58 for a 30-day refill of her medication in a blister pack. When she moved to Alderwood, she was told the home only accepted blister pack medications from a particular local pharmacy. As a result, this medication had to be destroyed and a new prescription obtained, as had been directed.

I recognize that this is a safety measure, and that's good, but it contributed to extra costs and waste to the province and to the individual.

My question to the minister is: Can the policy be changed so that any unused medication an individual might have upon transfer can be used with the proviso that remaining prescriptions be filled at the home's pharmacy of choice?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I believe I was aware of the circumstances that he referenced when that occurred. I did ask staff to take a look at that and have some conversations within the sector to appreciate and understand. I believe that particular practice is not at all facilities. They've been having some discussions as to whether we can improve that process - again, first and foremost, safety being front and centre and the top priority. That work and those discussions are ongoing.

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

H&W: MENTAL HEALTH SERV. - REFERRALS

LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. A constituent of mine has been diagnosed with borderline personality disorder. Since the diagnosis, he has been desperately trying to manage his disorder for his health, wellness, and family.

He has attempted to take his life twice now. A few weeks ago, I conducted a memorial service for a 37-year-old woman with the same disorder who succeeded in taking

her life. For this gentleman, the ability to access appropriate treatments and services seems to be in a state of limbo.

My question for the minister is: Without a family doctor, how can my constituent acquire referrals to the mental health programs and services that he desperately needs?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, we often have discussions on this floor about mental illness and the importance of mental health. Every member here, I'm sure, has been touched one way or another with loved ones, or even perhaps directly, with mental illnesses - the specific example of very acute mental illnesses.

People do deserve access to care. That's why we continue to invest in and work to improve the delivery of care in our mental health services.

I assure the member that for referral to services, there's a crisis line that can be contacted. It doesn't need a physician referral. If someone is in need, they can call and appropriate resources will be dispatched.

LARRY HARRISON: I thank the minister for that answer. I know the minister is very concerned about this.

Ideally, my constituent would need dialectical behaviour therapy. The constituent has, on his own initiative, already conducted his own inquiries into the treatment and available programs, however, it had been found that there would be a minimum six-month waiting period to access this basic group therapy session.

My question to the minister is: Should he have to cope and manage his disorder for six months or more without mental health professional assistance?

RANDY DELOREY: As the member has a very specific constituent and circumstances in front of him, perhaps that is something I'd encourage the member - maybe if we can touch base offline, we will look into the specifics and endeavour to work to ensure that this individual gets the care that he needs. We will take a look at that and work with the Health Authority and our health professionals in the mental health and addictions space.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

H&W - RES. CARE/LONG-TERM CARE: EMPTY BEDS - COST

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to ask a question of the Minister of Health and Wellness around the fact that taxpayers in this province are paying for empty, long-term beds and empty residential care facility beds.

Our continuing care organization takes an average of 10 to 12 days to get a patient moved from an acute care hospital bed to a long-term care bed - 10 to 12 days, and meanwhile, residential care facility beds remain chronically empty.

In New Brunswick there is a vacant bed recovery policy that prevents government and taxpayers from paying for a bed that has been vacant more than two days, and I'd like to table that policy from New Brunswick.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: Is his department able to calculate the cost to taxpayers of empty residential care facility beds and long-term care beds in the province, and in Cumberland County in particular; and has the department looked at ways to create efficiencies to reduce the number of empty beds in the province?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, ensuring that residents of Nova Scotia require long-term care supports and services is important for this government and, indeed, for all Nova Scotians. That's why I'm pleased that my predecessor, the current Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage, during his tenure as Health Minister took steps that have resulted in a reduction in our wait-list for residents waiting to get access to long-term care facilities, whether they are waiting in community at home or in hospitals, reduced the wait-list by about half. The amount of time that they're waiting has also been reduced, and work continues to improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of our operations within that space.

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: I think it is very frustrating for health care professionals when there are empty beds and they know there are people who need those beds.

For example, right now in Cumberland North I have an 85-year-old constituent who is starting to have falls over the last six months. Recently, she has asked for help and so she and her physician have both agreed it is time for her to get some help. She wants to be independent, so they decided upon a residential care facility bed.

Continuing care has denied this senior - this 85-year-old woman - a bed, even though there are numerous empty residential care facility beds in Cumberland North. So, I just want to clarify that there are empty beds; I have an 85-year-old senior who wants one of those beds, who has been having falls for the last six months, but yet she is being denied.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: Will he commit into looking and investigating continuing care, how they are making their decisions, and why are they leaving empty beds while our seniors are looking for help?

RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the question. Indeed, I think it is important for members to recognize that there are a number of reasons why a bed may be, at a particular point in time, vacant.

Sometimes in our facilities a bed may be vacant because the resident is actually in an acute care hospital setting where they may have had to have been transferred out, but that bed remains for the resident to go in.

As far as the specific circumstances that the member referred to, when individuals are assessed - and I think the language the member used was an individual wanting access to a facility - to ensure that beds are available for those who need them is what we look at first and foremost as an assessment. I can't speak to the specifics of the case that she brought forward, though.

[10:45 a.m.]

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

H&W: DENTAL SERV. - ACCESS

BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, it's widely known that poor dental care can affect one's health, the ability to eat and maintain proper nutrition. Studies have shown connections between oral health and overall health, including heart problems, fever, diabetes, and pneumonia. Nova Dental in Sackville recently held their second annual Free Dental Day where residents of Sackville-Beaver Bank and the surrounding areas could go and receive free dental services on the day. Due to the regular high costs associated with dental care, over a hundred residents showed up to receive services at no cost.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness: For those Nova Scotians who are either youth or senior-age or simply not in a financial position to pay for such services, what can the minister advise them on doing to be able to obtain basic dental care services?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the question. I am pleased to note that in January of this year we expanded the dental services that the province provides, targeted towards our youth, Mr. Speaker. The advice and research clearly show that the types of services provided, particularly in the youth, is preventive in nature. Those were the services that we expanded, based upon advice and feedback that we received from the dentistry association.

BRAD JOHNS: I certainly acknowledge that in January the Nova Scotia government did expand dental coverage for children 14 and younger, and it's a decision that I certainly applaud. But based upon the fact that Nova Dental saw over a hundred people for free dental services, we can see there is still a serious need for dental care in our area, as well as across this province.

Creating a position of chief dental officer would certainly be a step in the right direction. Mr. Speaker, somebody who would be able to expose the needs and the issues related to dental care in Nova Scotia.

My next question to the minister is: In the absence of a chief dental officer in this province, who acts as an advocate for dental matters in Nova Scotia?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, as part of the work that we've been doing to improve our attention in the health space towards dental care and services, in addition to the expansion of programs and the dental health program in the province, we've also brought on staff a dental health consultant who works with us in a similar capacity as what I believe the member would refer to as chief dental officer.

Indeed, this is an individual who has clinical expertise, experience, and is working for the department on a part-time basis to provide that advice and recommendations to us.

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

MUN. AFFS. & HOUSING: PRIVATE PARTNERS - DETAILS

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, the province of Nova Scotia offers seniors' programs and grants to assist them to stay in their homes for as long as they can manage to do so. Assistance with household repairs and adaptations can improve the security and independent lives of our seniors; however, at some point, many seniors weigh the costs associated with staying their own home versus looking at affordable housing, with middle-class seniors finding their pensions insufficient to keep up with the costs of remaining in their own home.

Right now, Mr. Speaker, there is a shortage of affordable housing in Nova Scotia. In 2018 seniors made up 64 per cent of those on the waiting list. The Housing Nova Scotia business plan for 2018-19 outlines four priority areas for action. The number one priority is increased access to affordable housing by partnering with the private sector to build new affordable homes.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to please explain how many private partnerships have been created in Cape Breton-Richmond in 2018 and 2019 and are forecasted for 2019-20.

HON. CHUCK PORTER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable member for the question. She has referenced a very important issue that we are aware of. We are very happy to have signed the National Housing Strategy of course, which will allow us to implement things along the way.

Part of that first three-year action plan will be engaging the private sector, as well as not-for-profits, to help grow that affordable housing sector, Mr. Speaker.

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, access to affordable housing for seniors becomes an issue when they are forced to decide on a placement, and it's even worse when they have to make a decision not to be able to take with them a cherished member of their family, their pet.

Our nursing homes have acknowledged the importance of allowing pets in some facilities. ElderDog Canada Inc. is working with our senior population to help reduce issues with social isolation by offering support to seniors through programs such as Dog Care Support for Seniors.

My question to the minister is: Why is there only a handful of affordable housing available to seniors who wish to bring their pets along with them in the move?

CHUCK PORTER: I appreciate the question. We realize we will always have challenges with housing. We are doing what we believe is a good job working through the rent supplement program. We will work with all ages, it doesn't matter if they're seniors or others, but seniors have certainly been a focus over the years.

We'll continue to work with them through each of our municipalities right across this province. We'll continue to look at the programming.

There are a number of things coming forward in the action plan that we're very excited about. We'll soon be under way. We're actually already doing a number of things. We were able to continue programs and services that were in place previously and we'll continue to build new ones as we go along. We're already in the middle of that now; we're in fiscal year one and money is going out the door. We're doing our very best. We'll always have room to improve. We're doing our very best to help look after all Nova Scotians.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

H&W - CAREGIVER BENEFIT

TIM HALMAN: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. My constituent, David Austin, cares for his wife Judith who suffers from an advanced form of Alzheimer's. I have a consent form signed by my constituent. He cares for her roughly 140 hours each week. To better break that down, that's seven times the departmental minimum to qualify for the Caregiver Benefit.

Though initially receiving the Caregiver Benefit, the expenses associated with this illness have piled up to the point that David made the decision to sell their family cottage

to make ends meet. Based on this one-time sale, the Department of Health and Wellness revoked their \$400 a month Caregiver Benefit.

My question is: Can the minister please clarify, why are we penalizing Nova Scotians who are forced to sell their family property, just to make ends meet, in order to pay for home care expenses?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, again as noted, the care and support - the opportunity and the valuable support - that caregivers provide is noted by us as government. That's why we've expanded that Caregiver Benefit program - to ensure that more Nova Scotians are able to take advantage of it. These programs, like many government programs, are income-tested to ensure that those who do need it the most receive those supports. That's the process we have in place.

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

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, during Question Period, stated that I made a different statement here in the Legislature than what I say privately . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. That's a disagreement of facts. It's not a point of order. (Interruption) Continue.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage.

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development has no basis to make that assertion; his assertion calls my character into question. I ask that he be directed to retract his statement and to apologize.

THE SPEAKER: It sounds like a disagreement of facts, to me. It's not a point of order.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, before moving to Government Business, I rise to ask for the unanimous consent of the House to allow the Premier and the Leaders of the Opposition Parties to speak to a matter of importance, and quite frankly, sadness for Nova Scotians. With that consent, we'll move to hear from the Premier and the Leaders.

THE SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Premier.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all members of the House. As the House Leader said, following my remarks, the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party and the New Democratic Party will speak. Then I will ask for a moment of silence.

As we were in this House, word came that Nova Scotia lost one of its true champions in the 20th Premier of our province, Senator John Buchanan. Senator Buchanan began his elected life in 1967, began leading the Progressive Conservative Party in 1971, and served this province as the longest serving Progressive Conservative Premier. He then went on to serve this province in the Canadian Senate for 16 years.

He has often been referred to as probably the best grassroots politician that this province has ever seen. The irony about Senator Buchanan was when you first met him, the way he responded to you and to your family and to the people around you, it sometimes caught you off guard because he was just in such a spirit of life. But it wasn't because he was in elected office, Mr. Speaker. The last time I saw the senator, he still had that same energy and enthusiasm for life.

I don't think anyone who sat in this House has been a truer champion of the values of this province and believing in this province. You weren't even sure where he was from because if you were in Sydney with him, he would remind you he was born in Sydney. But if you were in Bear River or my constituency - mind you, Mavis was from Bear River. He had connections all over the place and he served the people of the new riding of Halifax Atlantic in seven elections. That's an extraordinary record for anyone.

Whether you agreed with Mr. Buchanan's politics or not, no one can deny his belief in the best for this province and the people in this province.

My grandfather is from the Spryfield area and Senator Buchanan would often tell me that my grandfather voted for him in 1970. He would say to Mavis, "You know, Stephen's grandfather was a big Liberal" and Mavis would look at me - so is Stephen - and then I would say to the Senator, "I'm not arguing, I'm not disputing the fact that my grandfather might have voted for you, but I can guarantee that he didn't tell my grandmother." We would tell that story over and over again, every chance I got to see him.

I want to say to Mavis and to their five children, thank you for sharing John with this province, giving him an opportunity to spend a lifetime of public service. Whether it was in this Chamber or whether it was in the Senate, John Buchanan always made sure that people knew he was from Nova Scotia and that Nova Scotia was his priority.

Mavis, to you and your family I want to send you my love, the love of this caucus, and the members of this House and our deepest condolences to you on the loss that I am sure is unmeasurable for all of you.

I do want to read just one comment - and I think this sums up Senator Buchanan - in a speech in 2010 he urged Nova Scotians to have more pride in their province. "We don't do enough bragging about Nova Scotia. Many criticize it," he said. "There can be too much pessimism in the media and elsewhere. Brag about the people, the resources, the entrepreneurs - like the people here tonight - and our heritage as the birthplace of New Scotland."

Senator Buchanan was proud of this province, not just because he served in here or because he was the 20th Premier of this province but because he believed in it. Mr. Speaker, heaven now has a new storyteller and it'll be alive tonight. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

TIM HOUSTON: Thank you, Premier, for those incredible words. We have certainly lost a great Nova Scotian, for sure. I know Premier Buchanan will be remembered by many as a very skilled politician and a masterful campaigner, but it really was his ability to connect with Nova Scotians that is his true legacy. He was often late for events and you know the reason; it was because he had stopped to talk to people along the way.

Premier Buchanan led the Progressive Conservative Party to four consecutive majority governments - in 1978, 1981, 1984 and 1988. He often used to say to me when I saw him since I was Leader, "Tim, I hope you win three majorities." He was very proud of his four majorities and he was Nova Scotia's fourth-longest-serving Premier. I believe he actually believed he was the third. He had a technicality, there was a reason he said he was the third-longest.

I will certainly remember John as a wonderful person and a masterful storyteller. His genuine interest in people meant he never forgot a face and he never forgot a name. He will be missed by many because his warmth truly was a magnet to people.

I know that quote the Premier refers to - John was immensely proud of Nova Scotia. He did urge every single one of us to brag about Nova Scotia at every opportunity and he certainly did brag about it to people - its entrepreneurs, its resources.

My thoughts are certainly with Mavis and their five children. We also send, as a caucus and as elected people, as Nova Scotians, our love to their family and we do appreciate John's service and the fact that they shared him with so many people for so long.

I know he is telling a story somewhere. He is probably singing about a place that he couldn't imagine - he couldn't imagine a place, any place any more beautiful, more fit for princes and kings, and he would trade ten cities for his Marion Bridge and the pleasure it brings. So, John, rest in peace, my good friend. (Applause)

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

[11:00 a.m.]

GARY BURILL: We in the New Democratic Party share the sorrow of the people of Nova Scotia to hear this morning of John Buchanan's passing. Mr. Buchanan's life touched so many different parts of the province but none more than the community of Spryfield where, after he had grown up in Sydney, he made his dug-in, permanent, lifetime home.

Mr. Buchanan was an indefatigable advocate for Spryfield, and this included not just his many years as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for the area but also his long-time service in the community's institutions - including, I should certainly say, St. Paul's United Church - and also his service to the community, on the hockey teams on which I and many others were privileged to play as a boy. No one in Nova Scotia, as has been said, could rival John Buchanan in social skill or in interactional, conversational skill. His exceptional recall for the genealogical details about the life of the person with whom he was conversing is one I have never seen paralleled, and this did not leave him in his later age.

We in our Party join all members of the House in extending our sympathy to Mavis and to John and Mavis's children: Murdoch, Travis, Nichola, Natasha and Natalie. So let us all stand together and honour Senator John Buchanan's memory.

THE SPEAKER: I'd like to ask that all members please rise as we observe a moment of silence in remembrance of former Premier and Senator John Buchanan.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 169.

Bill No. 169 - Expropriation Act.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 169, an Act to Amend Chapter 156 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Expropriation Act, be now read a second time.

It is my pleasure to speak to this bill today. These changes provide clarity to the legislation while also supporting investments in the major infrastructure projects that Nova Scotians have told us are a priority, infrastructure investments for the public good, such as highways and health care facilities.

While expropriation is always a measure of last resort, there are times when private land is impacted by infrastructure projects, projects needed for the public good, such as highways, and claims for compensation come forward even when land is not expropriated.

I know that expropriation can be a difficult process, and Nova Scotians experiencing it want clear and fair rules. The current legislation is ambiguous. We have an obligation to ensure that landowners who are impacted by expropriation are reasonably compensated through clear and fair rules. They have a legal right to such compensation. Our goal is to ensure that anyone impacted by expropriation does not suffer a financial loss. We also have an obligation to protect the interests of taxpayers and provide responsible fiscal management.

To this end, it is just as important that a landowner impacted by expropriation does not profit from expropriation at the expense of taxpayers. Fair and reasonable compensation means that an impacted landowner will be compensated for what they are entitled to in terms of their actual financial loss - no more, no less.

The changes we are recommending will clarify what can be claimed through legal processes under the Act. We are also adding definitions which were not previously defined in the legislation.

The changes will set clear parameters for eligible claims for compensation in certain situations. With this increased clarity, our hope is that these changes will reduce the need for litigation by landowners.

Finally, these changes will bring us in line with jurisdictions across the country. Most provinces have been reviewing their expropriation legislation and are making or have made similar changes. The trend across the country is to make expropriation clearer and easier to understand.

We are recommending several changes to the Act. First, we are clarifying that one of the purposes of the Act is for people impacted by expropriation to be reasonably compensated.

The second change relates to disturbance losses, which are all reasonable costs, expenses, and financial losses a landowner incurs when their land is expropriated. With these changes, losses for disturbance damages must be quantified in financial terms and must be actually incurred by the landowner. Claims based on hypothetical scenarios of potential disturbances or damages that may be experienced will no longer be permitted.

The third change will require that claims must be directly linked to activity on the expropriated land. For example, a claimant cannot seek compensation for a possible personal or business activity which may have been considered into the future. This change aligns with other sections of the Act that provide losses to business for having to relocate as a result of an expropriation.

The fourth change relates to interest. We will clarify that interest may not be paid on claims for the period prior to the actual expropriation, which is the date that expropriation documents are filed with the Land Registry or the Registry of Deeds. Going forward, interest will only accrue from the filing date. Currently, some claimants have asked for and received interest for the period before the actual expropriation date.

The final change relates to injurious affection claims where no land is taken. Going forward, these claims will be heard by the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia instead of the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board, who currently hears these claims.

We feel that disputes where a landowner is impacted but does not actually have their land expropriated are best heard by the courts. These disputes are like other types of cases that the Supreme Court hears regularly, and they are best positioned to hear these cases.

The courts are used to assessing evidence in these types of cases, and the process in the court offers opportunity for settlement conferences, as well as the ability for parties to get decisions on questions of law where there is a disagreement. Claims for injurious affection where land is actually expropriated will remain with the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

“Injurious affection” refers to a decrease in the property’s market value caused by expropriation or to other losses that a property owner incurs because of expropriation.

Nova Scotians have told us that infrastructure investments such as highways and health care facilities and services are a priority. To help advance these priorities, we need to ensure that the expropriation process provides landowners with fair and reasonable compensation while balancing the interests of taxpayers, ensuring responsible fiscal

management and more clarity to all concerned. It is important to recognize that expropriation is, in fact, a course of last resort.

These changes complement the ones made earlier this year to regulations. Through those regulations we developed a schedule of fees for legal, land appraisal, surveyor, and other expert fees which are incurred by landowners experiencing expropriation.

These amendments to the Expropriation Act will help ensure we have clear parameters in place to guarantee that landowners impacted by expropriation receive the fair and reasonable compensation they are entitled to, while also balancing the interests of taxpayers and ensuring prudent fiscal management.

With those comments, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the comments of my colleagues.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

KIM MASLAND: I am happy to rise and speak briefly to Bill No. 169, the Expropriation Act.

Let's remind ourselves what is at the heart of this Act. This is about the government coming to take the land and property of private citizens and, as private citizens, we cannot stop them. All we can do is hope that we are fairly compensated.

This is why I have concern about the amendments that the government is bringing forward because it is the government getting to decide the standards of fairness and a process that they are party to. These amendments, I believe, will actually make it harder for private citizens to be treated fairly.

The purpose of an administrative tribunal, like the URB, is to provide an affordable and efficient mechanism to mediate disputes. Individuals are able to advance and attend these informal proceedings in an effort to find a reasonable solution. It is simple access to justice, something I believe that we all want to strive to achieve.

At present, the first place to turn if you're unhappy with dealing with a transaction under the Expropriation Act is the URB, where you file pretty straightforward paperwork and explain your position to the tribunal.

The revisions of Clauses 5 and 6 of the Expropriation Act remove the involvement of the Utility and Review Board from certain disputes related to compensation. It makes it so that the first place to go, in some situations, is the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia. The court system is an intimidating place for most people and the process is very formal. The rules of Civil Procedure are complicated and generally require the expertise of a lawyer to interpret, to figure out the simplest of details, like what to file and when.

While hiring a lawyer is not required, it is generally advisable, especially given that you will have the government on the other side, who comes with no shortage of lawyers.

This amendment makes questioning or challenging compensation much more expensive. It will take longer to resolve - potentially years, in some cases - and it will clog up our already congested court system. At the end of the day, it is about access to justice.

I'd like to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak briefly to this bill, and I look forward to seeing what the good people of Nova Scotia will have to say at the Law Amendments Committee.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and say a few short words about the amendments to the Expropriation Act brought in today.

We appreciate that the amendments were brought in with the intention of creating clarity, and I think we in the NDP caucus recognize that it's the government's job to create that clarity insofar as legislation goes. I think in general my colleague's points are well taken. This does impact private landowners, and I think that we need to be cautious about how we go forward.

In general, I would say whenever we move the hearing of a matter from a tribunal to a higher court, there are access-to-justice issues that can immediately be engaged. It is harder to access those courts as those courts are busier, but I won't opine on whether that's the right decision or not. I think our caucus is of the view that we really look forward to hearing from landowners and, hopefully, from some legal experts at Law Amendments, and I look forward to that process going forward.

[11:15 a.m.]

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: I appreciate the comments of my colleagues. I do want to emphasize that the Expropriation Act is not new; this process has existed for many years. It has been a process that has had a lack of clarity for some time, and we know that both the courts and the URB have sought clarity around the legislation.

I'll refer specifically to the comments of my colleague from Queens-Shelburne. I remember coming into government in 2013 and the then-federal Member of Parliament for South Shore-St. Margarets, Mr. Gerald Keddy - whom my colleague was employed with at that time - and I had a number of discussions around the bypasses through Queens

County that were critical to that community. That expropriation took place at that time to facilitate the development of that highway through those communities.

It really is about extending that same opportunity to every other area of the province where we see a need for public safety to expand and create and develop four-lane highways, but also to find efficiencies, Mr. Speaker, for those communities that are involved. So it is a point where expropriation is a necessary process that has existed and it is our intention, as my colleague from the NDP has stated, to provide clarity.

The one comment I will conclude on, because we have given this very close analysis and because of the complexity of expropriation and land title, in most cases these matters require legal representation. For the most part, legal representation is present at the URB hearings as well. Although both of my colleagues have expressed a concern around access to justice and the need to secure legal advice should matters proceed to the Supreme Court, I would suggest to this House, and to Nova Scotians, that those circumstances presently exist.

With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, I move to close second reading on Bill No. 169.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 169. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 170.

Bill No. 170 - Public Highways Act.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 170 be read a second time.

It is a pleasure to speak to this legislation today. These amendments will improve the efficient administration of our highway system and help our province better manage the public expenditure on our highways. As we can all appreciate, Nova Scotia's road and highway network is the backbone of our economy; it is integral to how the public and

businesses move people, goods and services across the province. So just as our highway network is important, so too is the legislation that supports it, Mr. Speaker.

The amendments we are proposing in this bill will provide important updates and administrative improvements so we can plan and manage our highway network better. The changes we are bringing forward today will also help bring our legislation in line with other Atlantic provinces.

The two most substantive amendments I want to highlight involve simplifying the process for selling land that the province no longer needs and improving the process for reserving land for future road or highway expansion.

Currently, TIR can identify or reserve land for highways for up to five years. The changes we are proposing will make it clear that the province is not responsible for compensating for certain types of improvements made to the land that adds value while the land is reserved for highway use.

These changes will also make it clear to prospective landowners that formal notification has been given and that any development agreements, zoning changes, or other improvements done to the property to arbitrarily enhance the value after notice is given, will not be compensable by the province.

This amendment will provide transparency and clarity to landowners whose land the province needs for a new highway. It will also help us engage landowners earlier in the process.

I might just add that my department works very hard with landowners to achieve a positive outcome.

I think it is also important to note that the number of projects where landowners have been affected by this situation has been relatively quite small - just two instances in the last five years. However, with the number of major capital highway infrastructure projects anticipated across the province over the next number of years, it is prudent we improve the legislation so we can manage costs appropriately and engage property owners earlier in the process.

As I referenced earlier, the amendments will also make it easier for the province to dispose of unneeded land remnants abutting old roads. This is a very important change and one that frustrates the system because of the amount of red tape that that generates.

In Nova Scotia, we convey about 75 parcels of land per year to landowners who have property abutting old roads, or severed parcels that are surplus to the province. Understandably, those lands are of interest to neighbouring contiguous landowners. Right now, much of the cost of the conveyance - such as surveying and other fees - is the

responsibility of the buyer. That will change under this legislation. The authority to release the land will now be simplified to a certificate of release. This will ease the red tape and financial burden on the purchaser.

The remaining amendments we are proposing are essentially administrative changes that will update the terminology to include gender-neutral language, correct job titles, move fees to regulation, expand the way we notify the public about important information related to roads, and remove outdated provisions that are no longer practical.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing from my colleagues across the aisle.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take a few moments to make a few comments with this particular bill - An Act to Amend Chapter 371 of Revised Statutes, 1989, the Public Highways Act.

It is my understanding that this has been in place since 1953, I believe, so needless to say, it is time to scrutinize the bill and make some changes, in particular in the wording in the Act and updating the language and the legislation regarding job titles, et cetera.

The changes will allow the province to sell or dispose of all historical highways no longer in use, and I believe there is a word we use - ghost roads - for those types of historical roads that are not being used any longer; updating notifications for road closures and spring weight restrictions; and many amendments that were updated and changed to improve, as the minister had mentioned, highway expenditures.

However, I am sure we probably could have even gone a little bit further in scrutinizing this particular Act. If we are truly going to modernize the Highway Act, then perhaps let's modernize it and do even better with a more thorough examination and bring the entire Act up to date.

Mr. Speaker, we will support this particular piece of legislation, and I am looking forward to Law Amendments.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

TAMMY MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, we in the New Democratic Party are glad to see how the government is updating our ghost highways in Nova Scotia and we look forward to hearing from constituents at Law Amendments Committee.

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

The honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues across the hall for their comments. I rise to close debate on Bill No. 170.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 170. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, this concludes the government's business for today. The House will meet again Tuesday, October 8th, from the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Following the daily routine and Question Period, business will include second reading of Bill No. 175, the Marine Renewable-energy Act and Bill No. 177, the Public Utilities Act. With time permitting, we will also have Address in Reply.

I would also like to note for members of the House and the public that the Law Amendments Committee will be meeting Monday at 1:00 p.m. to deal with Bill Nos. 152, 160, 163, 166, 169, and 170.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to adjourn to rise again Tuesday, October 8th, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

The House now stands adjourned.

[The House rose at 11:27 a.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1259**

By: Colton LeBlanc (Argyle-Barrington)

À une date ultérieure je demanderai l'adoption de la résolution suivante:

Attendu qu'un groupe de citoyens dévoués de la communauté de Pubnico-Ouest se sont rencontrés en 1973 pour former une société historique qui porte aujourd'hui le nom la Société historique acadienne de Pubnico-Ouest qui avait pour but de préserver leur patrimoine;

Attendu qu'en 1977 la société a transformé une maison du village dans un musée, nommé le Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos et a ouvert les portes en 1979 pour partager une collection impressionnante d'artefacts qui promeut l'histoire de leurs ancêtres acadiens; et

Attendu que le Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos célèbre son 40^e anniversaire lors de célébrations du 4 au 6 octobre 2019 à Pubnico-Ouest, Nouvelle-Écosse;

Par conséquent, qu'il soit résolu que tous les membres de l'Assemblée législative félicitent la Société historique acadienne de Pubnico-Ouest et le Musée des Acadiens des Pubnicos lors de leur 40^e anniversaire pour tout leur travail et dévouement à la promotion et à la préservation de la culture acadienne.

RESOLUTION NO. 1260

By: Colton LeBlanc (Argyle-Barrington)

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

Whereas on the night of October 4, 1967, there was a report of a large, unknown object crashing into the waters off Shag Harbour, N.S., and that is now known as the Shag Harbour UFO Incident; and

Whereas this year marks 52 years since the Shag Harbour UFO Incident and an annual festival will be hosted from October 4 to 6, 2019; and

Whereas on October 1, 2019, the Royal Canadian Mint released 4,000 \$20 silver collectors' coins to depict and commemorate the widely witnessed event of October 1967.

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate the Shag Harbour Incident Society on their hard work and dedication to preserve the history of the UFO incident of 1967 and wish them the best in years to come.