



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Second Session

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION:	
Res. 1736, Cromwell, Elizabeth: Contribs. to N.S. Soc. - Recog., Hon. T. Ince	5684
Vote - Affirmative.....	5684
Res. 1737, Université Sainte-Anne: Centre de recherche sur la qualité du homard - Félicitations, Hon. L. Metlege Diab	5685
Vote - Affirmative.....	5686
Res. 1738, Dorrington, Francis: Order of Nova Scotia - Congrats., Hon. T. Ince	5686
Vote - Affirmative.....	5687
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS:	
No. 246, Opioid Damages and Health-care Costs Recovery Act, Hon. R. Delorey	5687

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS:

MacEachern, William: Death of - Tribute, A. MacMaster	5687
Stirling, Laird: Death of - Tribute, T. Halman	5688
<i>The Laker</i> Newspaper: No Longer in Publication - Recog., B. Horne	5688
PCRA: 13 th Ann. Ice Fishing Derby - Congrats., K. MacFarlane.....	5689
Duggan, Marlene & Barry: Purcells Cove Fisherfolk - Recog., B. Maguire	5689
Vince Ryan Hockey Tourn.: Enduring Enthusiasm - Best Wishes, M. Ryan.....	5690
Stewart, Shannon: Santas for S. Shore Seniors Program - Recog., S. Lohnes-Croft.....	5690
Myers, Michelle: Com. Serv. - Recog., B. Adams.....	5691
Ghada, Gabr: Com. Serv. - Recog., R. DiCostanzo	5691
Bicycle Specialist: 5 th Anniv. - Congrats., E. Smith-McCrossin.....	5692
Acadia Men's Swim Team: AUS Champs - Congrats., K. Irving.....	5692
Ugly Mug Café: 7 th Anniv. - Congrats., B. Comer	5693
Gift from the Heart Radiothon: 10 Yrs. of Success - Recog., Hon. M. Furey.....	5693
Fox Hollow Iron Man Golf Tourn.: Successful Fundraiser - Congrats., L. Harrison	5694
La Femme Fatale: Fun Plus-sized Fashion - Congrats., Hon. K. Regan.....	5694
N. Queens Sch.: Arts Showcase - Thanks, K. Masland.....	5695
Orton, Lynn: Holy Trinity Emman. Xmas Hampers - Thanks, Susan Leblanc	5695
Esau, Emily - Winner: Remem. Day Writing Contest - Congrats., Hon. K. Casey.....	5696
Gregory, Linda: Lyon's Brook Volun. of the Yr. - Congrats., K. MacFarlane.....	5696
A.F. Theriault Ltd.: N.S. Bus. Hall of Fame - Congrats., Hon. G. Wilson	5697
Samson Family: Family Feud Canada - Best Wishes, M. Ryan.....	5697

Sacred Temple Tattoo: Dedication to Art and Community - Recog., Hon. L. Hines.....	5698
McWade, Bert/Brunt, Shawn: Pugwash Food Drive - Congrats., E. Smith-McCrossin.....	5698
Intl. Yr. of the Nurse and Midwife: Increase Investment - Honour, A. Paon.....	5699
N.S. Brotherhood: Health Care for Black Men - Thanks, Susan Leblanc.....	5699
Job Junction: OWL Project for Older Workers - Thanks, Hon. L. Metlege Diab.....	5700
Legion Br. 164: Caring for Veterans - Thanks, B. Adams.....	5700
Penney-Crocker, Amelia: Advocate, Climate Crisis - Recog., L. Roberts.....	5701
McCarthy, Megan/Gallant, Zan: Plastic Free Christmas - Recog., B. Jessome.....	5701
Payzant, Elliott: Honoured, Dedication to Queens Co. Fair - Congrats., K. Masland.....	5702
Bain, John: 15 Yrs. of Municipal Serv. - Recog., S. Lohnes-Croft.....	5702
Morris, Nick: Screenplay, <i>Becky</i> - Congrats., T. Rushton.....	5702
Adams, Steve: Serv. to Municipality - Thanks, B. Maguire.....	5703
Nani's Esthetics: Grand Opening - Congrats., A. Paon.....	5703
Landry, Janice: Book, <i>Silver Linings</i> - Congrats., R. DiCostanzo.....	5704
FASD: Preventable Disorder - Spread Awareness, Hon. M. Furey.....	5704
Haines, Connie: Sharing Treasures in the Community - Thanks, Hon. L. Hines.....	5704
Fisher Family: Dedication to Girls Ringette - Recog., Hon. L. Metlege Diab.....	5705
McDonald's Restaurant: Fam. Literacy Day Partnership - Thanks, B. Jessome.....	5705
ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS:	
No. 1072, Prem.: Prov. Bottom Line - Reality, T. Houston.....	5706
No. 1073, Prem. - COVID-19: Paid Sick Leave - Introduce, G. Burrill.....	5708
No. 1074, Prem. - Yar. Ferry: File Mismanagement - Apologize, T. Houston.....	5709

No. 1075, H&W: N-95 Masks - Current Stock, Colton Leblanc.....	5711
No. 1076, EECD - COVID-19: School Trip Cancellations - Confirm, T. Halman	5712
No. 1077, Justice - Street Checks Data: Make Available - Confirm, C. Chender	5713
No. 1078, H&W - Desmond Inquiry Finding: Info. Sharing - Improve, J. Lohr	5714
No. 1079, H&W: Youth Mental Health - Social Media and Smartphone Impact, J. Lohr	5715
No. 1080, LAE: Funding for Nursing Education - Explain Delay, B. Comer	5716
No. 1081, H&W - Adult Protection Servs.: Limited Hours - Inappropriate, K. Masland.....	5717
No. 1082, Justice - Police Act Regs.: Discoverability - Include, C. Chender	5718
No. 1083, TIR - Hwy. 359: Repaving - Timeline J. Lohr	5719
No. 1084, H&W: Lung Cancer - Screening, S. Craig	5720
No. 1085, H&W - Doctors: Exit Interviews - Numbers, A. Paon.....	5721
No. 1086, TIR - Mira Gut Bridge: Construction - Timeline, B. Comer	5722
No. 1087, H&W - Pictou County: New Dialysis Sites - Update, Hon. P. Dunn.....	5723
No. 1088, H&W - Dartmouth General: Mental Health Services - Commit, T. Halman	5724
OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS:	
PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:	
No. 244, Education Act T. Halman	5726
C. Chender	5729
B. Maguire	5732
J. Lohr	5737
No. 241, Change of Name Act K. Masland.....	5740
L. Roberts.....	5742
B. Jessome.....	5743
K. MacFarlane.....	5743
Hon. G. MacLellan	5744
K. Masland.....	5745
Vote - Affirmative.....	5745

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS:

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:

No. 242, Protecting Access to Reproductive Health Care Act	
C. Chender	5746
T. Houston.....	5748
Hon. K. Regan.....	5749
K. MacFarlane.....	5751
G. Burrill	5751
R. DiCostanzo	5752
A. Paon.....	5753
C. Chender	5755
Vote - Affirmative.....	5755

PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING:

No. 243, Financial Measures (2020) Act	
Hon. K. Casey	5756
M. Ryan.....	5757
G. Burrill	5758
Hon. K. Casey	5765
Vote - Affirmative.....	5765

PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR SECOND READING:

No. 245, Brookside Cemetery Commission Dissolution Act	
Hon. M. Furey	5765
Vote - Affirmative.....	5766

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS:

ON MOTION FOR SUPPLY:

Colton LeBlanc	5766
M. Ryan.....	5769

HOUSE RESOLVED INTO CW ON SUPPLY AT 5:38 P.M.5771

HOUSE RECONVENED AT 9:48 P.M.....5772

ADJOURNMENT, House rose to meet again on Thur., Mar. 5th at 4:00 p.m.5772

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3):

Res. 1739, Davidson, Cadence: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5773
Res. 1740, Miller, Georgia: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5773
Res. 1741, Hayward, Isabelle: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5773
Res. 1742, Feindel-Sherry, Jaina: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5774
Res. 1743, Gatto, Jane: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5774
Res. 1744, Thompson, Jeff: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5775

Res. 1745, Thompson, Josie: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5775
Res. 1746, Leblanc, Kiersten: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5776
Res. 1747, Miles, Larissa: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5776
Res. 1748, McBurney, Liera: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5776
Res. 1749, Maycock, Ruby: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5777
Res. 1750, Patterson-Smith, Scarlett: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5777
Res. 1751, Foley, Sierra: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5778
Res. 1752, Cruickshank, Sophie: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5778
Res. 1753, Park, Sophie: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5779
Res. 1754, Smith, Sophie: REC Girls Soccer Champs. - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5779
Res. 1755, Mahar, Owen: Racing Career - Congrats., Hon. I. Rankin.....	5779
Res. 1756, Beaulieu, Darlene Elizabeth: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5780
Res. 1757, MacRae, Catherine Ellen: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5780
Res. 1758, Marchand, Colette Marie: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5781
Res. 1759, McNamara, Catherine Patricia (Pat): Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5781
Res. 1760, MacRae-Stubbs, Charlene Ruth: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5782
Res. 1761, Boudreau, Doreen Anne: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5782
Res. 1762, Baigent, Cecile Marie: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5783
Res. 1763, Sampson, Clarence "Bill": Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5783
Res. 1764, Doyle, Christine Ann: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5784
Res. 1765, Kew, Camilla Amelia (Whitty): Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5784
Res. 1766, Beaton, Doreen M.: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5785

Res. 1767, Robert Leonard, Creighton: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5785
Res. 1768, Bonin, Claire Marie: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5786
Res. 1769, MacKillop, Dugald MacLachlan: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5786
Res. 1770, Nicholls, Diane Marie: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5787
Res. 1771, Boudreau, Charles Herman: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5787
Res. 1772, Boudreau, Carl Joseph: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5788
Res. 1773, Carter, Daniel Clifford (Ciffie): Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5788
Res. 1774, Ross, Donald Calvin: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5789
Res. 1775, Dingle, Dorothy May: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5789
Res. 1776, Burns, Catherine “Kay”: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5790
Res. 1777, Boucher, Cornelius Amedee: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5790
Res. 1778, MacMullin, Duncan Robert: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5791
Res. 1779, Muggah, Charles Ryan: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5791
Res. 1780, Waechter, Donald George “Don”: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5792
Res. 1781, Procure, Clara Theresa (Sue): Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5792
Res. 1782, Wright-Beaton, Doris Elizabeth: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5793
Res. 1783, MacNeil, Donald “Donnie”: Death of - Tribute, A. Paon.....	5793
Res. 1784, Clark, Brook: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5794
Res. 1785, Millett, Alyssa: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5794
Res. 1786, MacDougall, Emily: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5795
Res. 1787, Gilby, Grace: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5795
Res. 1788, Chatfield, Hailey: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5796

Res. 1789, Rumsheidt, Jordan: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5796
Res. 1790, Peltola, Kenda: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5796
Res. 1791, Hopewell, Keni: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5797
Res. 1792, Hopewell, Madi: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5797
Res. 1793, Bitonti, Megan: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5798
Res. 1794, Clow, Sophie: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5798
Res. 1795, MacNeil, Sydney: Dance Prod., <i>The Beast</i> - Congrats., Hon. M. Miller	5799



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2020

Sixty-third General Assembly

Second Session

1:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Suzanne Lohnes-Croft, Brendan Maguire

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. We'll begin the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

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

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

TONY INCE: Joining us in the East Gallery today are family members of Dr. Elizabeth Cromwell and Mr. Francis Dorrington. I would ask them to rise as I call their names, please: Ms. Mary Cromwell, Mr. Wayne Cromwell, Ms. Cynthia Dorrington, and Ms. Joann Wyse. I would like the House to please welcome them. (Applause)

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

RESOLUTION NO. 1736

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

Whereas the late Dr. Elizabeth Cromwell, beloved community leader from Birchtown, was a 2019 recipient of the Order of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Dr. Cromwell was a member of the Black Cultural Society board and the Black United Front, a founding member and president of the Black Loyalist Heritage Society, an awardee of honorary degrees from Mount Saint Vincent University and Dalhousie University, a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal and the Multicultural Volunteer of the Year Award from Nova Scotia, and an appointee to the Order of Canada in 2018; and

Whereas the Order of Nova Scotia is the highest honour of the province, recognizing individuals for their outstanding achievements in various fields of endeavours that have brought honour to themselves and others;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly please join me in acknowledging the life of the late Dr. Elizabeth Cromwell and the contributions she has made to improving our society.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Immigration.

RESOLUTION NO. 1737

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: À une date ultérieure je demanderai l'adoption de la résolution suivante:

Attendu que l'Université Sainte-Anne, en partenariat avec le ministère des Pêches et de l'Aquaculture de la Nouvelle-Écosse, a récemment annoncé la mise sur pied d'un centre de recherche et d'innovation sur la qualité du homard; et

Attendu que ce centre de recherche contribuera à la croissance de l'industrie des produits de la mer provenant de la Nouvelle-Écosse et à la promotion de notre homard comme ressource naturelle et durable au niveau national et international; et

Attendu que les innovations développées devraient permettre de renforcer la qualité de nos produits et ainsi soutenir un secteur de la plus haute importance pour la Nouvelle-Écosse;

Par conséquent, il est résolu que les membres de l'Assemblée législative se joignent à moi pour féliciter l'Université Sainte-Anne pour cette initiative qui soutiendra notre industrie des pêches et contribuera à faire de la Nouvelle-Écosse un chef de file en matière d'exploitation durable de nos ressources maritimes.

Monsieur le Président, je demande l'adoption de cette résolution sans préavis et sans débat.

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

Whereas Université Sainte-Anne, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, recently announced the establishment of a lobster quality research and innovation centre; and

Whereas this research centre will contribute to the growth of Nova Scotia's seafood industry and to the promotion of our lobster as a natural and sustainable resource at the national and international levels; and

Whereas the innovations developed should strengthen the quality of our products and thus support a sector of the utmost importance for Nova Scotia;

Therefore be it resolved that members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating Université Sainte-Anne for this initiative, which will support our fishing industry and help make Nova Scotia a leader in the field of sustainable use of our maritime resources.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs.

RESOLUTION NO. 1738

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

Whereas community leader and trailblazer Francis Dorrington from New Glasgow is the 2019 recipient of the Order of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Mr. Dorrington was the first African Nova Scotian elected to public office in New Glasgow, serving as town councillor for 21 consecutive years, serving as deputy mayor and acting mayor as well as being the key member in establishing the New Glasgow Black Gala Homecoming Committee and in working to ensure diverse representation in public service hiring; and

Whereas the Order of Nova Scotia is the highest honour of the province, recognizing individuals for their outstanding achievements in various fields of endeavour that have brought honour to themselves and others;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly please join me in congratulating Francis Dorrington for receiving the Order of Nova Scotia and for the contributions he has made to improving our province.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 246 - Entitled an Act to Recover Opioid Damages and Health-care Costs. (Hon. Randy Delorey)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

MACEACHERN, WILLIAM: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, if I may, there are a couple of former members of the Legislature we are recognizing today, and perhaps we could have a moment of silence after both are recognized.

Let us remember former Nova Scotian MLA William MacEachern. Bill came from a large family in Centennial, on the back roads of Judique. Like many others they had a family farm supporting their needs. After obtaining his own degree from St. F.X., he put his own interests aside to work as a miner to help his brother so he could obtain his university education.

It was after a mining accident in Wawa that left him badly injured for an extended period that he chose to study journalism. He went on to spend 10 years at the *Toronto Star* where he is best remembered for his effort to draw attention to the plight of the aging poor. For two weeks he lived and wrote a daily account of what it was like to live on Old Age Security alone. In the 1950s, it was an original idea for a reporter to live the life of the people who were the subject of the story. It may very well have contributed to the political decision by the federal government to increase the Old Age Security benefit for Canadians.

He moved on to a career of public service. He wrote what the Honourable Allan J. MacEachern called “the Purple Pages” for him. I’ve come to understand that those were the speeches of literary flair that MacEachern so eloquently delivered.

First elected in 1974 to this Legislature, Billy was a cabinet minister but also a good constituency man, as they were referred to back then. He was a people person who was ready to help people on the spot.

The Honourable William MacEachern is remembered for the contribution he has made to our province and to our country.

[1:15 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

STIRLING, LAIRD: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I inform members of this House that former Dartmouth North MLA Laird Stirling has passed away.

Mr. Stirling attended the Atlantic School of Theology and McMaster University. He was a well-loved and dedicated United Church minister before entering public life in 1978. He was re-elected in 1981 and 1984. In his time as an MLA he served as Minister of Community Services, Minister of Environment, and Minister of Municipal Affairs. One tribute, among the many I saw on social media, stood out to me: He was a good man, committed to doing good.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this House to join me in sending sincere condolences to Mr. Stirling's wife Carolyn, his three children, his grandchildren, and his many friends. I ask that we observe a moment of silence to salute the lives of Laird Stirling and William MacEachern.

THE SPEAKER: I would ask all members to please rise as we observe a moment of silence in memory of the Honourable William MacEachern and the Honourable Laird Stirling.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

The honourable member for Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank.

THE LAKER NEWSPAPER: NO LONGER IN PUBLICATION - RECOG.

BILL HORNE: It was with great disappointment that the residents of Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank learned that the January 2020 edition of *The Laker* newspaper would be the last. The community paper was connected to the people of our community for 30 years and will be greatly missed.

I wish to give special thanks to editor Abby Cameron and reporter Pat Healey. *The Laker* newspaper provided the news and the stories of the people of our communities,

young and old. The newspaper was an important part of our community and will be greatly missed.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking Abby Cameron and Pat Healey for their dedication to our community and for producing a heartfelt newspaper each month.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

PCRA: 13TH ANN. ICE FISHING DERBY - CONGRATS.

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pictou County Rivers Association for a successful fishing derby held February 16th in Gairloch, Pictou County. This event has been taking place annually for 13 years and has grown steadily in popularity. Two hundred and thirty-six people registered for the derby, including many first-time participants eager to get on the ice and enjoy the Winter weather.

This year the event was named the Bob Ferguson Memorial Ice Fishing Derby. Thirty years ago, Mr. Ferguson was a founding member of the Pictou County Rivers Association. It is a volunteer organization dedicated to protecting and conserving the waterways of Pictou County through hands-on projects and education. Mr. Ferguson's wife, children, grandchildren, and even a great-grandchild attended the ice fishing derby, helping to carry on his legacy of conservation.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Ferguson family and all the volunteers who made this event a success.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**DUGGAN, MARLENE & BARRY:
PURCELLS COVE FISHERFOLK - RECOG.**

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize Marlene Duggan and her husband, Barry, the last fisherfolk of Purcells Cove. During lobster season, Marlene and Barry are up at 4:30 a.m. and out the door where they jump on their 23-foot Cape Islander, the *Cari Lynn*.

Marlene, one of the few female fisherpersons in our community, is a trailblazer. She got the fishing itch in the 1970s and has never looked back. Marlene was a captain for 16 years, from the 1980s to the 1990s. Barry, her husband, was her deckhand.

Marlene and Barry have been through many storms and cold weathers, but their love for each other and their love for the ocean has remained strong.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

**VINCE RYAN HOCKEY TOURN.:
ENDURING ENTHUSIASM - BEST WISHES**

MURRAY RYAN: Mr. Speaker, later this month the 31st Annual Vince Ryan Memorial Hockey Tournament will commence. Each year over 160 teams and 1,000 players from across Canada and the United States descend on the CBRM to take part in this 4-day, 10-rink tournament. As one would expect, Cape Bretoners eagerly roll out the welcome mat to the teams and players. That is surely the reason so many teams return year in and year out.

Mr. Speaker, the organizers and over 200 volunteers continue to ensure that an enjoyable time is had for participants and spectators alike. This tournament not only serves to spread many good stories about the CBRM but injects an estimated \$5 million into the community each year.

Mr. Speaker, I wish the organizers all the best with the 2020 edition of the Vince Ryan and look forward to welcoming the teams and participants to our community in a few short weeks.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**STEWART, SHANNON:
SANTAS FOR S. SHORE SENIORS PROGRAM - RECOG.**

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Shannon Stewart of West Northfield, who in November 2018 launched the Santas for South Shore Seniors program. This program pairs community members with seniors in the area who have needs such as winter boots, coats, hats, mitts, a grocery card, or even a simple act of kindness.

Stewart describes this program as “community members helping community members.” People are encouraged to notify Santas for South Shore Seniors if a family member, friend, neighbour, or someone in a nursing home has something they need at Christmas. The seniors can also reach out to the program directly.

In its initial year, there were 12 seniors who were given gifts by South Shore residents. This past year, we saw 228 seniors receiving Christmas presents.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and members of this House of Assembly please join me in recognizing Shannon Stewart for the work she does to support seniors on the South Shore.

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

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

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted.

BARBARA ADAMS: I would like to draw everyone's attention to the East Gallery. I will ask them to stand as I introduce them.

I would like to introduce Michelle Myers and Danica Ocasio, two parents from Island View High School who, along with their children, fundraised to send them on a school trip to Europe. They're here today looking for answers as to when their children's trip is going to be cancelled, postponed, or diverted. (Applause)

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

MYERS, MICHELLE: COM. SERV. - RECOG.

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Michelle Myers, an amazing and passionate community advocate and volunteer extraordinaire. Michelle serves on the Island View High School Enhancement Committee and the new Eastern Passage and Area Action Committee and its three subcommittees. She also co-chairs the communications subcommittee herself.

She also serves on many other committees in our community that enhance the lives of our students, their parents, our schools, and the rest of our fellow community members, including everyone who fundraised for the high school trip.

I would like to recognize Michelle Myers for all of her hard work throughout the past year. I am so very proud of Michelle Myers and all that she does for our community. I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in recognizing and thanking Michelle Myers for all that she does for our community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

GHADA, GABR: COM. SERV. - RECOG.

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, in honour of International Women's Day on March 8th, I would like to recognize an outstanding businesswoman in Halifax West: Ghada Gabr.

Ghada is a highly accomplished pharmacist and businessowner of two Shoppers Drug Mart stores in HRM. She brings over 15 years of experience to the pharmaceutical industry in our province.

After Ghada completed her Bachelor of Pharmacy degree in Egypt, she graduated with a Master of Health Informatics degree from Dalhousie University, and she continues to develop her professional skills. Ghada has organized several events at her Halifax stores to raise funds for Adsum for Women and Children, the IWK Women's Mental Health Unit, and the IWK Women's Breast Health Unit.

Mr. Speaker, I am so grateful for all that Ghada provides to our community. Her contributions are appreciated by so many.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

BICYCLE SPECIALIST: 5TH ANNIV. - CONGRATS.

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Basil and Julie Hicks, owners of the Bicycle Specialist in Amherst, Nova Scotia. They recently celebrated five successful years in business.

Basil and Julie have created a small business that specializes in customer service. They specialize in bicycle and Winter recreation sports, encouraging their customers to be active, and to enjoy an active lifestyle.

Mr. Speaker, Basil and Julie have put a lot of work into maintaining their customer base. I'd like to congratulate them on this anniversary and wish them continued success as they continue to do what they love.

Mr. Speaker, this is another successful business in Cumberland North because of two special entrepreneurs who put in the work, day in and day out.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

ACADIA MEN'S SWIM TEAM: AUS CHAMPS - CONGRATS.

KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, in 1981, the New York Islanders won the Stanley Cup, the Boston Celtics won the NBA championship, and the Acadia men's swim team was named Atlantic University Sport Champions. Now, 39 years later, the men's swim team has returned to the top of the podium, winning the 2020 AUS Swimming Championships held at Dalhousie University last month.

Led by Head Coach Gary MacDonald, the Acadia team enjoyed top-place finishes from Brett Liem in the 100-metre freestyle, Andre Walcott in the 100-metre breaststroke, Shane Kenny in the 50-metre butterfly, Gordon Shortt in the 200-metre IM, and Dean Sangster in the 200-metre backstroke.

The men also recorded a new AUS record in the men's 4x100-metre medley relay, and Brett Liem earned Male Swimmer of the Meet.

I invite all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating the Acadia men's swim team for once again rising to the top of the podium as 2020 AUS champions.

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

UGLY MUG CAFÉ: 7TH ANNIV. - CONGRATS.

BRIAN COMER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to talk about a locally owned and run coffee shop in my constituency of Sydney River, which celebrated its seventh year of business this Winter.

The Ugly Mug Café and Emporium was brought to life by Tracey Black-Hanratty and Lori Latimer-Merlin, who decided to take their dream and make it a reality. The coffee shop offers fair trade organic coffee and has some of the best baked goods on the Island, which are baked fresh each morning. The friendly service is without a doubt one of the main reasons this place of business is as busy as it is day in and day out.

I would like to stand here today to congratulate these women on their success with their café and wish them all the best in the future.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

**GIFT FROM THE HEART RADIOTHON:
10 YRS. OF SUCCESS - RECOG.**

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the incredible success of the 10th annual Gift from the Heart Radiothon.

On February 14th, the radiothon began with the goal of raising \$150,000 to purchase and install 25 ceiling lifts at South Shore Regional Hospital. These lifts afford patients an easier way to get out of bed, allow them to be more mobile during their stay, and give medical teams the tools they need to prevent injury and provide the highest standard of care.

I am pleased to say that as a united community, CKBW, the Health Services Foundation of the South Shore, the South Shore Regional Hospital Auxiliary, residents, and businesses far and wide who donated individually or as part of a larger group far surpassed the goal of \$150,000; the day ended at over \$200,000. Donations are still rolling in, now exceeding \$250,000.

I ask members of this House of Assembly to please join me in recognizing all involved for their dedication, generosity, and community spirit.

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

**FOX HOLLOW IRON MAN GOLF TOURN.:
SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER - CONGRATS.**

LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, hats off to Fox Hollow Golf Course owner Betty Gourley along with organizers Becky Turner and Rick Vacheresse for their efforts in planning and executing the Iron Man Golf Tournament.

This event and its patrons raised more than \$6,500 in support of the breakfast program at the Dutch Settlement Elementary School. This program ensures that every student is able to start their day off with a full belly.

Staff and students alike were excited to accept the cheque and offer thanks, not only to the organizers but to team participants as well as to the local businesses that provided prizes and monetary donations for the event. This is a demonstration of co-operation and spirit that truly does say “community.”

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

LA FEMME FATALE: FUN PLUS-SIZED FASHION - CONGRATS.

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to share some news about a store that recently opened in Bedford Sunnyside Mall.

How it all came about was simply that Warna Downey was tired of trying to find fashionable clothing in plus sizes. Every time she found a store that was carrying larger sizes, it shut down or began limiting the amount of larger clothing that it carried. Warna decided to open La Femme Fatale, which caters to women up to sizes 26-28.

The clothing is fun and fashionable, staff do consultations to help clients build wardrobes, and the store is lovely. It feels like an expensive women’s clothing store, but the prices are much lower than you would think.

I would like to congratulate Warna Downey on finding a much underserved niche in the retail world and wish her every success.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

[1:30 p.m.]

N. QUEENS SCH.: ARTS SHOWCASE - THANKS

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud students and staff from North Queens Community School.

On January 30th, the school's Visual Arts students impressed visitors with their Annual Art Showcase. This showcase was held at the school, with the work of more than 20 young artists on display. I'd like to thank these talented young artists for their efforts and for sharing their gift of creativity with their community.

If the high calibre of work that was on display is any indication, some of these artisans may be one day pursuing a career in the artistic field. Well done to all involved.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

ORTON, LYNN: HOLY TRINITY EMMAN. XMAS HAMPERS - THANKS

SUSAN LEBLANC: I rise today to acknowledge Lynn Orton, a woman who makes Dartmouth North an even kinder place to live.

For 13 years, Lynn has coordinated the Christmas Hampers Program for Holy Trinity Emmanuel Anglican Church on Alfred Street. Six months before Christmas, she begins looking for sales for items to include in the hampers, which go to those who have signed up for support through Feed Nova Scotia and the Department of Community Services.

She also organizes the volunteers who put the hampers together and deliver them to the folks throughout Dartmouth North.

I've had the pleasure of watching Lynn in action as the date for these deliveries takes place, and she is truly amazing. With the church basement and sanctuary both full of food and presents, Lynn oversees the chaos, full of energy and joy and with meticulous attention to detail. That's not all.

Lynn volunteers weekly for the Breakfast Program at Harbour View Elementary. Once a month she prepares and delivers lunch for teachers from various North End Dartmouth schools, and she also caters lunches for Dartmouth principals' meetings with all the proceeds going to the Holy Trinity hamper program.

I ask that the House join me in giving heartfelt thanks to Lynn Orton for her commitment and love of her community and for keeping so many people in Dartmouth North fed all year round.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

**ESAU, EMILY - WINNER:
REMEM. DAY WRITING CONTEST - CONGRATS.**

HON. KAREN CASEY: The Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 64, in Tatamagouche sponsored a writing contest for Remembrance Day. It is an excellent way to keep our young people interested and aware of the role that veterans have played in our history and the sacrifices they have made to ensure our safety and our way of life.

Fifteen-year-old Emily Esau from the Tatamagouche Regional Academy wrote a poem about remembrance that won her a first-place certificate from the Legion. She was delighted to receive the accolade, especially since she knows most of the Legion members personally. She was encouraged by their pride in her work and sees it as an incentive to keep writing.

Emily writes poetry which she shares with her friends who also have an interest in writing. She writes about things that interest her. She said that while she was writing her poem, she thought about her Uncle Jerry who was a peacekeeper. She finds it a good way to express her feelings, and it's obvious that she does it well.

Congratulations, Emily, on your win. We hope you will continue with your writing.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

GREGORY, LINDA: LYONS BROOK VOLUN. OF THE YR. - CONGRATS.

KARLA MACFARLANE: I rise today to congratulate Ms. Linda Gregory for being chosen as the Lyons Brook Volunteer of the Year 2020.

Linda is a dedicated volunteer in the community. She is a long serving volunteer for the weekly card parties and worker for the community's annual Christmas dinner. These two events are the major fundraisers for the upkeep of Lyons Brook Hall. She is described as someone who works quietly in the background, getting things done.

Our communities need people like Linda - dedicated, hard-working, and selfless - people who get the job done without fanfare. They are the backbone of our communities in rural Nova Scotia.

Please join me in thanking Linda for her volunteer work and congratulating her on receiving this award.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

A.F. THERIAULT LTD.: N.S. BUS. HALL OF FAME - CONGRATS.

HON. GORDON WILSON: I rise today to congratulate Ernest, Arthur, and Larry Theriault, and the family of Russell Theriault, on the announcement that the four will be inducted into the Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame.

Their parents, Gus and Elizabeth Theriault, started a boatyard in Meteghan River in 1938. Since then, under the direction of the founders and then their sons, the boatyard has continued to grow, undoubtedly helped by the company's reputation of quality workmanship.

A.F. Theriault is now the largest and oldest family-owned boatyard in Nova Scotia, and this honour is a recognition of the role the four brothers had in building this company. It is sad that one brother, Russell, will not be present at the gala as he passed away in 2016. The remaining three are no longer involved in the company's day-to-day operations; now the responsibility is on some of their children.

As the four brothers had learned about business at their father's side, the current generation learned the business under the tutelage of their fathers, knowledge that will ensure the company will continue to thrive and impact our local and provincial economy for years to come.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

SAMSON FAMILY: FAMILY FEUD CANADA - BEST WISHES

MURRAY RYAN: I rise today to recognize the Samson family of Little Bras d'Or. Next week, Holly, her husband Kitamura, along with her sister Megan and parents Liz and Harold, will be getting down to some serious feuding. The Samsons will be competing on Family Feud Canada, hoping to win the \$10,000 prize.

When the CBC sent out the call last Summer for contestants, the Samsons sharpened their pitchforks and applied. Families were required to submit a five-minute video. The Samsons chose to provide a video of the family singing *We Are the Samsons*, a slight revision from Queen's *We Are the Champions*.

In late December, the family was selected and jetted off to Toronto for their film session. While the family is privy to their fate, they aren't sharing with anyone. The family is going to hold a public viewing on March 10th at North Sydney's D' Theatre Resto and Pub for the entire community to come and cheer then on.

On behalf of myself and the residents of Northside-Westmount, I send my congratulations and best wishes to the Samsons for a successful feud.

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

**SACRED TEMPLE TATTOO:
DEDICATION TO ART AND COMMUNITY - RECOG.**

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in appreciation for a local tattoo artist and entrepreneur Jamie MacKay of Sacred Temple Tattoo in Havre Boucher. Jamie is a hugely talented artist who deserves all the recognition he receives for his 10 years of service as the owner and artist of Sacred Temple Tattoos. His artistic skill and creative talent has built a respected name for Sacred Temple Tattoos, earning him a well-deserved reputation for quality and professionalism.

Sacred Temple Tattoos has three full-time artists and they specialize in everything from large, black and grey custom work and portraits to large, colour-realism script and all the things in between, large and small.

Jamie should also be noted for his philanthropy. He and his wife Cara have been long-time contributors to the IWK, the special place that cared for their children during difficult times. Sacred Temple Tattoos IWK fundraiser has raised over \$95,000 in support of the IWK.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to commend Jamie and Sacred Temple Tattoos for his dedicated and passionate contribution to tattoo artistry and local entrepreneurship.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**MCWADE, BERT/BRUNT, SHAWN:
PUGWASH FOOD DRIVE - CONGRATS.**

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Bert McWade and Pugwash District High School Principal Shawn Brunt for their work in this year's Pugwash Foodbank Drive on February 26th. This year they raised \$2,700 and a half ton truck of food was donated to the food bank. They have used the Man in Black, Johnny Cash, as their theme - dressing in black and serving fried baloney sandwiches.

Bert's efforts have raised over \$10,000 for the food bank since 2014. This year Principal Brunt asked his students to dress in black and bring food in for the food bank. This was a great contribution to the truck of food donated. I am thankful for all of the hearts involved, most especially Bert McWade, a.k.a. Johnny Cash.

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

**INTL. YR. OF THE NURSE AND MIDWIFE:
INCREASE INVESTMENT - HONOUR**

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour the hard work and dedication of our province's nurses and midwives and recognize 2020 as being designated the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife. This year-long effort to celebrate the work of nurses and midwives highlights the challenging conditions they often face and advocates for increased investments in nursing and midwifery workforce. Too often, nurses and midwives are undervalued and unable to fulfill their true potential.

Mr. Speaker, nurses and midwives play a vital role in providing health care to Nova Scotians. These professionals devote their lives to caring for others, giving life-saving health advice, tending to essential health needs, and playing a critical role in emergency settings. They are often the first and only point of care in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I call upon the members of this House to join the World Health Organization's aim in 2020 to ensure that all of the more than 7,400 registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, nurse practitioners, and midwives working in Nova Scotia operate in an environment where they are safe from harm, respected by their colleagues, have access to a functioning health care service, and where their work is integrated with other health care professionals.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

N.S. BROTHERHOOD: HEALTH CARE FOR BLACK MEN - THANKS

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the vital work done by the Nova Scotia Brotherhood Initiative, who offer essential health care in Dartmouth North.

Funded by the Nova Scotia Health Authority, the Nova Scotia Brotherhood Initiative is a free program for African Nova Scotian men which allows them to access tailored health care from other Black men. Through the Brotherhood, African Nova Scotian men have access to a family doctor, Dr. Ron Milne; a psychiatrist, Dr. Jacob Cookey; a social worker, Mario Rolle; and a community liaison officer, Duane Winter.

The Brotherhood offers services in Dartmouth, Hammonds Plains, North Preston, East Preston and Halifax and runs programs like Walking Group: Black Men Walking, Men's Health League, and Anger Management and Emotional Intelligence program.

I am truly grateful for the good work that the Brotherhood does for African Nova Scotian men in my community and extend my thanks to the wonderful team of health care professionals who make up the Dartmouth North team.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

JOB JUNCTION: OWL PROJECT FOR OLDER WORKERS - THANKS

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Mr. Speaker, just before Christmas, I had the opportunity to join the great team behind the OWL project at Job Junction on Mumford Road for their Christmas with the OWL's open house.

For those who don't know, OWL is the acronym for older, wiser labour force. They offer a five-week employment-readiness program designed specifically to assist mature workers to return to work.

Job Junction offers a great deal of helpful programming to my community. This month alone, they're hosting an intensive Summer Job Boot Camp and a one-week Computer Skills Boot Camp, as well as ongoing employment skills coaching for recent grads. That's in addition to their regular resume and cover letter workshops and sessions on navigating the hidden job market.

I want to thank Job Junction's Lisa Martell and Carrie Lynn Wall and all Nova Scotia Works centre staff for helping Nova Scotians prepare for the workforce.

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

LEGION BR. 164: CARING FOR VETERANS - THANKS

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 164, located in Eastern Passage, for all of their hard work and dedication when giving back to veterans and our community.

The Legion relies on fundraisers like Chase the Ace and raffles on quilts and other locally made items donated by community members. The Legion offers members social opportunities like the dart league, trivia nights, luncheons and so much more. Remembrance Day at the Legion is always a very special and solemn event.

This past November, the community was invited to help make Valentine cards for single veterans living in long-term care facilities. Their goal is let every veteran know they are appreciated and not forgotten.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in thanking the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 164 in Eastern Passage for everything they do.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**PENNEY-CROCKER, AMELIA:
ADVOCATE, CLIMATE CRISIS - RECOG.**

LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Amelia Penney-Crocker, a 14-year-old Halifax resident and climate activist who is writing to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau each week about the climate crisis. She has been doing so since December. She is also encouraging other children to do the same.

In the last posted letter, she writes: “If you are a leader of a rich country who refuses to act on climate change (or doesn’t do enough), you are willingly throwing the future of all children out the window.”

As a Chamber of leaders - not of a country but of a province - I assert that we are debating a budget that does not do enough. The reality of the climate emergency should be informing every investment that Nova Scotia makes, in transportation, in built infrastructure, and in programs.

I congratulate Amelia on using her writing skills and ideas to hold Prime Minister Trudeau to account and urge us all to identify how and where and with whom we can show leadership that is adequate - in bravery, ambition, and scope - to this moment of climate emergency.

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

**MCCARTHY, MEGAN/GALLANT, ZAN:
PLASTIC FREE CHRISTMAS - RECOG.**

BEN JESSOME: I would like to recognize Megan McCarthy and Zan Gallant of Hammonds Plains for their creative efforts to go plastic-free this holiday season.

They made this choice, and over the holidays they recycled old decorations and built lawn-ornament reindeers out of fallen trees.

I would like to recognize them because it’s important to do everything we can to go plastic-free and to do sustainable things. This is just one way that we can do that. I would also like to acknowledge local journalist with the CBC, Aly Thomson, for telling their story.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**PAYZANT, ELLIOTT:
HONOURED, DEDICATION TO QUEENS CO. FAIR - CONGRATS.**

KIM MASLAND: I rise today to recognize the volunteer efforts of Elliott Payzant of Albany New, in Queens County.

The Queens County Fair continues to hold a treasured spot for residents of North Queens. On January 16th, the board of the long-running and well-respected Queens County Fair honoured Elliott for his involvement with their organization since the year 1962. His lengthy commitment to this agricultural fair is very impressive, and Elliott has played an integral role in ensuring that the fair maintains its impressive reputation and continued success.

Mr. Speaker, I offer my congratulations to Elliott on receiving this very well-deserved honour, and thank him for his commitment to the fair and to his community.

[1:45 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

BAIN, JOHN: 15 YRS. OF MUNICIPAL SERV. - RECOG.

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate John Bain, a municipal councillor with the Town of Mahone Bay, who was recognized for 15 years of service in municipal government at the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities Fall Conference. John attended Acadia University, where he obtained a degree in biology and went on to pursue graduate studies at both Acadia University and the University of Guelph. He has had a career working as a fisheries biologist for Nova Scotia, director of Fish and Wildlife for P.E.I., and provincial manager for Ducks Unlimited Canada in Ontario.

In 1991, John and his wife, Judy, returned to Nova Scotia. John is the proud father of two children and four grandchildren. He continues to serve on several committees and is an avid community volunteer. I would ask that you and the members of this House of Assembly please join me in recognizing Councillor Bain for his continued contributions to municipal government.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

MORRIS, NICK: SCREENPLAY, BECKY - CONGRATS.

TORY RUSHTON: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Nick Morris. Nick grew up in Streets Ridge, which is between Oxford and Wentworth. Nick graduated from Oxford Regional High School and now resides in the Halifax area, where he's a screenwriter. Nick

was pleased last year to announce that one of his scripts was going to become a movie starring the likes of Kevin James, Joel McHale and Lulu Wilson. The movie is an action thriller and, under the title *Becky*, will premiere at next month's Tribeca Film Festival in New York.

Nick's family, friends and the community of his youth are all very proud of his accomplishments and look forward to the viewing of the movie.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

ADAMS, STEVE: SERV. TO MUNICIPALITY - THANKS

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: Mr. Speaker, this October will see an election in HRM, and after 29 years Councillor Steve Adams of District 11 will be stepping down. So far, there are 12 candidates who have stepped forward to try to take the position. I think all combined probably can't do the work that Steve has done over the last 29 years. Steve has worked tirelessly for the people of the community. He has made many great investments in the community. He will be missed. I wish all 12 candidates the best of luck.

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

NANI'S ESTHETICS: GRAND OPENING - CONGRATS.

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the official opening of Nani's Esthetics and Laser Centre on September 16, 2019 in Port Hawkesbury. Esthetician Nani Venus left the Philippines 20 years ago for the United Arab Emirates, where she met her business and life partner, Aby Maqui. Together they moved to Canada in 2013.

Despite the trials of becoming accustomed to a new country, a different climate, a new language, Nani and Aby were able to find support from the Strait Area community and ultimately found happiness. An example of how the community supported Nani and Aby is by generously donating the equipment to assist them in the start-up of their business. They now have plans to expand and hire new employees and have more than 200 clients that are booked a month in advance.

Mr. Speaker, I call upon the members of this House to applaud the Strait Area community for welcoming and supporting all new immigrants to our constituency and to congratulate Nani and Aby on their grand opening. May they have many years of success and happiness.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

LANDRY, JANICE: BOOK, *SILVER LININGS* - CONGRATS.

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Janice Landry, an award-winning author and journalist who lives in Clayton Park West. Janice began her journalism career at CBC Halifax in the 1980s as a traffic reporter. Janice went on to do incredible things. She worked at CTV Atlantic for a decade and worked as part-time instructor in the Department of Communications Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University for over 16 years.

Her focus now has been to pursue her passion of writing. Her most recent book, *Silver Linings*, highlights the importance of gratitude and resiliency in studying mental health. Janice's work has shed a much-needed light on the importance of mental health and wellness. I ask the members of this House to join me in congratulating Janice on the success of her book.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

FASD: PREVENTABLE DISORDER - SPREAD AWARENESS

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, fetal alcohol syndrome spectrum disorder is the leading preventable developmental disability in Canada. It can occur when an unborn child is exposed to alcohol during pregnancy. FASD has potentially far-reaching effects, including physical, mental, behavioural and learning disabilities that result in increased costs in health, education and justice, yet it remains largely stigmatized and unrecognized as a disability.

Individuals with FASD will experience some degree of challenge in their daily living and need support with motor skills, physical health, learning, memory, attention, communication, emotional regulation and social skills to reach their full potential. I'd like to ask members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in spreading awareness that fetal alcohol syndrome is a serious and preventable disorder.

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

**HAINES, CONNIE:
SHARING TREASURES IN THE COMMUNITY - THANKS**

HON. LLOYD HINES: I rise today in recognition of Connie Haines of Little Dover, who does the little things that mean so much to the children of her community. An avid crafter and artist, Connie has been painting stones and creating other unicorn- and dolphin-themed crafts, which she hides around her community boardwalk for the enjoyment of passersby of all ages but are especially loved by the children of Little Dover.

Connie says she loves to work on her art projects, but they never last long once she puts them out, with the local children taking them home to enjoy the small painted rocks and other crafts she makes almost as soon as she has a new batch ready. As a big fan of dolphins and unicorns, they always feature heavily in her work.

Sometimes we forget the importance of art and the little things in life that make it so special. I'd like to applaud Connie for her brightening up of our community and the days of those who have passed by and had the chance to pocket one of the small treasures she has left for them.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

FISHER FAMILY: DEDICATION TO GIRLS RINGETTE - RECOG.

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Girls ringette has a 45-year history here in Nova Scotia, and its enduring and growing popularity is notable. The Fishers of Halifax Armdale are an active ringette family. Claire Fisher has been involved in the sport for years, having played for the Halifax Hurricanes U14 AA Ringette team when they won their provincial championship last year and went to represent Nova Scotia at the Eastern Canadian Ringette Championships. This year, playing for the Hurricanes, she helped the team take the gold medal at the U16 Tier 1 Provincial Championships.

I'm also proud to share that she has been selected to play for the Team Nova Scotia U16 AA team as they participate in the Canadian Ringette Championship from April 5th to 11th in Ottawa. I know her father, Mike Fisher, the U16 Tier 1 team's head coach is proud, and I've been happy to support the teams in their fundraising efforts. I want to wish Claire and Mike Fisher and the entire team all the best next month in Ottawa. Go, girls, go! Yes!

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

MCDONALD'S RESTAURANT: FAM. LITERACY DAY PARTNERSHIP - THANKS

BEN JESSOME: I'd would like to recognize the McDonald's in Tantallon for partnering with First Book Canada and putting on an event for the community on Family Literacy Day on January 29th. They partnered with a local author, Nancy Rose, for live readings of her book *The Secret Life of Squirrels*. She did three readings, one starting at the beginning of each hour.

Ms. Rose is a retired school guidance counsellor with a love for nature and wildlife. She started taking photos of the little American red squirrels that raided her bird feeders and discovered their curious nature, which led to her writing five books on their antics.

I'd also like to recognize local general manager Jason Durette for his efforts to help facilitate this event. I would ask all members to join me in thanking the local McDonald's for helping host this event and celebrating the important Family Literacy Day.

THE SPEAKER: In the absence of more member statements, the House will now recess until the start of Question Period at 2:00 p.m.

[1:54 p.m. The House recessed.]

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM.: PROV. BOTTOM LINE - REALITY

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, in any business, in any household, there are two numbers that people pay attention to: the top line and the bottom line. The top line tells you what you are bringing in, and the bottom line tells you what you have left at the end of the day.

The Premier doesn't talk much about the bottom-line reality for Nova Scotians of this province. The bottom line in this province says that Nova Scotians have the lowest after-tax take-home pay in the country and that Nova Scotians see the highest child poverty rates in the country. The bottom line is that our economy is not thriving.

I would like to ask the Premier: How does the Premier square his rosy talking points with the bottom-line reality that Nova Scotians are living?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member knows our population is at an all-time high, and our unemployment is at an all-time low. He knows that more young people are choosing to live and work and stay in this province to help build our economy. He also knows that more entrepreneurs are choosing to stay in Nova Scotia and build their businesses here. He would also know that the exports are up in our province. Nova Scotia companies are recognizing from this part of the world that they can have a global business.

I want to recognize that the honourable member raised a point around child poverty. Actually, it's concerning. We made investments early on in our government that haven't had the impact we had hoped. That's why, in this current budget, he will see a substantial increase in the child tax benefit. I hope the honourable member will stand in his place and vote for the kids of this province and vote for that budget.

TIM HOUSTON: We will be voting for a future of this province, Mr. Speaker.

Canadians are familiar with the struggles that Alberta is suffering. Alberta's GDP forecast for this year is 2.5 per cent. Bear in mind the struggles they are facing, and keep in mind that Nova Scotia's GDP forecast is 0.4 per cent. It's 2.5 per cent in Alberta and 0.4 per cent in Nova Scotia. That 0.4 per cent is before an uncertain outcome for those workers displaced by the changes in the forestry industry. It is before the threat of a worldwide recession as a result of the coronavirus. The future is not looking all rosy for Nova Scotia with a 0.4 per cent GDP forecast.

I would like the Premier to clarify for Nova Scotians: Just how close is this province to a recession?

THE PREMIER: It's the same song he sang last year.

The reality of it is, we continue to grow the economy in our province. More people are finding work to live in this province. More young people are providing hope. As a government, we invested in young people. The pre-Primary program, which they voted against, has given every 4-year-old, regardless of the socio-economic circumstances they are born into, the same start. This budget will reflect our commitment to families across the province that are struggling. We're going to continue to do that.

Also, I am glad the honourable member raised the Alberta government. He should also look at the federal budgetary office, which says that this province is one of the few provinces on a sustainable path and can afford to pay the bills it has had. Our debt to GDP is declining. One of those four is not Alberta.

TIM HOUSTON: As we all know, as Canadians know, a province that relies increasingly on federal sources of revenue is a province that is falling behind the rest of the nation. Guess what's happening here? Increased reliance on federal transfers, the lowest after-tax take-home income, growing rates of child poverty, and double-digit unemployment in pockets of this province - the 0.4 per cent GDP outlook tells the story.

The Premier can try to write a different reality, but the reality comes up in the Premier's own Budget Estimates. Will the Premier acknowledge for Nova Scotians that the stats he's touting aren't having a positive impact on the lives of Nova Scotians?

THE PREMIER: The reality of it is child poverty is going down in Nova Scotia. That's what the fact of matter is. We lead the country with the largest increase - we still know there's more work to do, and we'll continue to do that.

It was not the Nova Scotia Premier who went to Ottawa with cap in hand. It was the Alberta Premier, looking for a change in the fiscal stabilization program, looking for money from Ottawa to deal with their issues.

Since we came in in 2013, we made some very difficult decisions. On every one of them, they tilted their head, and they turned away, just like they do when they're in government. They're afraid to take on the issues that matter to Nova Scotians. They're afraid to make tough choices. They believe in the status quo. Depending on who they're talking to, they have one position, and then when they talk to someone else, they change. That's not leadership; that's a windmill.

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

PREM. - COVID-19: PAID SICK LEAVE - INTRODUCE

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, addressing the spread of COVID-19, Dr. Strang, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, said recently that one of the best things people can do to protect themselves is to stay home when they're sick.

Many people in Nova Scotia don't stay home from work when they're sick, not because they don't want to follow Dr. Strang's advice but because if they don't work they don't get paid. This is a situation with a simple remedy: paid sick days for all employees in Nova Scotia as a public health protection.

Does the Premier agree with me that paid sick days should be immediately introduced?

THE PREMIER: As he would know, many private companies across this province continue to provide support; those things are negotiated at the bargaining table with their employer. He would also know that there are many self-employed people in the province who want to be self-employed, continue to grow their business, and make decisions for that business. I don't believe it should be government that imposes that.

As someone in this House - and I join with him in supporting the collective bargaining process in Nova Scotia - I'll let the employers and the representatives come to determine what benefits they want.

GARY BURRILL: The World Health Organization has changed its assessment of the risk of COVID-19 infection from high to very high. When it strikes, according to the WHO, containment is going to be very challenging. It's, rather, going to be a situation of management. In other words, people who are sick need to be able to stay at home.

One way we could help would be to stop patients from having to make unnecessary trips to the doctor for the sole reason that their employer requires a doctor's sick note.

Will the Premier agree, given the dangerously contagious nature of this infection, that the government should end employers requiring sick notes from employees?

THE PREMIER: I agree with the honourable member. I don't think it should just be for this. Regardless of whether it is the current virus or other ailments that happen, I think we need to have a serious look at whether or not we should be asking our employees to go get a sick note.

GARY BURRILL: I thank the Premier for that thoughtful answer. I want to tell him about a woman named Kaitlyn Robinson.

Kaitlyn lives in Eastern Passage and she was off work with pneumonia. She went to the doctor - waited three hours in the waiting room - got a sick note, then went to work and gave it to the employer. The employer said if she missed more than four days, she would be written up, so she went back to work while she still had pneumonia.

What is the Premier currently, concretely, doing to make sure people in Nova Scotia are able to stay home, as all health authorities are recommending, when they're sick?

THE PREMIER: As I said in the second question that he asked me, I agree with the honourable member. We need to have a serious look at what the adjustment looks like when it comes to requiring a medical note or if they need one at all. I think as a government we're looking at that with our own employees across government.

I don't know the particular employer that he's referring to, or the employee he mentioned by name, but there's always the Labour Board and supports around for workers in our province. I think all Nova Scotians would agree when someone is ill, they should have the right and the ability to stay home.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM. - YAR. FERRY: FILE MISMANAGEMENT - APOLOGIZE

TIM HOUSTON: In 2015, the government signed a 10-year deal to operate the Yarmouth to Bar Harbor ferry. At the time, our caucus raised concerns in this House that the deal could cost upwards of \$100 million over the course of the contract.

The government laughed at the time and called us negative. Well, I don't know if the Premier's chief of staff has had a chance to tell him, but according to Global News last night, by this time next year the government will have spent \$96 million on this ferry in 6 years. We had the money right; we just had the time wrong. We estimated it would be 10 years.

My question for the Premier is: Will the Premier apologize to Nova Scotians for the mismanagement of this file, where they've spent \$100 million and there's no stability after six years?

THE PREMIER: I will continue to be consistent with Nova Scotians when I tell them that we support Nova Scotia's international link from Yarmouth to the United States. I will continue to defend the position of our government. When we're wrong, I'll acknowledge that, as I have in the past. I'll continue to defend and fight for the economy of this province.

I will say the same thing in Sydney that I say in Yarmouth; I think it's incumbent on all members in this House to do the same thing. Unlike the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party when he's in Yarmouth, he's in favour of the ferry; when he's everywhere else, he's against it.

TIM HOUSTON: I will always say the same thing no matter where I am and who's listening. I think it's the Premier who needs to look in the mirror on that particular comment.

The reality is, the first two years of this deal were expected to cost an average of \$16 million. In this year's budget, the operational grant is again \$16 million. The idea that the Liberal government pushed at the time was that as the contract went on, the operator would be less reliant on operating grants and more self-sufficient. What has happened is that every tourism operator in this province has been let down by this government because they haven't been able to get it right. Every taxpayer in this province has been let down by this government because they haven't been able to get it right.

I would like to ask the Premier a simple question: Will the Premier just acknowledge that after six years and \$100 million in the past, he's simply just rebooting and trying to start over on this service?

THE PREMIER: Six years in, we have gone from a \$0.5 billion deficit to tabling our fifth balanced budget. Six years in, more young Nova Scotians are planning their future in this province than they were in 2013. Six years in, our population is at an all-time high, and we're continuing to grow. Six years in, our unemployment is at an all-time low. Those are the kinds of things our government has been able to do, regardless of the negativity coming from the other side of the House.

We're going to continue to work with Nova Scotians to build a positive approach to this province and continue to make sure that not only are we leading Atlantic Canada but we're seen as a positive jewel in the country, and that when outside people are looking at investing in Canada they look at Nova Scotia.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

H&W: N-95 MASKS - CURRENT STOCK

COLTON LEBLANC: Yesterday, there was a rumour circulating around social media that there was a case of COVID-19 at the Cobequid Health Centre. The officials responsible moved quickly to shut down those rumours and reassure everyone that there had been no confirmed cases of the virus in Nova Scotia. It does go to show the level of anxiety around COVID-19. People want to know that Nova Scotia is prepared and that the people will be safe.

The N-95 mask is an essential piece of personal protective equipment to protect our health care workers against the virus. Does the minister know how many N-95 masks are currently in stock within the health care system?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the question and in particular the context that he provided around the issues of misinformation that gets out there. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all Nova Scotians to rely on valid and credible sources of information like the provincial website, which provides updates on COVID-19: novascotia.ca/coronavirus. If you see social media posts that post information out there, please reach out and validate that information before you start spreading it online to help avoid those types of issues.

As far as personal protective equipment, that's part of the planning process and working with public health officials and our partners. They have indicated that they are confident in the supply that they have for the status of planning and preparedness at this stage.

COLTON LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, our health care workers work hard across the province to deliver care to Nova Scotians. If they become sick, our preparations will quickly crumble. These masks are incredibly important to keeping these workers safe and able to deal with an outbreak. Being specific on the extent of the supply may give Nova Scotians a good indication of the overall preparedness, as will knowing how much more can be brought in if needed.

Can the minister provide the source of Nova Scotia's supply of N-95 masks and where they are manufactured?

RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for raising the question of preparedness for COVID-19. Obviously, we continue our preparations. We're following the pandemic planning protocols that have been established and updated based upon past instances like SARS and H1N1.

At the current status, the threat remains relatively low in a Nova Scotia context. We recognize on the global scale that the spread is growing, and we anticipate that there will be cases here in Nova Scotia. At the present time, we still remain at a low-threat level. The

preparation and the work for protective equipment and supplies and resources continues to follow along in accordance with the planning of public health officials, as outlined in the preparation materials.

[2:15 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

EECD - COVID-19: SCHOOL TRIP CANCELLATIONS - CONFIRM

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. After first saying that decisions on March Break trips to Europe were up to parents and travel companies, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development changed course yesterday. Yesterday the minister indicated that government was considering cancelling international travel because of COVID-19 and he would make an announcement within the next 48 hours.

My question to the minister is: Why is the minister leaving students and parents hanging for 48 hours when the CSAP has already made a decision?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, the situation is fluid. We are still taking our lead from the opinions on the front lines, from our school communities, from parents. It is that feedback that has informed where we're at today. We need to take time to evaluate the options, the positions that are coming in. We will have a decision on this that will be released later today. I look forward to chatting with the member and the press once we release that.

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think we all do recognize that it is a fluid situation. However, it is critical that communication and leadership are at the forefront in an issue like this. There are a lot of parents and students who are waiting and have waited for a response. We know that international school trips are scheduled to leave next week. The minister's inaction and delay in making a decision mean many students won't know if they'll be travelling in some cases. Some may have even packed their bags today.

Students and parents need clarity. They need government to ensure that they don't lose the cost of the trip if it's eventually cancelled. How will the minister communicate to students, parents, and schools exactly how this decision will impact their March Break trips and their pocketbooks?

ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, we've been working with the regions to fully assess the situation, including financial implications. The regions will be communicating directly to parents and school communities later today.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

JUSTICE - STREET CHECKS DATA: MAKE AVAILABLE - CONFIRM

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. In March 2019, the Human Rights Commission's *Street Checks Report* overwhelmingly confirmed what African Nova Scotians have been saying for decades: street checks are an instance of systemic racism. In that report, Dr. Wortley put forward many important recommendations for change. One of these was that data collected through street checks be de-identified and made available for research purposes.

The FOI request from our caucus indicates: "HRP will retain existing historical street check records until December 2020, at which point all records not specifically identified for further retention will be purged" from the database. I will table that.

Will the minister confirm if he will intervene and prevent the deletion of those records by HRP, making them available for research as requested by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission?

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. The point my colleague presents is a very sensitive discussion that we're all working diligently to address. Systemic racism in Nova Scotia is simply unacceptable. The status quo is no longer acceptable. We're working with our police community and police leaders to address these issues. The specific circumstances my colleague speaks about, I want to look into that further.

I know there is a date identified as December 2020. I'll commit to my colleague to addressing that with Halifax Regional Police. There are differing positions on the use and value of that information and we want to be sure that we land in a space that's appropriate for all.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I want to thank the minister for that answer. Through the FOI, we found that there are a number of Dr. Wortley's recommendations where no action has been taken. For example, no action has been taken on Recommendation 4.1: "The HRP and RCMP should develop a protocol that will screen new recruits for both cultural competency and racial bias."

Given the recent appalling police responses to both Santina Rao in a Halifax store and a Black 15-year-old arrested in Bedford, action on this recommendation is critical. Will the minister commit to urgent action on all of Dr. Wortley's recommendations?

MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, this is a very important discussion, a very sensitive discussion that we are all focused on. Addressing the responses to the Wortley report is a priority in the Department of Justice.

A number of those recommendations have been completed. A number of those recommendations are in progress. I know that those individuals across the broad community who are partaking in that work are committed to addressing all of the recommendations. I look forward to the day that all of those recommendations are completed. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

H&W - DESMOND INQUIRY FINDING: INFO. SHARING - IMPROVE

JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness.

Last Monday the Lionel Desmond Inquiry completed its first phase. The judge leading the inquiry, Warren Zimmer, stated previously that the lack of information sharing among provincial and federal levels of government kept key information from being known - and I will table that - particularly because Veterans Affairs and provincial health officials seem to be operating in silos. Additionally, officials who regulate the possession of firearms were unaware of the extent of Mr. Desmond's mental illness because of this.

My concern is that the lack of information sharing leads to poor health outcomes for many more Nova Scotians. I would like to ask the minister: What is the protocol for sharing health information between federal and provincial levels?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Certainly, the circumstances of that tragedy which the inquiry is investigating is to evaluate and bring forward recommendations for enhancements to avoid a tragic situation like this.

Again, as that work is ongoing, what I would advise the members is that we look forward to the final conclusions of that inquiry so that we as government can engage to address any potential shortcomings and recommendations to improve the situation, so that a situation does not befall another family in this province.

JOHN LOHR: I'd like to thank the minister for that answer.

The recently published Blueprint for Mental Health and Addictions tells us that Nova Scotia is focused on three key areas: access, integration, and continuum of care. However, there are no details on how Nova Scotia will collaborate with federal systems generally or how it will help our veterans when they come home - and there was a lack of access, integration, and continuum for the care of Lionel Desmond.

I would like to ask the minister: Why are there no plans outlined in the Blueprint for Mental Health and Addictions for collaboration on a national level?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, in fact, the outline and the plans for the work around mental health and addictions in the province - our efforts and investments that programs were focused on all Nova Scotians who may access our provincial services of care - are designed to respond to their needs; to provide the interventions and care that is needed to support them so that they can live healthy and productive lives. That's the intent of the blueprint - to guide that work and improvements in our mental health and addictions outcomes in this province.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North, on a new question.

**H&W: YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH -
SOCIAL MEDIA AND SMARTPHONE IMPACT**

JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is again for the Minister of Health and Wellness.

Recently, the Canadian Medical Association Journal published an analysis examining the impact of social media and smartphone use on youth mental health - and I will table that.

It notes that youth hospital admissions for mental health are on the rise across Canada, and suicides are now the second leading cause of death for Canadian youth. The analysis notes the rise in mental distress among youth is moving in close relation to the rise in social media and smartphone usage but has been understudied. My concern is that current strategies are still lagging behind in this key factor for our youth mental health.

I would like to ask the minister: Are there tailored education-based approaches specifically for youth around this subject in mental health?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I sincerely thank the member for bringing this information to the floor of the Legislature. It is important to note.

I believe that within the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, which is the department that has the most direct access to Nova Scotia youth, provides, as part of their curriculum, opportunities to engage with youth on the social media and content online. So, there is work in that regard. And, again, in the health system for reaching out and engaging we have expanded a number of youth-centric mental health programs and initiatives that I would be happy to provide more information about in the next response.

JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, I'd appreciate having that extra information or being provided more information.

As previously stated, hospital admissions for youth mental health concerns are on the rise across Canada. There's no standard definition of what would be addictive behaviours regarding smartphone and social media use. However, concerns have been raised about social media platforms, specifically for youth, being designed to promote behavioural reinforcements and behavioural addiction. My concern is that Nova Scotians are being affected by this and it requires a tailored approach.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister of Health and Wellness: Has his department looked into the addictive design of social media platforms targeting Nova Scotian youth?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for bringing this to the floor. Those additional programs and services that have been youth focused include the expansions of SchoolsPlus throughout schools across the province and the expansion of our adolescent outreach mental health program modelled on the CaperBase adolescent outreach model in Cape Breton, is now out in about 100 schools across the province in the last year. I believe we've had something in the vicinity of 25,000 visits. That's meeting those youth who may need identification, care, support and advice.

Regardless of what the trigger point is, if it's social media or others, these are the supports we're doing to provide broad level support. Those investments have been made.

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

LAE: FUNDING FOR NURSING EDUCATION - EXPLAIN DELAY

BRIAN COMER: Mr. Speaker, imagine if instead of 70 new nursing students starting in the Fall, 70 new nursing students were graduating this Spring. Less than \$700,000 is making that possible this year, but that means those nurses are still years away from treating patients.

My question for the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education is: No one will dispute the need for more nurses, but why is this a program his department is just getting to now?

HON. LABI KOUSOULIS: The program was started now because the need is forthcoming. A few years ago, the need wasn't there, so when we saw the need on the horizon, working with the Department of Health and Wellness and the Minister of Health and Wellness, we put together these seats not only at CBU but also at Dalhousie.

BRIAN COMER: Mr. Speaker, I have to respectfully disagree that the need hasn't been there for a number of years. They've had the money every year and have just chosen not to spend it, while with each passing year the need for the health care workers grew. For an accumulated amount that is less than 10 per cent of the money spent last year on the

ferry that didn't sail, we could have had 70 new nurses graduating this Spring. I guess better late than never.

Does the minister acknowledge that by waiting to create this funding he has been a contributing factor to the current health care crisis in this province?

LABI KOUSOULIS: Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, the need we see on the horizon coming in the next few years, especially with the new health care facility being brought into Cape Breton - a \$750-million investment. With that investment, we're going to need more nurses working in that hospital, which will be great for the citizens of not only Cape Breton but all of Nova Scotia.

I will also add that we have doubled the cohort going through.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**H&W - ADULT PROTECTION SERVS.:
LIMITED HOURS - INAPPROPRIATE**

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Looking after our most vulnerable adults is not a nine-to-five job. However, I recently learned of a terrible situation where the senior safety coordinator of Queens Care Society had to act outside of her training and responsibilities to safeguard the life of a woman who was in need of Adult Protection Services. It turns out that Adult Protection Services are only available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

My question for the minister is: Will the minister admit that banker's hours are not appropriate for Adult Protection Services?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Obviously, the care of our most vulnerable citizens, at whatever age they may be, is of critical importance to the Province. That means that we have programs and services in place to respond to situations where that need is identified, to investigate and provide the appropriate safeguards for those residents in need of that type of intervention.

[2:30 p.m.]

KIM MASLAND: The incident that I referenced earlier involved the senior safety coordinator dealing with the situation on a stormy Friday night that stretched into a Saturday morning. The minister may say that we do have programs in place, but they weren't available for this lady at this time.

The details of the incident are detailed in a letter to the minister from the chair of the Queens Care Society, and I'll table that, Mr. Speaker. In his judgment, the senior safety

coordinator was put in danger because the client needed help outside of the weekday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. availability of Adult Protection Services. The hours put volunteers like the senior safety coordinator in a terrible position, where they have to choose between being safe or helping a vulnerable person.

My question to the minister is: Will he commit to establishing a system where Adult Protection Services can be reached after office hours? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the question. I don't recall seeing that piece of correspondence. I'll certainly take a look at the concerns and the specific situation that is outlined there and ensure it's given the appropriate response and consideration if changes are needed in our programming.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

JUSTICE - POLICE ACT REGS.: DISCOVERABILITY - INCLUDE

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. Issues with the police complaints process were raised by the Wortley Report on police street checks and in the ongoing judicial review brought forward by Carrie Low.

When the government agreed to change the Police Act Regulations to align the HRP time limit for complaints with that of the RCMP, they missed the opportunity to add the important principle of discoverability. There are many reasons why an individual may not be immediately aware of failures or negligence in the handling of the police investigation. If we want a fully accountable police complaints process, the time limit must start from the time when an individual became aware of the issue that is the subject of their complaint.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister agree to further amend the Police Act Regulations to include the principle of discoverability?

HON. MARK FUREY: I thank my colleague for the question. In these circumstances, Mr. Speaker, my colleague would know that we have changed the Police Act to ensure that the time frame associated with municipal police officers is aligned with that of the RCMP, a period of 12 months, Mr. Speaker.

We've also addressed in those amendments to the bill the issue of discoverability that my colleague references, by allowing the Police Complaints Commissioner to use his or her discretion in extending that time frame, which speaks to the point my colleague references. We've had multiple legal eyes on this particular subject, with the objective of achieving what my colleague has identified, and we believe that the amendments we've made address discoverability.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I thank the member for that answer. I would say that discretion addresses the issue, but it doesn't solve it.

Mr. Speaker, the Limitations of Actions Act was introduced in 2014 in order to acknowledge a nearly universally accepted principle that time limits in legislation ought to start from the time the alleged wrongdoing was discovered. That Act amended the Land Registration Act, the Marketable Titles Act, the Personal Property Security Act, the Sydney Steel Corporation Sale Act but not the Police Act. This troubling omission is well illustrated by Carrie Low's situation.

Mr. Speaker, when will the government take action to close this important legislative gap?

MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, in the assessment of our amendments to the Police Act, we had significant legal expertise review the Act, review the proposed amendments. We believe, based on the flexibility that the Police Complaints Commissioner has, that the issue of discoverability is addressed in the most recent amendments.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

TIR - HWY. 359: REPAVING - TIMELINE

JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Highway 359 is one of two numbered highways that run north-south and carry the bulk of the north-south traffic in eastern Kings County. That includes thousands of cars and hundreds of 18-wheel trucks each day. Lobster, farm produce, farm supplies, farm equipment, a grain centre, the major fertilizer plants supplying Kings County are all on that road. It is such a rough highway that people's homes shake when trucks go by.

My constituents are disappointed that this road was again passed over in the five-year plan. My question for the minister is: When will the very rough Highway 359 be repaved?

HON. LLOYD HINES: I'm very pleased to see that we have tabled in the budget the largest capital projects in the history of Nova Scotia for the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. We can't get to all of them, though, but I'll certainly undertake to see where that particular road, which is of vital importance to our farmers in the area there, is on that plan.

JOHN LOHR: I just want to point out to the minister that we already have a fertilizer plant on that road, so my constituents might be forgiven for thinking the minister's answer is more of the same. (Laughter.) If not this year, will Highway 359 get paved next

year or the year after that? Or maybe we can just give it an Annapolis County postal code and that'll help?

THE PREMIER: I know many of the people in the honourable member's constituency and I agree with them. They need better representation. I would also say to the honourable member, if there's paving that is currently happening in his riding that he would like to divert to that road, I would encourage him to go to the member and we will cancel those tenders and put the tender where the honourable member would like.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

H&W: LUNG CANCER - SCREENING

STEVE CRAIG: I recently met with a constituent whose parents both died from lung cancer. She was inquiring about whether there's a plan to have lung cancer screening here in Nova Scotia. It's an excellent question. According to her, Japan offers annual screenings by way of X-rays and bloodwork. With breast cancer screening and colon cancer screening here now in Nova Scotia, she would like to see lung cancer screening added. Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health and Wellness, does Nova Scotia offer regular lung cancer screening?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for bringing this important question to the floor of the Legislature. Obviously, many of us have likely been touched by cancer in various forms, either directly or through loved ones. In this particular case, I don't believe there's an existing, specific, broad-level lung screening program as the member is referring to. However, it's my understanding that there have been some recent developments in other jurisdictions in Canada that are being monitored by the cancer care group. That group responsible for building the business case and learning from those best practices to help inform when and how such a program may be considered in a Nova Scotia context.

STEVE CRAIG: Minister, thank you very much for that answer. I've been touched by cancer, my wife has, my daughter has, and my mother-in-law passed of lung cancer. I think this is another situation where we find that screening and early detection just won't pay for itself just with the lives saved; it will pay for itself in the treatments and the future treatments that patients will have to endure with this awful disease.

In 2016, lung cancer accounted for 26 per cent of cancer deaths here in Nova Scotia. It seems to make sense that breast cancer screening and colon cancer screening are just wonderful things that have improved and helped increase the longevity and quality of life of our citizens here in Nova Scotia, so it makes sense, too, that we would look at lung cancer screening. Minister, through the Speaker, will the upcoming budget, the 2020-21 budget, reflect any movement to advance screening for lung cancer?

RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the question. I know we've broadly discussed the budget in Estimates but in this case, we recognize, as a government, as well, the important role and the need to make more progress in the area of cancer treatments. We don't have a dedicated program, as I've mentioned in my previous response. It's something being looked at, but no program is being designed or advanced in this budget that's being debated now.

However, we as a government do recognize the importance of progress, especially in areas that have been under-represented and under-researched. That's why we have \$1 million dedicated to ovarian cancer research, the very first for advanced ovarian - important research for women's cancer in that space.

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

H&W - DOCTORS: EXIT INTERVIEWS - NUMBERS

ALANA PAON: I am hopeful that the new agreement between doctors and the Province will improve doctor recruitment and retention for the province. Low wages are not the only reason that doctors are leaving.

In 2016, the government announced it would begin conducting exit interviews with doctors who are leaving. It was widely reported in 2017 that few doctors were actually participating in the voluntary exit interviews. According to notes from the 2019 Doctors Nova Scotia members forum in June 2019, the NSHA is not currently conducting exit interviews.

Can the Minister of Health and Wellness please confirm: Is the NSHA conducting these interviews and how many doctors are participating?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: In fact, the NSHA should be conducting those interviews. As the member noted, there's not a process to force or require the health care providers to participate in those interviews. One of the opportunities presented before me is part of my discussions with Doctors Nova Scotia to engage with them to see if they have suggestions and thoughts on how the Nova Scotia Health Authority can engage and work with physicians who may be leaving the province, to encourage a higher degree of participation with those interviews.

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, I didn't quite hear an answer on how many doctors were participating, but doctors are on record as being dissatisfied because they feel they haven't been supported professionally and are not having their concerns addressed by those in leadership.

A departing physician could impart valuable information and identify problems, propose solutions, maybe even guide the budget spending. We're losing two doctors in my constituency in the next few weeks.

Can the Minister of Health and Wellness please advise how many doctors have been participating and how we can put things forward to make sure we get that valuable information to impart into the process?

RANDY DELOREY: I thank the member for the inquiry. I guess I might be interpreting, or perhaps misinterpreting - the member can clarify for me later if I'm off-base here.

If the member's getting at how those physicians in her community that she's noted, who are preparing to leave, participate in and ensure that they participate in the exit interview process - we'll connect. I'll get the appropriate contact information if the NSHA hasn't already initiated that process to provide that information so that those physicians can reach out and trigger that process themselves. That, I'll certainly pass on to the member.

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

TIR - MIRA GUT BRIDGE: CONSTRUCTION - TIMELINE

BRIAN COMER: The residents of Mira Gut have been without a means to cross the Mira River for more than two years. The lack of a crossing has literally divided a community and the detour has been more than inconvenient.

There was a light at the end of the tunnel when the minister announced that the bridge was set to be replaced, with construction starting this Spring. Now my constituents just want to be sure that the project will be completed.

Can the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal confirm that the new Mira Gut bridge will indeed begin construction and when?

HON. LLOYD HINES: I thank the member opposite for the question. It's good to hear from him, as his predecessor was often on his feet talking about the New Boston Road, along with the Mira Gut bridge.

We are well aware of the importance of that particular bridge and the route in the area. We have plans to replace it. I believe it's on next year's capital plan, if you want to check the five-year plan. Part of the issue there is the implication with the federal government to get the approvals because they also have a say in the authority associated with that.

BRIAN COMER: I thank the minister for that answer. Obviously, the people in the area are concerned about the type of bridge that will be constructed. They want to know that it is the right design for the road traffic and for the river. Also, they want to be sure that the new bridge can withstand the Winter and the weather in the area.

Are there plans for continued consultations about the Mira Gut bridge and when will these consultations take place?

LLOYD HINES: I thank the member opposite for the question. I sincerely appreciate the indication that the community is interested in this, of course they are. It's an important route. It has been there for a long time. If you know the history of the crossing, it was an old railway bridge that got converted to a highway bridge when the rail was pulled out - and we are definitely going to replace that bridge.

Part of the process is the design, which in that instance was fairly elaborate because of the need to accommodate the river traffic and the upstream activity there. I'm pretty sure that we landed on a height that would be the same as the bridges further up the river. We will definitely be talking to the community to inform them what we're going to do when we have the design completed.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

H&W - PICTOU COUNTY: NEW DIALYSIS SITES - UPDATE

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Several residents of Pictou County are currently receiving dialysis treatment. Approximately 50 per cent of these residents receive treatment at the Sutherland Harris Memorial Hospital in Pictou. The wait-list is currently growing and the other 50 per cent must travel to Truro, Antigonish, sometimes Halifax for treatment. I realize that projects are under way and it is necessary to get these new chairs operating before announcing more. My question to the minister is, are there any of the previously announced dialysis sites near completion?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for advocating and raising this important topic in the Legislature. We speak about it often. Obviously, it's a concern for many of our constituents, especially those who have to travel for dialysis treatment.

In fact, we do anticipate, as noted in this year's budget, a fairly significant increase in dialysis treatment because we are expecting several of our ongoing projects to complete and become operational this year. This means that required an additional operational investment through the Nova Scotia Health Authority to deliver the additional dialysis at those sites. The member would know that we are nearing the next phase of planning and preparation for the next round of potential dialysis sites.

PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, the four units of the Sutherland Harris Memorial Hospital are insufficient to meet the growing demand in our communities. We all know it's terribly inconvenient for residents to travel outside Pictou County for this treatment. Due to the aging population in my area, demand for dialysis services is only increasing. Aging patients, increased distance and more uncertainty is a dangerous recipe. Recently six additional chairs were added to the Halifax Infirmary. I know the minister agrees that dialysis treatment is hard on patients and he wants to make it easier for more Nova Scotians to receive this treatment. My question for the minister is, will the minister commit to placing Pictou County on his radar for additional dialysis chairs as soon as some of the other sites are completed?

RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member again for this important topic. As previously noted in the past, and as the member rightfully noted in his preamble to the question, I would need to get the work completed on these existing projects, as we then can move to the next phase, which is planning for any future expansions.

Obviously, communities across the province with need - whether that be Pictou County or Argyle-Barrington or other communities across the province - we'll assure that assessment takes into account those sites as part of the provincial assessment as to where we might expand programming and dialysis seats going forward.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

H&W - DARTMOUTH GENERAL: MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES - COMMIT

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. The November 2017 Auditor General's Report stated, "Dartmouth General is the only regional hospital in the province without a crisis response service and no psychiatry support to the emergency department."

Through you, Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is, will the government commit to provide mental health services to the people of Dartmouth at the Dartmouth General?

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member again for raising this important topic of mental health and wellness services before the Legislature. Certainly, this government recognizes the important role the Dartmouth General Hospital plays in the delivery of health care for the residents in and around the Dartmouth community. In fact, the recent investments and expansions at that site, we also recognize the valuable role that facility plays in providing care for other, broader communities, as well.

I believe that shows in the same way that the delivery of health care services is an integrated process . . .

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

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture on an introduction.

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw the attention of the members to the Speaker's Gallery to recognize Charmaine Williams, Assistant Liaison Officer for the Eastern Caribbean Services, which assists with processing requests for foreign seasonal agricultural and fisheries workers.

Charmaine is visiting in Halifax and attending the first annual Minister's Conference on Agriculture, on behalf of Minister King of St. Lucia, from the consulate in Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like all members of this House to offer Charmaine the warm welcome of the House, and I'd ask her to rise. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South on an introduction.

KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct folks' eyes to the East Gallery where we're joined by a wonderful Nova Scotian from the valley, Maura Ryan. I asked my colleague from Halifax Atlantic if he had any words to share on this introduction. He said no, she's great, though.

Maura has joined us here today. We're very fortunate that she lends her wisdom and bright mind to the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women. I'd like all members to join me in welcoming her. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid on an introduction.

STEVE CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce and recognize Councillor Paul Russell, up in the West Gallery. Paul certainly has been involved in the community of Sackville for decades and was recently elected as councillor to replace the previous wonderful councillor that they had out there.

I wish him well and please join me in welcoming Paul to this House. (Applause)

OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 244.

Bill No. 244 - Education Act.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured this afternoon to rise to speak on Bill No. 244: An Act to Amend Schedule A of Chapter 1 of the Acts of 2018, the Education Act, Respecting Mental Health Wellness Kits.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes the simplest solution has a lot of merit and wisdom to it. We know that the demands and needs of the classroom here in Nova Scotia and throughout Canada have changed dramatically in the last 10 to 20 years.

Certainly, when I started teaching in 2001, mental health was rarely talked about with teachers and their students. In the early to mid 2000s, we started to see a profound shift, a very positive shift I believe, in encouraging our young Nova Scotians - our young Canadians - to talk about mental health: to take ownership of their feelings; to take responsibility for how they are, and to talk about that. That's important because, for a very long time within the education system, that wasn't always the case. The case certainly was that our young people were expected to, I guess, leave their feelings at the door. That no longer happens.

We have thousands of teachers in this province, and I commend them for this, who actively engage our students to talk about their mental health. Of course, the issue is that the supports have not always kept up to, I suppose, the demand that our students have to talk about mental health.

Certainly, we have seen improvements through SchoolsPlus and various other programs in our public system. However, I think we also need to focus on the most important unit within our school system, and that is the classroom. That is where it matters, because it's in the classroom that our students remember either a wonderful learning experience within the public-school system or a very negative experience.

This bill before the House would put an accessible, direct resource in the classroom to assist teachers in supporting students who may be going through a very difficult time - a period of mental distress. In no way is this bill attempting to offer a long-term solution to an individual who is in crisis. This is meant as a preventative measure. This is meant to have this resource in the classroom to help support.

Mental health wellness kits - this idea came right from the grassroots. Two of my former colleagues, two phenomenal teachers with over 50 years' experience combined between the two of them, came forward to me last Summer with this idea of a mental health wellness kit or a mental health first aid kit. I want to thank John Stewart and Frances Abbass for their advocacy work with this. Certainly they know how helpful a resource like this would be in the classroom.

I can remember the first aid kits being brought into our classrooms about 10 years ago. I can remember a time when the first aid kit was simply maintained in the office with the administrative assistant, the vice-principal, and principal, but common sense prevailed - why not have a first aid kit in the classroom? Well, if there's a first aid kit in the classroom, there should be a mental health first aid kit in the classroom, as well.

Through our expanding knowledge of neuroscience, we know the correlation between the body and the mind. We have to have the attitude moving forward that the mind is just as important as the body. Certainly, I have seen that play out in the classroom and we have made gains; I want to acknowledge that. In terms of our attitude, we have made gains in talking about mental health. So, let the resources keep up with the new realities that exist in our classroom and the new positive attitudes that are out there about mental health.

We have to always be asking ourselves what supports we can put in place to minimize anxiety in our students but also to give them opportunities to learn to cope with anxieties, supports to overcome immediate symptoms of panic attacks. This falls in line very much with my view on education, which has always been to build the individual in spirit, mind, and body, to build the individual so that they can achieve their full potential. In order to do that, schools need to have the resources to teach young people how to cope with anxious feelings.

This is just anecdotal, but I certainly saw a growth in anxious feelings among our young people, and no doubt we are starting to see studies now - the correlation between smartphones, social media, and the anxiety that we are seeing in our youth. It is becoming more and more imperative how critical it is to have the resources and the approaches to teach our young people how to cope with anxiety. We all acknowledge very different levels of anxiety and it impacts people differently.

Having these resources in the classroom would also invite a conversation about this - that no person, I believe, is immune to anxious feelings. The degrees in which it impacts a person varies but certainly we need to recognize that school is a place and it should be a safe place where we can learn to cope with those feelings.

This idea, based upon the research that I've done - besides it being put forward to me in Dartmouth East by two amazing teachers, John Stewart and Frances Abbass - was actually Tina Chan at the University of Waterloo, a master's student in Public Health. In

2018, she initiated this at the University of Waterloo. There is a fantastic article here from *Maclean's* magazine, an article written by Emily Baron Cadloff. I just want to read an excerpt from this, if that's okay, Mr. Speaker. "Chan needed something to quickly overcome the immediate symptoms of her panic attacks, and some coping mechanisms. So she made her own solution. 'I thought if there's a first-aid kit for physical trauma, there should also be one for mental health symptoms,' Chan recalls." I'll table that, Mr. Speaker.

[3:00 p.m.]

I think that's a powerful line right there, attributed to Ms. Chan. If there's a first-aid kit for physical trauma, there should be one for mental health. Again, when we use the term trauma, let's all recognize there are varying degrees of trauma.

Classrooms are very complex, and they've grown in their complexity. This common-sense resource addresses those complexities. There are many needs in our classrooms, and I think we have to be very cognizant of the fact that we need to listen to our teachers. I think we have an idea that has come out of the classroom, come out of the lived experience of our teachers who are proposing: look, this could be a great resource to help support our students. Along with this bill proposing to place mental health kits within the classroom, it also puts forward the notion of consultation, a fundamental pillar in the development of legislation.

The bill calls for consultation with mental health professionals to decide the content of these mental health wellness kits, these mental health first-aid kits. Certainly, you want to have that consultation, to speak with our mental health professionals. Whether it's stress balls or fidget spinners, gum or a small card that has contact information for our students to access a higher level of mental health support.

Then, of course, the bill calls for further professional developments in mental health. I think all of us in this Chamber, and many of my colleagues in this Chamber have served in this House much longer than I. The growing urgency is out there among Nova Scotians to improve access to mental health services. I know that among teachers in this province, increased professional development around mental health has been a constant ask - authentic professional development that really can help set students up for success in the classroom. Admittedly, thousands of our teachers in this province often feel, at times, some of the professional development that's offered doesn't help their pedagogy, doesn't help their practice in the classroom. If this was initiated, if this was accepted by government and initiated, of course we'd want to have the appropriate professional development that goes along with that.

To be clear, these wellness kits are to be used in situations that have not reached a crisis point. The end goal of this wellness kit would be for a teacher - who is one of our front-line workers, who, perhaps, identifies some anxiety in students, that anxiety is an obstacle to learning, that anxiety may, perhaps, be an obstacle to social interaction - to use

those resources to help that student cope with those feelings and, if necessary, to use the resources to access a higher level of service if required. It bridges back to what we want to achieve in our education system constantly. That's the promotion of independence - taking ownership of feelings and acknowledging that it's okay if you're unable to cope with those feelings. Asking for help - it's normal to ask for help.

I see enormous benefits from this. In terms of the classroom dynamic, this could actually assist in freeing the teacher from constantly bringing the student back on task. If we can promote and emphasize self-regulation, that is critical and only goes to serve a person later on in life. Of course, it encourages individuality. It encourages taking responsibility for feelings and to encourage concrete steps to manage stress. As we all know, stress is unavoidable. It is important for adults to teach our young people very good habits in dealing with stress.

I believe the bill before this House is a common-sense, practical bill proposing a practical resource to help support our students and help our teachers, who every day wish to set our students up for success. It promotes an accessible direct resource that places a resource that could really make a difference right at the fingertips of our teachers.

I think back to my time in the classroom, and wow, students very much want to talk about the issues that are impacting them in their life. That has grown more and more.

With some of the studies that have come out recently, we know that anxiety has been an issue with our youth, specifically related to social media and specifically related to iPhones. I think we have to constantly adapt to the new realities. The reality is that mental health is talked about, so our resources must consistently adapt and keep up with the realities of the classroom.

I humbly ask for this government to consider passage of this bill. I encourage this government to work with teachers to bring mental health wellness kits into our classrooms in the province of Nova Scotia.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their kindness. I'm pleased to rise and speak to Bill No. 244, introduced by my colleague the member for Dartmouth East.

I think there's a lot we can agree with him about. To begin with, we need to make children's mental health a priority. We know that. We've been talking about that for a long time now. As the member points out, we live in a rapidly changing world. I think the member for Dartmouth East, as a former educator - maybe an educator on hiatus; I don't know how he likes to be referred to - has said that the classroom is a place that changes a

lot. I see this with my own children, that the reality today is completely different from the reality when I and many of us were children.

Many of us didn't have computers in our classrooms. We didn't have smartphones. I think it is a whole new world and I think there are also different pressures in the world. We've spoken a lot in the last while about what many call the existential threat of climate change. We know that conversations about that are impacting students. While many of us enjoyed a childhood where we could look forward to the future in the kind of innocent way that kids do, many kids today don't enjoy that same luxury.

To the substance of this bill we would say, sure, but not nearly enough. The member pointed out that he can remember when there were no first aid kits in the classroom. Obviously there ought to be a first aid kit in the classroom. I think this extends that concept and that's great.

In the classrooms where my children spend their days, I see that there are a lot of kids who need constant help and intervention from the educators and support folks in their classroom. I think anything that can help those folks intervene in a productive way is great, but I think there are a lot of other things that are needed. I think in this case, Mr. Speaker, a lot of it really goes back to the social determinants of health and the same things that you'll hear our caucus talk about time and time again. Healthy food in schools - we know that children who don't eat lunch - and there are many, many children in our province who don't eat lunch - tend to have behavioural issues in the afternoons.

Even in my district, Mr. Speaker, I talk to librarians, I talk to principals, I talk to teachers, and they say that everything is kind of okay until noon and then all bets are off. The reason is because they don't know if kids have eaten. I mean, there are a lot of reasons, I am sure, but if you want to find a common denominator, that's a really simple one. That's why we advocate for things like school food programs and poverty alleviation, because one in four students in this province is food insecure. That statistic rises when you get to certain parts of the province. That directly impacts students' mental health and ability to learn.

Similarly, shelter - we know that, increasingly, a great number of students in this province are also housing insecure. They don't know where they are going to be spending the night. I have several case files in my office of parents who can't find a place for their family to live. Imagine the stress, Mr. Speaker, of not knowing, not feeling comfortable and secure in just even knowing that you have your own room or your own home or where you are going to be the next day.

The issues of what happens in school pale in comparison in a child's life to those fundamental feelings of safety and security. Again, Mr. Speaker, this is why we repeat these points over and over again.

Our solution to this problem, and again we support the member's bill, but if we really want to get into the issue of child mental health, we have advocated for and introduced legislation towards a child and youth advocate in Nova Scotia. We believe that having a child and youth advocate would help advance the issues being faced by vulnerable children in this province and would help address many of the issues that we see being raised here.

We also support raising income assistance rates. There are many children whose families are supported in this way and, again, who are housing insecure, who are food insecure.

A \$15 per hour minimum wage, Mr. Speaker - and again this is where these issues of the social determinants of health, of housing, and food and security really overlap. In my constituency we have the Dartmouth Non-Profit Housing Society. They are a fantastic organization. They manage a ton of below-market-rate units as a non-profit. When I talked to Nick Russell, their director, when I first took office, I said, well Nick, what do you do? He said, well, we manage this portfolio of below-market-rate rentals. Typically, they're townhouses, typically they're two or three bedrooms. He said, our bread and butter is the single mum with three kids who works at Tim Hortons because that single mum doesn't have a hope in heck of finding an appropriate place to live for her family. It is not possible.

This was years ago. This was before we were in our current rental market. This is what I hear from folks like that. So, this is why we push for funding for these folks, this is why we push for support for these folks, and this is also why we push for the establishment of some control on rising rents. All of this is directly connected to student mental health.

[3:15 p.m.]

One of the points in this bill is that the kits will contain access information, contact information for provincial mental health services. My question, Mr. Speaker, is what happens when the teacher or the student or the EPA makes that call? Well, it depends on which part of the province they live in and it depends on how lucky they are. How long will a student wait to access those mental health services? It could be quite quickly, for a choice appointment, if they are in the catchment of the IWK here in HRM. It could be 41 days, it could 210 days. It could be longer in parts of Cape Breton - 210 days is longer than the entire school year. Picture a student in distress and the teacher accesses this kit and it helps for a little while. This student, as with many students, needs more help than that. They need to avail themselves of the public mental health system. Picture that they make this call and they are told that next school year they'll get an appointment.

These are the issues that we are pointing to. These are the interventions and wait times in access to mental health that could make the material difference in lives of students and children who are suffering from mental health issues. Other Maritime Provinces have next day, walk-in mental health clinics. We need same day, next day clinics here.

Our caucus has also repeatedly called for a mental health bill of rights here in Nova Scotia. This would help us to unpack issues around mental health and act on them accordingly. I think the bill that the member brings forwards highlights that there are major issues arising in the classroom around mental health. I think it's one sensible piece of a tool kit, but I think there are so many really big interventions that need to be made to really crack the code on this.

We currently spend 4 per cent of our very large health care budget on mental health. Our bill of rights would call for that percentage of funding to increase to 10 per cent. Mental health and physical health are not disconnected. We know that people who suffer from mental health, particularly untreated, tend to avail themselves of all kinds of other parts of our health care system much more frequently than if their issues were dealt with, if there were more upstream interventions, and if we could appropriately triage and treat and support folks who are coming forward with these issues, especially children.

We have also, in that vein, called on the government to provide clarity on the investments in inclusive education. We are happy to see those investments; we are glad to see \$15 million in this budget. We want to know how it's going to be spent because we continue, over and over again, to hear issues around students in classrooms not being appropriately supported and not being able to learn.

That is the issue that was at the heart of the report on inclusive education and the excellent outreach and consultation that was done around that report. That's the nut we're trying to crack and the problem we're trying to solve. We're just asking for transparency as we move down the road to solving that because we're not hearing about a lot of progress. We hear anecdotes around progress from the minister and from the deputy minister. It may be too soon to see the data, but we would like to see more detail on how those plans are rolling out so that we can understand whether or not they will be successful.

Mr. Speaker, mental health kits in classrooms is a start. Back to the member's early comment on this bill that he can remember a time when there were no first aid kits in classrooms, and now we would think it was ridiculous if there wasn't a first aid kit in a classroom. Similarly, I think it makes eminent sense to have a kit with things that could support vulnerable students in the classroom. The underlying issue as we see it is much bigger and is fully in the government's purview to address.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: I thank the member opposite for her usual smart and factual arguments on the issue.

I do want to tell just a quick little story. Last night, I was watching *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* - I don't know if anyone ever watches that - the topic on *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* was on the coronavirus and information that's being put

out there. One of the things that he had said was for world leaders and people who are in leadership positions to start putting out factual evidence. When you make comments on this, you need to make sure that what you're putting out there to the public, because people are listening, is truthful and factual and doesn't lead people in the wrong direction.

The reason I bring that up is one of the comments that I heard from the Progressive Conservative Party was that teachers are not receiving adequate funding for professional development. I'm no expert, but Article 60 in the union contract states that we can't actually direct teachers to take the training. It's there, it's available to them, and they get to choose the mental health training that they want to take. There is a \$7 million budget for that training.

To be clear, the member opposite said that teachers were not getting access to the proper professional development. Article 60 of the NSTU contract states we cannot force them, but it's there. We cannot force them to take the training. They can choose the training they want to take, and there is a \$7 million budget.

I would argue, if the member opposite knows professionals who are not receiving the proper training, maybe they're not aware of the budget. Maybe they're not aware that they have the ability to choose the training. Training is not forced upon them; they can't be told to take this training.

If they are uncomfortable with the training, they can go back to the school administrators, their union leaders, the HRCE, and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development with courses.

I don't know why that is in the contract, but I think it is actually a great thing to have in the contract. The reason I think it's a great thing to have in the contract is so that we don't get stuck with training people the same way over and over. The truth is, for someone who has soon-to-be three children in the education system, both members are absolutely correct.

We all have different experiences, we're all parents here, but I do have a lot of respect for the member for Dartmouth East and his experience in the classroom. I can't speak to what he has seen, but when he says things are changing, I take it for 100 per cent truth from his experience.

I'm sure since he first started teaching in the classroom, it has changed drastically. I've just seen it from when my children go to school, especially around the social media part of it. It used to be that we would go on the internet to kind of take a break from the real world. Now it's the exact opposite: we go into the real world to take a break from the internet.

There is professional development there for teachers. If teachers are not aware of that, they need to be made aware of that from their school administrators, their union reps, HRCE, or the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

They need to know that there is a sizable budget to ensure that they are kept up to date on practices and the ever-evolving world of technology, which I'm sure they have to keep up with. I just found out a week and a half ago that there is something called TikTok. I don't even know what that is, and I don't want to know what it is, because everything I see on the internet about it, it's not a positive thing apparently.

Those are the kind of things that I, as a parent, have to worry about for my three children. When you are educators you have to worry about those things for 20-plus students sometimes, so there is a lot of training there. We hope that if anyone in this room knows of a teacher, an educator, who feels that they are lacking in training, please stress to them that it is there for them and that there are resources for them.

There were some comments made about where some of the resources are going for inclusive education; over 365 specialists have now been hired. Is there more work to be done? Absolutely. That is reflective in this budget around money put aside for inclusive education, but that goes toward school psychologists who will be available year-round.

I think it's an important thing to stress that when the school is on hold in the summertime, learning doesn't stop. Our children still need those resources. A lot of us, obviously, have to work throughout the Summer, so we have to make sure those resources are there.

I know when my son first got into school, the teacher told us that he had some issues pronouncing certain letters, so we were able to get a speech pathologist to help him out. That help - thankfully, we had insurance to help cover that - extended into March Break. It extended into the Summer vacation and things like that. Because of that year-long work that he had with a speech pathologist, the issue was addressed. He went back to school the next year, and away he went. That's a big part of it too: making sure that those resources are available year-round.

There is an expansion of SchoolsPlus, and it's something I'm very proud of. We're now seeing that SchoolsPlus is available in all schools. I remember when I first got elected, in 2013, attending a school with the then-Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, the member for Colchester North. We went up to the Rockingstone school. I think it was before SchoolsPlus was really integrated into our school system. Actually, credit to the previous government, they had initiated this program at Rockingstone, and they had seen that some of these priority schools were in desperate need of extra resources.

We went up there, and at that time the former Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development fully implemented it. I remember sitting there and seeing the look

on the educators' and the teachers' faces about how this was going to help them so much to have these resources available right in the school, that it was going to take the pressure off our health care professionals and it was going to take the pressure off of the IWK - these resources were available right there.

I remember walking away with the minister at the time and saying to her that this has to be available in every school; it can't just be available in a handful of priority schools. Our children must have access to this. As we see now, fast-forward seven years, it's something that - I'm not going to say the government - I think everyone in this room should be proud of, that it is a program now available in every school.

I would say whether it's 5, 10, or 20 years from now, unless some new type of program comes along, whatever government, whatever people are on this side of the aisle, we're not going to see that program removed. That program will remain in schools - I would hope so, anyway. That program could potentially be expanded with new technology.

Those are the type of things, those are the type of resources, and those are the type of investments that are being made in all of our backyards. I know that when some of these programs are rolled out, whether it was this or whether it is pre-Primary in budgets - yes people voted against the budget for this, but the same people who voted against these budgets were the same people who were coming up and asking, when is this going to be in my school next?

All politics aside, I think people realize how impactful these programs were, including programs like Reading Recovery, which is now back and fully implemented. It's an extremely important program. Reading and writing and math are the base of everything we do, and there are children who struggle with that. That's why the Reading Recovery program is so important.

We do have a lot of investments - SchoolsPlus, for example. I'll use the school in my backyard, which is J.L. Ilsley High School. It was on the list for new construction for well over a decade - and for most of those years it was the number-one school put forward by HRCE to be replaced. For four or five years in a row it was the number-one school to be replaced, yet there was no movement. The school is finally being built. If you drive down Drysdale or Sylvia, depending on what road you go down, the concrete is being poured, so there's no turning back. When they released the plans for this new school, one of the plans was an extended SchoolsPlus. When they're building these buildings now, they're not just putting in the resources, they're now expanding them.

They realize from Dr. Stan Kutcher - or Senator Kutcher now - and Starr Dobson the importance of this. When the report came out, what it said was that if we really want to make an impact, if we really want to help children with mental health, there's a spot that they all go to and that's the school. So put those resources, put those investments in the school.

[3:30 p.m.]

The member for Dartmouth South was correct. This isn't just about programs. Mental health and health is a wraparound. We need to make sure that when kids in Greystone go to school, when kids in Sambro go to school, when kids in Preston go to school or kids in the South End go to school, or wherever it may be - sorry, HRM-centric - that they don't go to school hungry, that when they get to school there's food.

We saw the rollout of that program and we're seeing the impact now because - let's be honest - if you're a child, whether you are in Primary or Grade 12, life's not easy. You're going through puberty, you're trying to make friends, there's mental health issues you're dealing with, and now you have all the pressures of social media, so the last thing you should be worried about is the food in your belly.

The breakfast program has made an immense difference in these schools. We've seen stakeholders come out to partner with us on these programs and they realize, and we realize and I think everybody in this room realizes, that it will make a child's day better. We're seeing schools step up; we're seeing schools do some amazing things. I use Rockingstone as another example, where they went above and beyond. They were having a dentist come into the school; they were having mental health workers coming into the school before anyone thought that was the right thing to do.

We're seeing school administrators like principal Craig Myra at Chebucto Heights, who was named one of Canada's Outstanding Principals for 2017, working with government, no matter the stripe, to have these programs implemented.

Is there more we can do? Absolutely. I would say that until every single - not just child - but every single individual has the resources available, has a dignified place they can call home, has food when they need food and has the health care when they need health care, until that is 100 per cent, we have more work to do and we'll continue to move forward.

We talked about the online stuff but I've seen some divisive stuff online about this budget, about where's the middle class, you forgot the middle class. What I would say is, look at what the budget has in it.

The members just stood up and said, we need more social programs, we need more safety nets, we need more things for our youth and we need to make sure they're not left behind. This budget helps. This budget identifies some of those issues and works forward to finding a solution.

I hope that the divisiveness online stops. Secondly, if we're going to all stand here and say that we need to do more, then this is a budget that does more, and I hope people support it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege to get up and speak to this Bill No. 244, the Education Act respecting mental health wellness kits. It's tempting to get into a talk about the budget with the member for Halifax Atlantic but I'll possibly leave that for Supply. We'll have another opportunity to talk about that later.

I guess, first of all, I want to just introduce the idea of the power of small changes to make a difference. I know it was a number of years ago. I think every member in the Legislature will be familiar with the story of then-mayor Rudy Giuliani, who decided that he wanted to deal with graffiti and garbage in New York City. Those small changes had a huge impact on that city and, by doing so, was able to really change New York City, change the crime rate.

This is, maybe in the overall education budget, maybe in the overall budget - all the millions of dollars - we're talking about a small slice here, a small thing. I do believe in the power of small changes to make a difference.

If you think about a teacher in a classroom and what they're dealing with today, I know it's a lot different than when I went to school, it's probably even different than 10 years ago. I've met with teachers over the last couple of years.

Actually, if I think about my time in this Legislature, one of the most defining things seems to have been teachers. Not this February but the last two Februaries, we had teachers walking around this Legislature, protesting about various things.

One of the themes that I took out of those protests was their frustration in the classroom with being able to really teach. I think, for a lot of them, it was never about more money; it was about, I can't do my job anymore, I'm overwhelmed here. That feeling came out of the circumstances in the classroom. I remember hearing one teacher say, John, I have a class that's got 20 students and 12 of them have attempted suicide, in one class. I could hardly believe it.

The mental health issues that they're dealing with in the classroom, and I know that SchoolsPlus has begun to address some of those issues in the classroom. I've had one teacher tell me, John, when I recommend someone to SchoolsPlus, I never hear anything back. There's never any feedback back to me as a teacher. Then they feel out of the loop, and they're the person who is interacting as the significant adult in that student's life. That teacher felt like, I need to know what's happening with that student; if there are techniques or tools or things that I need to be doing to help that student, I need to know. There was a sort of a frustration there on their part.

So, let's bring it down to mental health wellness kits which are maybe not particularly expensive but could be in every classroom. We said that they would be put

together in consultation with mental health professionals, and, very importantly, professional development for teachers who work in public school, as the Clause 8B part of this bill that we're proposing.

The two things together - the mental health kit and the professional development for teachers - I believe are not massive changes, but they would have the power as a small change to make a big difference.

I was pleased to hear the member refer to now Senator Stan Kutcher, I know the member for Halifax Atlantic would know that one of the key planks in Dr. Kutcher's plan for schools was what he called mental health literacy - in other words, giving children, teachers and family GPs, frankly, the language around mental health and to know how to describe it, how to deal with it. Not only do we have to destigmatize dealing with mental health, we also have to fill in the language of how to describe it and know how to deal with it.

This is sort of what this would do. It's really a part of - if I think about what I heard Dr. Kutcher describe when he described his plan for mental health for schools, which, I believe he implemented in Mali in western Africa and in British Columbia - there's the old saying, a prophet is without honour in his own land. We haven't actually implemented Dr. Stan Kutcher's programs here, even though many other jurisdictions have, besides British Columbia and the nation of Mali in western Africa.

His plan was one that did not involve a huge amount of money, as this one does not involve a huge amount of money. It is a plan that would put some tools in the hands of teachers for children, and it would provide professional development for those teachers to know how to implement those tools. I hope it would. I'm certain it would also provide some of the language of how to describe mental health, how to talk to the students about mental health issues.

I think about the idea of having a fidgeter, a stress ball in your hand and I think of my own life. One of the things that I do to relieve stress is I'm a hobby woodworker. I go do something totally different with my hands than what we're doing here. There's an enormous amount of satisfaction just to have something that you can focus on that is not your problem or not the issue of the day, but something that's totally outside that, totally different.

In fact, I sometimes talk about how I subscribe to the project theory of life, that everybody needs to have small projects in their life that are totally different from everything they are doing. I have a number of them and it's a huge impact for positive mental health.

So, something that is essentially a distraction from the issues of the moment would be enormously helpful in a classroom setting, I believe. A part of the kit would also include

contact information for mental health services in the province and other items too. I believe the impact small changes can have on a system is not to be overlooked. This is not a huge change; it does not involve a huge amount of money. I know the member for Halifax Atlantic was talking about in-service days and professional development for teachers. I actually can't comment - I'm not aware whether those are voluntary or involuntary or if they're mandatory.

I know teachers would respond to something like this, which relates to problems they're dealing with every day in the classroom. I know the teachers I have met with and talked with over the last couple of years - as we've gone through those February crises in education, the last two - would tell me that they really need more tools in the classroom. I remember a teacher telling me, John, I just need one more person in the classroom, and then describing her classroom, and I'm thinking, yeah, I don't know how you do that. If we can't provide human resources, maybe we can provide that teacher with tools to give to that one child who is having difficulty at the moment.

I do want to acknowledge both the member for the NDP and the government had mentioned school lunch programs. In the Valley there is significant effort - in the Valley the Rotary Clubs contribute to school lunch programs. There's a very committed group of adult volunteers who have decided that they are going to change the school lunch programs in the Annapolis Valley. They're trying to provide healthy lunches with salads and good healthy food.

We realize that even in a valley full of agricultural products there are many children who come to school hungry. The schools that I interact with are very committed to providing food to those children in a non-stigmatizing way - not in a way to identify, like over here is the line of kids who can't - they want to do it in a way that doesn't call attention to anyone, that makes it look like everyone is receiving the same benefit. There are not haves and have-nots.

I really respect the schools for their effort in that and I commend them. All of the schools that I interact with have programs of various degrees. I think that it will be part of the future of our province, this idea that we have to provide healthy food, real food to students in school and address issues of hunger. I think that is going to be a part of our future.

I recall before I was an MLA, in 2013 I was a volunteer with Farmers Helping Farmers and was in Kenya. We worked with a number of different schools to provide school gardens, and those school gardens were transforming the lives of those students. That's a country where you can grow stuff all year round so there was not a Winter/Summer issue. They were growing food, vegetables for those schools. All over the world people recognize that this is important.

In fact, today I was able to ask a question in the Legislature about the impact in our students' lives of hand-held devices and mobile phones. You might well ask about the impact on our own lives. As I stand here, I can see a number of different people on their devices too, so it has affected all of us I'm sure. In the school classroom it's had a huge impact.

Here again the mental health wellness kit might be something to be able to distract someone away from that cellphone, away from that social media for a few minutes, to give them an outlet, a release from that, give the teacher the tools to address that. I believe it would be very positive. I know that this is something that is a very grassroots endeavour to put something very practical - maybe more practical than we normally see for a bill in this Legislature - into the hands of teachers. I think it's maybe not something we normally see here in the Legislature: a bill that is this sort of grassroots, this practical, this sort of "get right down to it."

I would like to call on the Government to support the bill. Like I said, I do believe in the power of small changes to make big differences. I believe that the things that we do in our own lives to deal with our own mental health issues and struggles, we can teach children how to do that too, how to focus on something else. We can give teachers the tools to deal with this and children the mental health language and the mental health literacy to know how to deal with these issues.

With those words, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak in favour of Bill No. 244 and conclude.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

ALLAN MACMASTER: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 241.

Bill No. 241 - Change of Name Act

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 241: An Act to Amend Chapter 66 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Change of Name Act, Respecting the Protection of Communities.

We as individuals here in this House all put our names on the ballot for the same reason, to be part of the democratic process, bring forth our own individual ideas, our constituents' ideas, to make things better for those living in our province. I take the job as MLA for Queen-Shelburne very seriously. I am deeply humbled every day for the opportunity to be the voice of my constituents, to do my part as a legislator bringing forth ideas to the floor of this Legislative Assembly, to make lives better and safer for those who live in my community and this beautiful province.

As a mother of two daughters, and now a grandmother, I think daily of how I can help to ensure they are able to live safe, comfortable lives. I know I'm not alone when I hear many members of this Legislature talk of their sons and daughters.

This proactive piece of legislation is a small bill, but it will have a big, powerful impact going forward when it comes to protecting our communities, and the most vulnerable in our communities. It will strengthen the great work already being done by our justice community to protect our children and our communities from sex offenders by preventing those who are convicted of an offense that requires registration on the National Sex Offender Registry from legally changing their name to escape accountability and avoid detection.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about convictions for crimes like sexual assault, sexual interference, sexual exploitation, incest, child pornography, and indecent assault. Presently, there is no legislation in our province to prevent this. If someone wishes to change their name, they simply complete the application form and provide fingerprints. We all know provincial employees are not permitted to access the National Sex Offender Registry, so there is no safeguard in preventing people convicted of sex crimes from changing their names and erasing their dangerous histories.

Mr. Speaker, we know these perpetrators are very skilled and manipulative when grooming the children they victimize. I know our own Minister of Justice in his time of policing has sadly witnessed this victimization. I know my son-in-law, who is an RCMP officer, has shared with me his fears of being able to protect his son, my grandson, because of what he has already seen in his very relatively short career. Sadly, this victimization happens in our communities, our province, and our country.

Mr. Speaker, as you may know, in January 2020, residents of Saskatchewan learned some bone-chilling news in the media. They learned that a man has successfully changed his name even though he had pled guilty to 88 counts of child pornography and sexual assault on a seven-year-old girl in Las Vegas in 1999. Further investigation showed that another person who had served time twice for child pornography-related cases had changed their name.

These type of incidents led the government in Saskatchewan to explore modifications to changing-name procedures. Saskatchewan recently became the first province in Canada to ban people from changing their names if they had been convicted of a certain sexual offence. It is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that Alberta and Ontario are presently looking at similar legislation.

I believe we need to be proactive. We should not wait for a disguised offender to strike before action is taken on our part as government. We have heard from Bernadette MacDonald, a feminist advocate for women and children in rural Nova Scotia, that the fact these predatory sexual offenders can currently change their name is an outrage. This

necessary safeguard of never being able to change their name should be a given, not something that needs to be explained and implemented.

Mr. Speaker, since introducing this bill on Monday I have received numerous messages from Nova Scotians who are shocked to learn that a sexual offender can scrub their alarming history clean. If this bill is adopted, anyone applying to change their name would have to submit a criminal records check. If the check reveals that the person has been convicted of a crime that would place them on the national sexual offender registry, their application would be denied.

This bill is about protection, not punishment. It is a common-sense bill. This is a bill that makes me think of the words of Joseph Howe: “What is right? What is just? What is for the public good?” This bill is all of that, Mr. Speaker. It sends a very strong, clear message to sex offenders that Nova Scotia is not a place where you can hide in the shadows. It sends a strong, clear message to citizens that protecting their safety is a top priority.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

LISA ROBERTS: It’s my privilege to speak on Bill No. 241 on behalf of the NDP caucus. When it comes to sexualized violence, health and safety and prevention must be our priority. No one would argue with the idea that people should not be able to change their names in order to evade responsibility or consequences of criminal behaviour.

I note that this comes just several weeks after the provincial government made a funding announcement that our caucus certainly was very glad to see - the contribution of more than \$1 million towards a number of initiatives aimed at curtailing and responding to the high incidence of human trafficking in Nova Scotia, including hiring of family and victim support navigators and funding for a new Crown prosecutor who will be dedicated to prosecuting human trafficking cases. We really did welcome that announcement.

At the same time, when I talk to people working on the ground in sexual assault services, what I hear is that the demand for trauma services is growing and the needs of sexual assault survivors are going unaddressed. In April 2019, the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre had to stop taking on new counselling cases for the first time in its 23-year history. Their wait-lists have been closed for nearly a year. They are unable to offer a dedicated crisis support line and the situation shows no sign of changing.

In this Chamber at different times and broadly speaking in society, I’ve heard a real growing awareness and indications of great support for people suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. That disorder is largely associated with service members and with members of police forces. At some point in the last couple of years it came to my attention that in fact it is surviving sexual assault that has the highest per cent chance of a person being afflicted with the disorder afterwards. This is an incredibly damaging experience.

Organizations like the Avalon Centre are stretched too thin. Survivors of sexual trauma in Nova Scotia are not getting the support they need. That's why the NDP has called on the government to not only increase funding to existing services but also to expand services across the province. If we want to address sexual violence in our province and create safe communities, we must address the underlying causes of sexualized violence including toxic masculinity and misogyny, and commit to providing victims and survivors of sexualized violence with the support they need right now.

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

BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to initiate this with my gratitude to the member for Queens-Shelburne for advancing this important initiative, and certainly to the member for Halifax Needham for her contributions to the conversation today.

As a government, we've been in some ways keenly focused on protecting the public with respect to, specifically, sexual assaults. There are a couple of the ways that we've started to try and address that as an issue. We more recently brought in a public prosecutor to deal with human trafficking and, previously, a couple of prosecutors to deal with files with respect to sexual assault.

So, the long and short of it is we are supportive of this initiative. We'd like to gather some feedback from the public to see if there's anything we're missing that can be added. We are, at the bottom line, focused on trying to protect people who have been in scenarios where they've experienced a sexual assault, so that's paramount for everybody, I think we can all agree to that.

I'll conclude with that. We're looking forward to the Law Amendments Committee.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I sincerely welcome the opportunity to speak to Bill No. 241: An Act to Amend Chapter 66 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Change of Name Act, Respecting the Protection of Communities.

I am so very proud of my colleague from Queens-Shelburne for introducing a bill that matters to all Nova Scotians, a bill that will protect all Nova Scotians. Nova Scotians don't want convicted sex offenders hiding in our communities, hiding from our families and our loved ones, our children. That's why I am standing in my place today, advocating for this Liberal government and the NDP Party to collectively work together with us to protect Nova Scotians by passing this bill.

Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 241 means that sex offenders will not be able to legally change their names to escape accountability and avoid detection. We need to act on this

bill so that any sex offender wanting to change their name would have to submit a criminal record check. It only warrants a good, common-sense approach.

[4:00 p.m.]

I think about our wonderful community of volunteers, who often are required to have a criminal record check before being allowed to work with children. My gosh, I think about my daughter when she turned 15, who is now 22, she was working part-time at Camp Geddie and had to have a criminal record check. She didn't really understand why, so I explained it to her. It all makes perfect sense, good common sense. That's all this bill is requesting to happen in order to protect our communities and people of all demographics.

There are a number of very scary cases that have happened in Canada. Let's not allow those cases to be repeated. I sincerely don't want us to wait for something to happen and regret not doing the right thing now. By not adopting this piece of legislation, we would be allowing individuals who have committed such crimes as sexual assault, sexual interference, sexual exploitation, incest, child pornography, and indecent assault to walk free, to walk free to a new life and possibly a new life of committing the same crimes, over and over again, for which they have been convicted in the past.

The national registry includes the names of high-risk sex offenders who have been the subject of local or provincial public notifications. We need to make sure that this particular list is accessible. We need to create safeguards so that convicted sex offenders can't camouflage their connections to their crimes.

Mr. Speaker, I realize many individuals have legitimate reasons for wanting to change their names. I understand that. However, this should not be a matter of routine for those listed on the National Sex Offender Registry. They should never be able to morph into someone they are not. This bill would prevent them from having a new identity.

We all know, for the most part, a new identity is usually part of a precalculated plan to repeat their past crimes. Taking the measures outlined in Bill No. 241, we are stating clearly and collectively in a loud message to those who are on the National Sex Offender Registry: You can't hide. You can't change your name. We know who you are and, together, we will protect our communities.

It is my hope that all members in this Chamber will see how imperative it is to pass this piece of legislation as soon as possible. It is the right thing to do.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank members on both sides of the House for their comments with respect to this bill tabled by the member for Queens-Shelburne. From a personal perspective, I think it's timely, and it's important. I think it's

extremely reasonable to ask, in terms of this legislation. How it fits in with the national registry and the changing of names and how that impacts the community at large would be specifically effective by something of this nature. Congratulations to the member opposite.

As my colleague referenced, the Law Amendments Committee process will bring out debate and conversation about this, and I think that's a good thing. With respect to that, the government is in favour of this motion for second reading. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you now put the question to the House.

THE SPEAKER: Just before I put the question to the House, for the purposes of clarity and for the record, I would like to ask the honourable member who tabled the bill to rise in her place and close second reading of this bill.

The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to rise, and I thank everyone for their comments today. I ask that debate be closed on second reading of the bill.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 241. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried. (Applause)

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

The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

ALLAN MACMASTER: That concludes our business on this Opposition Day. It's not often that we get a bill passed, so I'd like to thank the government for seeing to it.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 242.

Bill No. 242 - Protecting Access to Reproductive Health Care Act.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on this unusual day of collaboration in this Chamber to speak to Bill No. 242, the Protecting Access to Reproductive Health Care Act. This is a bill put forward by our caucus in order to protect people's right to access reproductive health care.

We know in Nova Scotia, across the country, around the world, and even here in the Maritimes that there have been issues with people accessing reproductive health care. Although it remains in some circles a divisive issue, the fact is that women have fought hard and won the right to full health care under the Canada Health Act, but we know that sometimes that health care cannot always be accessed equally.

We talk in this Chamber about differential access to health care. We often talk about that geographically, but here we have differential access to health care at times based on gender, where predominantly women are not able to avail themselves of what is already a very difficult choice in many women's lives.

Mr. Speaker, I generally refrain from talking about my personal connection to bills, but I'm going to spend just a couple of minutes on this rare, and maybe singular, occasion of moving a bill through this House and say that I first want to point out Megan Boudreau, the amazing young activist who is profiled in *The Coast* and who took it upon herself - she walked by the Women's Choice Clinic at the Victoria General Hospital, she saw protesters, and she decided that was wrong. All by herself, she wrote a petition and she walked around Halifax, asking people to sign it.

When I talked to her about that yesterday, when we tabled the petition in this House, she said it was a difficult decision because the whole issue with protesters, anti-abortion protests in particular, is that it is traumatizing. You have women making what is already sometimes a traumatic, difficult choice, and they're re-traumatized as they attempt to access that health care. She said she felt conflicted asking people to sign this petition because she worried that she, too, was guilty of this same re-traumatizing action. She said she did it as gracefully and as kindly as she could, and she decided that it was probably worth the little bit of discomfort for her and for the folks she was talking to if there was a payoff at the end.

I am so pleased to stand here and thank Megan and many others like her for their efforts. So many times when legislation moves through this Chamber it's not because one of us thought of it or one of our excellent members of the Public Service thought about it. It's because someone in the community on the ground discovered that there was an issue, and they pushed and pushed until finally that issue makes it to the floor of this Chamber. This is one of those cases.

Mr. Speaker, in my own life this is a really resonant issue, so if you'll forgive me for a few personal anecdotes. My grandmother, Selda Chender, as I think I've spoken about before in this Chamber, escaped the Holocaust without most of her family. She came to New York City on a boat, alone, at 16. She managed to teach herself English, find herself a job, and eventually fall in love and get married to a Russian refugee who had also escaped the war: my grandfather, Jules Chender. They couldn't find work in the States, so immediately after World War II, they moved back to Paris - talk about traumatizing.

My grandmother often talked about those years as the worst of her life. Not the years in the war but the years after the war, living in a war-torn country that she had so recently escaped from. In those years she became pregnant. She said that although she thought about it until the end of her life, the decision that she made at that time to get an abortion was one she never regretted. She said, at that time in my life I was in love with your grandfather, but I was so emotionally incapable of being a parent that I couldn't possibly have given birth to a child. She said, I knew that.

We talked about this when I was a teenager. I am so grateful that I had a family with whom I could have these conversations. She had the proverbial back-alley procedure because that was the only option at that time. Luckily, she survived and went on to have two more children.

Fast-forward to my mother, who didn't work much outside the home. She raised us, and she was a fantastic mother. She had three children, but she spaced us by 13 years, so she had a lot of work for a long time. When we were all getting older, she decided she wanted to be engaged to her community, and the place that she set out to be engaged to her community was what was at the time called the Metro Planned Parenthood Clinic.

My mother served on the board of Planned Parenthood for many years, including as the chair of that board. It was always a little bit, not surprising, but I didn't know what the nexus was for her. She just said, Claudia, it is absolutely important that women can access health care and that they can access it without any intimidation and on their own terms.

At that time, the Planned Parenthood Clinic was a place that many women, including myself as a teenager, went for health care because they didn't want to go to their doctors. It was still taboo to talk about things like birth control, to talk about things like abortion or any other reproductive services.

As a young woman, especially if you had a male doctor, these were conversations you didn't want to have. That clinic, which still persists today as the Metro - I don't know what it's called now, but maybe the minister will remember that name in her remarks - provided such an important service. I'm so proud that my mom was a part of that.

It was unfortunate, but lucky, that when my sister was a teenager, she herself availed herself of the services of the Planned Parenthood Clinic and also of the Women's Choice Clinic. I called her this morning and I said I'd like to mention you in my remarks, but I don't want to do that if that makes you feel uncomfortable. My sister, who is currently working for the Ontario Midwives said, no, I want you to mention me in your remarks; it's important that you mention me in your remarks. I'm just one person in one family, and the connection that I have to this issue of women's access to reproductive health care just spreads through every part of my life.

I don't tell these stories to point out any special situation that I have but to say that if this is my situation, how many other women, how many other men, how many other people in Nova Scotia also, maybe even unknowingly, share this need and legacy around reproductive health?

When I spoke to the budget earlier in this session, which although only days long feels like years, I started my remarks by saying that although we have major issues with the budget for this session, we come and take our seats with some pride. We note that the government is finally starting to listen to some of the issues that we're bringing forward and to act on those. It feels as though our work matters.

[4:15 p.m.]

I was having a conversation yesterday in the lunch room with our Leader, the member for Halifax Chebucto, and I was telling him about a friend of mine, and I said "You know, it's amazing because she has her dream job. Like, she's always loved this and she's always loved that and she's living her dream." And he looked at me and he said, "Well, that's what you're doing!" (Laughter.) I had to think about it for a second and then I said, "You're right."

It doesn't feel that way some days, but on days like today, when I can stand on the floor of this House and speak to the movement forward of a bill that will have a major impact on the lives of Nova Scotians, that will help young women and girls and people accessing reproductive health care to not face intimidation, to not face the fear that I and my grandmother and my sister and my friends felt. If that can be different for this generation, then I will continue to feel like my work here matters. For that, I thank my colleagues and I thank the government, and with those few comments I'll take my seat. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

TIM HOUSTON: I thank the member for bringing this bill forward. Nobody in this province accessing medical care should have fear that somebody will protest against them as they go down to that building. Nobody should worry that somebody is going to protest their right to receive the medical service, and women should not be subjected to

interference, intimidation, bullying or harassment on what is, no doubt, the hardest day of their lives.

We believe in protecting the safety, the security, the health and the privacy also of clinic staff and health care professionals, those who provide these services, when they're just trying to go to work in the morning and do what's right for Nova Scotians.

Of course, freedom of expression is important, as is the right to protest and to voice opinions, but those rights have to be balanced with the need to protect access to medical services and to protect the safety, security, privacy and the health of both patients and providers. This bill is about everyone having the right to access health care without bullying and without intimidation. This bill ensures, specifically, that women are able to access health care in Nova Scotia without fearing for their safety. That is a good thing. For that reason, I support this bill. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. KELLY REGAN: I am pleased to rise in my place today to speak to a bill that affirms the fundamental right of women to access health care, specifically health care regarding their sexual health. There are many reasons why a woman might decide not to bring a pregnancy to term. My colleague from Dartmouth South articulated some of them, but we all know that this can be a tremendously difficult decision for many women. There may be reasons, economic reasons, why a woman has decided not to, maybe around the safety of the mother - not just her health but also, by the simple fact of being pregnant, her life may be in danger. Or it could be the life of her child that could be in danger as a result of bringing this pregnancy to term. It may be that the fetus isn't viable. Whatever the reason is for a woman seeking to terminate a pregnancy, she should not have to face protestors on her way in to receive that care.

One of my colleagues noted that in some communities around this province, women have not had access to safe abortions, and so, for many years, they were performed in backrooms and back alleys, and women ended up dead, sick, or sterile, or some combination thereof, as a result of the fact that they could not access this fundamental piece of health care.

Having made that difficult decision to end a pregnancy, no woman should have to run the gauntlet of protestors who really have no idea of the individual situation of that woman who is heading into the hospital that day. It's funny, even from the time I was a teenager - and again hearing the member for Dartmouth South discuss this brought back a lot of memories - I knew that for me, access to abortion was an important fundamental right for me, for my daughters, for my friends, for everyone. That's why, way back when the United Way funded Planned Parenthood, that's where my donation always went because I knew that there were people who were not donating to Planned Parenthood because they

did not agree with the work they were doing. Now today, we call it the Halifax Sexual Health Centre.

I just want to point out that all of us here in the House today know women who have had abortions. We may not know that they have had abortions, but I guarantee you, all of us in this House know women who have had abortions. It's a very difficult decision often, and it's one that a woman should make for herself, period.

Let me be clear - no Nova Scotian undergoing a procedure like this should have to deal with strangers commenting on their health on the way into that operation. It's a principle of this government that women should have agency over their own bodies. That's why we expanded access to Mifegymiso; that's why we changed the rules so women can self-refer for abortions.

I want to point out that we did this at a time when south of the border, legislatures are limiting access to safe abortions, forcing women to undergo invasive procedures just so they can get an abortion. It has actually gotten to the point where one Alabama lawmaker was so disgusted by what she saw that she in fact introduced a bill that would force mandatory vasectomies for men over the age of 50 in return for the fact that male legislators were consistently telling women what to do with their bodies. I am not suggesting an amendment around this - at this time. (Laughter)

I would like to thank my colleagues for supporting the right of women to choose when to have a child. I have been blessed to have three wonderful children. I got to make the choice when I was going to have them. I want that for all women here in Nova Scotia. I want all women here in Nova Scotia to have agency over their bodies.

I would like to thank Megan Boudreau, who saw something and said something and did something because she saw something that she didn't think was right. I would like to thank the member for Dartmouth South for introducing this legislation today. I support it; we support it. I would like to thank the member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island, who when Megan came to talk to him, worked with her on the petition and explained that you can't have an online petition.

There are a lot of days in this House that are really difficult. There are a lot of days in this House that are long. Some of us put up with an incredible amount of abuse. But, as the member for Dartmouth South noted, these are the days when we know we're doing the right thing. These are the days when we know that we actually had an opportunity to make a huge difference in the lives of Nova Scotians.

I am so proud of my colleagues here in this House. I'm proud of the Premier for listening. I'm proud of my colleagues for supporting this legislation today. I want to thank the honourable member again for bringing this to the floor of the House. This is a day I won't soon forget. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join in the debate of Bill No. 242, Protecting Access to Reproductive Health Care Act, introduced by the member for Dartmouth South. I will say that my words will not be as eloquent as hers, nor do I have any personal stories to share like our member, as well, from Bedford. I listened, I enjoyed both stories, and I thank you for speaking.

Bill No. 242 is about protecting women. This is an important bill. It's a bill that must be treated with care. It's about providing safety and security for Nova Scotians who are accessing a legal medical procedure - "legal" being the key word here. Some will say that this bill stifles free expression. It does not.

Bill No. 242 does not prevent protest; it provides a safe access zone. It does not prohibit Nova Scotians and others from protesting or expressing their opinions. They have the right to protest but women also have the right to access - again, an important word - legal medical services.

Health professionals have the right to go to their places of work and to their homes, free of intimidation or harassment. For me, Bill No. 242 is certainly an attempt to strike a balance. It allows those who go to hospitals and clinics for any reason to access a legal medical service, free of harassment. It also allows those who choose to protest at hospitals, clinics, pharmacies and physicians' homes to protest within so many metres.

I don't believe establishing a safety zone diminishes the right to protest and it doesn't prevent people from expressing their opinions. We can't change human nature. However, I believe that in the vast majority of cases, the decision to have an abortion is excruciating, it's difficult, it's heart-wrenching, and no one knows what it's like until they walk in their shoes.

When a pregnancy is not viable, the termination of that pregnancy is a crushing disappointment, one of the worst days of a woman's life. When a woman experiences a miscarriage and requires medical follow-up, going to the hospital for that treatment is heart-breaking. This bill ensures that they can have access to the services they need in safety and I don't think anyone in this Chamber would want it any other way.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons I will be supporting Bill No. 242.

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

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, my words in favour of the legislation will be few.

The harm that this legislation is prohibiting here has a unique and singular character. In no other dimension of health care would it even be conceivable that anyone

accessing the service might be subjected to harassment for no other reason than they are accessing the service which is approved by the medical services in our province.

It is inconceivable that a person might, under any circumstances, face harassment for accessing services to do with, let's say, prostate surgery, or that a person might face harassment attempting to dissuade them from accessing services related to orthopedic or cardiac or any other surgery, for that matter. This bill simply makes sure that this is not the case for women accessing reproductive health care services in our province.

I want to echo the point made by the previous speaker, the member for Pictou West, that we have heard it said about this bill that it contains, it is alleged sometimes, a compromising of free speech but that's not true at all. Those whose views on this subject are not parallel with the view which is held within the New Democratic Party are, by this bill, in no way restricted from expressing that view in a vocal or vociferous way in any kind of form. They are simply prevented from expressing this view in a manner which amounts to harassment.

[4:30 p.m.]

That is the case for the protests that are being proscribed by this legislation that creates these bubble zones. This bill provides that that harassment may not and will not and cannot take place in the future in Nova Scotia. For this reason, we're proud to be associated with it. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The honorable member for Clayton Park West.

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: I would like to thank my colleague for Dartmouth South for bringing this wonderful, amazing bill that has struck a real strong chord in me. As she spoke about her grandmother, I could only think of my mother who was one of the oldest Catholics in the Middle East and raised in a Muslim country.

It was a very difficult thing for her, but Mum was not able to take contraceptives. It hurt her very badly, so she wasn't able to tolerate them. In that time, there was very limited contraceptives and they weren't half as good as they are now. Unfortunately, she had to resort to abortion two or three times, which was a huge deal in that country. I also thank my father who was there with her.

My mum raised four beautiful children. She was an only child and wanted children but, at times, when mistakes happened, again, I think it was in the back door. I was too young to understand but all I remember is the word "curettage." In Iraq, we used the French word for abortion at the time. Luckily, my mum was healthy and did very well.

This stuck in my mind. As an interpreter, I was asked many times - I was the first one to go to the clinic at the hospital and I did attend at least 14 or 15 abortions. The number

of young girls that I saw, who were children themselves - 13 and 14 years old - who were desperate for this. Their lives would have been so different if they had to keep that child and raise it when they were children themselves. I'm sure most of them would find the right person and marry and have more kids.

There was one incident that really stuck in my mind today. There was a young girl, an international student, who was in her twenties, I believe, doing her master's in physics or chemistry. Brilliant, but was going through a very hard relationship with her husband and did not want children from him. She had from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. She had gotten the money, and she had to get back to the house without her husband knowing that she was having this abortion. Everything had to be done within six hours. I can't imagine if protestors were there delaying her or even making her have a second thought about what she was doing.

I thank the member and I thank this Legislature for doing things for women here. I'm always stunned at what I see in this Legislature. I say to all my friends, I say I couldn't say the word "period" to my relatives and friends, let alone having 51 talking about menstrual products in the Legislature. I thank you. This is amazing and I support it with all my heart. (Applause)

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

ALANA PAON: It's a pleasure to rise to speak on Bill No. 242: An Act to Protect Access to Reproductive Health Care.

I appreciate the comments from my colleague for Dartmouth South and I commend her for bringing forward such legislation. It's astounding to me to even think that a woman in any way would not have the right to be able to access reproductive health care. A woman's body is her own and does not belong to anyone else. Therefore, the choices that she makes with regard to her health or anything else to do with her body should be her own, in my opinion.

It makes me think about my grandmother, as the member for Dartmouth South was mentioning hers. I come from a very traditional Acadian community on Isle Madame. My grandmother was about yay tall, about 4 foot tall. I remember my grandmother and my mother and I having a discussion about how resources were so limited during that time period when my grandmother was growing up on the south side of the island. Her mother, my great-grandmother - it's hard to actually conceive that a woman could possibly do something like this - she was pregnant 24 times, my great grandmother. She brought into this world 18 children who made it to adulthood. They all lived in a home which was not very large.

There were a lot of families like that on Cape Breton. My great-grandmother did her job as far as the population increase in Nova Scotia at that time - as well as did so many other women.

I also think of my own experience and many members in this House may not know this - I kind of keep it to myself really and I didn't really talk about these things in public - when I was a teenager, I was a very quiet person, I was a little bit of a wallflower - I'm still pretty quiet - but I got myself into a situation. Sometimes women do, and it's not their choice, but somebody else makes a choice for you - and I'll kind of let you guys read between the lines in that. I found myself pregnant as a teenager. I was 18 years old and let's just say someone else made a choice for me. I didn't choose to be pregnant on my own. When I see a bill like this coming forward to protect the access of reproductive health care for a woman, it hits me very close to home.

Now during that time in my life, I had choices that were accessible to me. I made my choice to have my son who, quite coincidentally, is also a friend to one of the sisters of the member from Dartmouth South - they went to school together. I brought that child into this world. I raised him not as a single parent, but I raised him as an only parent. One faces financial burdens, barriers and assumptions, and the bullying and harassing of people assuming that they know what must have happened to you.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, when I see again a piece of legislation like this going forward or coming into the House, it reminds me that we need especially to give access and also give the right of choice to women who have been sexually assaulted. We don't talk about that enough. I know in some areas perhaps people would say that the , of course, the fetus has a right. I have conflicts with that as well; I have a great deal of conflict. My background is Christian; I'm Catholic. It was my choice to have my son based on my faith and my beliefs, but for someone else that may be very different. They need to be able to have the freedom of being able to choose what's right for them at the time, depending on the circumstances, and so forth.

I have raised a child, a son who, I hope, is reflective of the generation to come and is reflective of the values that I tried to instill in him to respect women's bodies, to respect women's choices, and just to be respectful altogether as a human being.

I am fully supportive of this bill and I would ask this House to please unanimously look at passing this bill. To me, for lack of a better way of saying it, it's a no-brainer. It's an absolute no-brainer.

As another member said, we would not be coming forward and trying to bar access in any way to someone who is trying to access medical help for any other procedure or health care. If someone doesn't agree and they want to protest, by all means do so, but do so within a zone so the person who is making that choice, which - it's a tough choice.

In my situation I was getting people saying, don't have that child, if you have that child, Alana, you are 18 years old, your life is done, you'll never be able to go to school, you will not be able to achieve what you want to achieve in life. I can tell you that it is very difficult. It was a rough road and I wouldn't wish it on anyone. I will never say that I am not thankful to have the child that I have in my life, but other people may choose something different.

Mr. Speaker, keeping in mind what my grandmother went through, what my great-grandmother went through - I am one of five children and my mom was not on any kind of birth control either, so I am kind of, like I say, the last hurrah. I was 10 years after everybody else - surprise.

I really want to make certain that women - that we've progressed. It's not that long ago that women didn't even have a bathroom in this House. We have progressed. We have come so far. This is just another step we need to take - again, on the eve of International Women's Day. How much better could it be, how much more timely could it be, than to pass this legislation for the betterment of all women in this province? (Applause)

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

The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I move to close debate on Bill No. 242, the Protecting Access to Reproductive Health Care Act.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 242. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader. (Applause)

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Thanks for that ovation, guys. I appreciate that. Very kind of my colleagues.

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. 243.

Bill No. 243 - Financial Measures (2020) Act.

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

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 243, the Financial Measures (2020) Act, be now read a second time.

Today I am speaking to the Financial Measures Act, which provides legislative authority to implement measures in the Budget 2020-21 and other legislative measures which have financial implications. This bill will make changes to three pieces of legislation: the Gaming Control Act, the Income Tax Act, and the Revenue Act.

The first change is to amend the Gaming Control Act, to ensure that gambling in Nova Scotia is socially responsible. It allows for a regulated environment for Nova Scotians to engage in gaming activities. The amendment we are making is to provide immunity from class action lawsuits and punitive damages to the Province, ministers responsible for the Act, the Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation, and the Atlantic Lottery Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, these are similar to recent changes in New Brunswick. We believe that Nova Scotians should be able to choose whether they want to participate in gaming activities and that, if they do so, they should do it responsibly. The majority of those who do game do so for entertainment. However, for those who experience problems, we will continue to ensure programs are available to them when they need them. However, like New Brunswick, we believe it is prudent to take action to protect our taxpayers from potentially costly litigation.

These changes do not apply in situations of negligence or omissions by the operators. Immunity provisions already exist in other Nova Scotia legislation: the Health Authorities Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Social Workers Act, the Pension Benefits Act.

[4:45 p.m.]

Secondly, we are amending the Income Tax Act. The amendments will decrease the corporate tax rate and the small business tax rate, and these amendments will also extend the expiry date of the Digital Animation Tax Credit and the Digital Media Tax Credit. The Income Tax Act will incorporate recent tax changes announced in budget 2020-21. The corporate tax rate will decrease by 2 per cent to 14 per cent, making Nova Scotia a more attractive place to do business. The small business tax will decrease by 0.5 per cent to 2.5 per cent. This puts us in line with New Brunswick for the lowest corporate tax rate and small business tax rate in Atlantic Canada.

As mentioned, the Act will also extend both the Digital Animation and Digital Media Tax Credits to December 31, 2025. These tax credits had a sunset date of 2020 and this extends that timeline by five years for each tax credit.

The third Act we are amending is the Revenue Act. These amendments will increase the tobacco tax, introduce a tax on vaping products starting September 2020, and require all retailers to obtain permits to sell vaping products starting in July 2020. The tobacco tax will increase by 2 cents per cigarette to 75 per cent of the suggested retail price on cigars, and to 40 cents per gram on fine-cut and loose tobacco.

Vaping products are popular among youth in Nova Scotia. Given the increasing amount of vape-related illnesses in Canada and the U.S., we know we need to do everything we can to make sure these products do not appeal to younger Nova Scotians. Vaping substances will be taxed at the rate of 50 cents per millilitre or 50 cents per gram, and vaping devices will be taxed at a rate of 20 per cent of the suggested retail selling price.

The new taxes will not apply to cannabis vaping substances, as they are already taxed under the coordinated cannabis taxation agreement. As of July 1, 2020, all retailers, wholesalers and manufacturers of vaping products will require a permit to sell those products in Nova Scotia.

In summary, these amendments to the Financial Measures (2020) Act provide the legislative authority required to implement the measures in our budget 2020-21.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

MURRAY RYAN: Mr. Speaker, what the minister just laid out covers a lot of territory. The introduction of legislation that protects the operators of lotteries and the casinos, Atlantic Lottery Corporation, is in response to a perceived risk and there is actually ongoing litigation in other provinces. What's in the interest of Nova Scotia and Nova Scotians is in protecting the province from potential damages were such efforts to be instigated here in our province. Our neighbours in New Brunswick recently passed similar legislation and, as partners in Atlantic Lottery, it would appear prudent that we consider similar legislation here.

Related to the film industry tax credit extension, back in 2012-13 the film industry was a growing, vibrant industry. Nova Scotia benefited not only from skilled professionals in the film industry but the supporting businesses such as hotels, suppliers, et cetera. In 2013 this government instituted policies that severely impacted this industry. Their reworking of the film funding incentives was detrimental to the industry, and many productions took their business elsewhere. These lost opportunities left workers in the industry scrambling for work and other opportunities. The result was that many had to sell their homes and were forced to relocate. Many have never returned. Many have never recovered.

Since 2014 the government has continually spent more and more money on this industry in an attempt to lure film productions back to the province. My goodness, think of where our film industry would be now if the government had not pressed the reset button back then. The province has never admitted that they made a mistake and the extension of the film tax credit by five years to 2025 does not change these facts.

The introduction of taxes and regulations surrounding the vaping industry bears scrutiny. For example, a single package of juice will increase the cost from \$20 to \$50 for consumers. This is a very delicate balance and I'm not sure that this Act strikes the right notes. The removal of flavours and other changes may lead just to people buying more online.

Yes, for our youth, the added cost may serve as a deterrent to them considering taking on vaping as an activity, and that is definitely a good thing. What of this added tax? Where will it go? Where are these funds going to be allocated?

They should end up going directly toward education as to the effects of vaping, to encouraging and promoting smoking cessation, and to promoting and encouraging people that vaping, like smoking, is simply not good and that the people should obviously work to quit.

This concludes my remarks related to this bill, Mr. Speaker.

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

GARY BURRILL: When people turn to evaluate a piece of legislation or, for that matter, a budget - and we can't separate the enterprise of the Financial Measures (2020) Act from the budget itself - there are always a few basic questions in trying to come to such an evaluation that people are bound to ask.

Maybe the first such question a person might ask of the legislation would be simply, is this legislation fair? I think this is a very reasonable question to ask, particularly of the provisions in this legislation that provide immunity to the government of the province retroactively to 1991, for the actions of the Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation, the Atlantic Lottery Corporation, casinos, and also cabinet ministers who have overseen gambling operations over that 29-year period in the province.

So, we ask ourselves, is that fair? Of course, fairness depends to a great extent on the angle from which you ask the question.

I think if you're one of those more than 7,000 people in this modestly populated province who have very serious gambling problems - one of the more 7,000 people for whom their lives have been placed in real chaos and lived under a real cloud because of gambling addictions - or if you're one of the 47,000 adults in Nova Scotia who identify

themselves as being in a place about gambling where this is a direction that is a real and present danger in their lives, I think if you look at it from the point of view of anybody in that category, the retroactive indemnification of the corporations that have had responsibility for gambling in Nova Scotia back 30 years might not seem an utter paragon of fairness.

If you're one of those people whose VLT gambling has provided that extra \$10 million a year - that the government has been receiving since cancelling the self-regulating My-Play System - people who, according to every study of this subject, tend to be from a lower income demographic, if you belonged to that category I don't suppose you'd look at this law and say, well what does this law do? Oh, well it makes it so that nobody can sue anybody who has been in charge of gambling going back since VLTs were brought into Nova Scotia, retroactively.

Well, if you were one of the people who had contributed that \$10 million that has been brought in in revenue since the My-Play System was done away with, I think you might look at that and say, well I'm not sure that sounds entirely fair to me.

Maybe more singularly, if you were one of those whose family members who have been caught in the chaotic vortex of addictive gambling, and the conclusion of this dark vortex had been that they have passed away of their own hand - this is not an inappreciable or miniscule number of people in Nova Scotia. If you are one of the members of the family of such people and one of those therefore who live under the weight of this accumulated trauma decades later, it seems to me that from that point of view, the answer to the question of if this is a fair piece of legislation would probably be no.

Maybe related to the question of fairness is the question of fundamental worthiness. Is this a worthy piece of legislation? Is it an honourable piece of legislation? I think it would be one thing if the government were saying here, taking in the landscape of all potential legal liabilities, balancing all considerations, it is our view that going forward the Province of Nova Scotia should be indemnified against potential lawsuits in this category. I think that would be one thing.

But for the government to say, going forward, not only are we to be immune from these kinds of lawsuits, not only are we going to be immune from them today, but we're going to bring forward a piece of legislation that says that retroactively, from the day that VLTs came on the landscape, we are going to indemnify ourselves and all who have been involved in this enterprise back to 1991 - providing oneself with retroactive immunity from the damaging effects of one's own malfeasance, it seems to me, is the antithesis of the worthy or the honourable, and that a fair person would say of such a piece of legislation, as they considered it, no, the fundamental dimension we're looking for, of fairness, we don't find it here.

That's one question I think a person might ask. They would say, is it fair?

Another reasonable question when a piece of legislation is being evaluated would be, is it sound? When we look at the budget that is being encapsulated in the Financial Measures (2020) Act and we turn it to its singular defining feature, that \$70-million tax cut to corporations consisting of a 12.5 per cent decrease in the corporate tax rate in Nova Scotia - I want to say about this that in terms of the fundamentals of economics, particularly as economics is applied in the field of economic development, there is something about the \$70 million tax cut, and therefore the whole budget which it defines, which is economically unsound.

What have we got here in terms of basic economic thinking? We have at work an economic theory which is sadly outdated, now about 40 years old, usually referred to as trickle-down economics. The essential tenet of trickle-down economics, which was de rigueur 40 years ago, all the rage - at the time it was felt quite broadly that what you need to do is to cut taxes in the corporate sector and the revenue that is thereby no longer allocated will be available in the corporate sector for the kinds of investments that will create the kind of job creation that will create the kind of stimulus that will lead to economic development which will lead to growth.

I don't think the government could bring forward a single credible economist in the year 2020 who would make that argument for trickle-down economics. There isn't a single credible economist who is making this argument anymore because the evidence is incontrovertible. Four decades of the economic history of the western world has demonstrated in a conclusive way that what you get with trickle-down economics - that is, the alleviation of taxation responsibilities on corporations - is not investment, not job creation, not growth, but the exacerbation of inequalities and inequities in the economy as a whole, and that there is a negligible role played as a result in the fostering of economic growth. Internationally this is the consensus to such a degree that the approach has now been jettisoned by the organization with which it was originally associated, the International Monetary Fund.

[5:00 p.m.]

If we think about just in Canada, in responding to the budget some days ago, my friend, the member for Dartmouth South, spoke about the research of Canadian economist Jim Stanford. He has conclusively demonstrated that in this country, for every dollar of tax cut to business from 1961 to 2010, only 10 cents of actual private job-creating economic-development-inducing investment actually ensued.

So, throughout the western world, as this theory has been jettisoned and set to one side, another theory has come into its place. A theory which is not anywhere in evidence in this budget, but which is the best practice in development economics at the moment; that is to say that where government needs to make its investments is in the enhancement of the productivity of labour.

When investments are made in the enhancement of the productivity of labour the centrepiece of that is investments in improving access in your population to post-secondary education. We know that for every dollar invested in removing tuition for a student at the community college, over \$7.00 is returned to the province in the course of that student's taxpaying, working life. It is because of this economic thinking that we see all our neighbouring jurisdictions having made signature investments in enhancements of the productivity of labour.

So why is today, tuition so much cheaper in Newfoundland and Labrador? Why is it that so many of young people from our communities choose to go to university in Newfoundland and Labrador? Because in Newfoundland and Labrador the economic thinking was developed some years ago that they had to make a signature investment in enhancing the productivity of labour through investing in post-secondary education.

The same thinking was the case in making tuition free for families making less than \$50,000 a year, two years ago, in New Brunswick. The same thinking applies at the moment in Quebec, which made those same kinds of investments a number of years ago. It is not at all rare that young people from our communities go to Quebec to university for reasons similar to the reasons that they go to Newfoundland and Labrador. All of this is a reflection of an economic understanding of where governments need to make investments in order to generate economic development and growth.

However, we have no investment in this budget to rectify the situation in which we find ourselves. We have not only the fastest rising tuition in the country, we've got the highest, absolute number, tuition in the country. So no, as this budget allocates its resources to alleviating the corporate sector from its responsibilities to the society of the province, as it allocates \$70 million to this effect and makes no significant investments in a parallel way in enhancing the productivity of labour, we're not seeing best practices here. We're not seeing reflected the quality of thinking in political economy that's available at the moment.

In this respect, I think an honest answer to the question of, well, is this whole Financial Measures (2020) Act budget enterprise sound? I think the answer is no. It isn't fair and it isn't sound. It also, to a great extent, isn't true. I think that's a question we want to ask whenever we evaluate anything, we say well, is it a fair thing? Is it a sound thing? But is it a true thing?

Here I want to speak about the discourse with which the government has surrounded and wrapped up the enterprise of this entire budget. This is the discourse with which the Premier, particularly, presents the budget and the budget's thinking as though we were in a moment in Nova Scotia of some kind of unprecedented economic, positive, conjuncture.

We're all familiar with what the Premier has to say about this, often making reference to growth in population, making reference to retention of a young part of the

population, and making reference to the increases in our exports. But let's just stop and deconstruct these claims, for a minute.

The population is increasing: In what decade in Canadian history has the population of Nova Scotia not increased? There are 15 decades in Canadian history, there's only one of them when they didn't increase and that was the decade of the unprecedented crash after the First World War. It is no great sign of anything that the population is increasing.

Or young people are retained: Well, let's think about that. What happens when young people are retained in an economy like ours, which throughout its history has supplied a great supply of labour to other regions of the continent or the country. In an area like this - and this is the signature feature of our economy for a long, long time - young people are retained in the economy in periods of recession in the areas to which we have traditionally sent the younger part of our population.

So, when were youth retained in big numbers before? The Great Depression. In the Great Depression, in fact, we had a net return of young people because of the economic flatness that was taking place at the time in New England. We see at the moment that we're dealing with the recession in Alberta, a parallel circumstance to the depressions that happened in New England so many years ago. This results in a retention of young people in our province, but this isn't a sign - a floresce of economic vibrancy or economic growth.

I want to say something similar about exports. Now exports, of course, are important; nobody is questioning that. However, it is not the case that an increase in exports is on its own merits proof of the pudding of vibrant economic performance. My own people came to this country from Ireland in the 1840s. My grandfather's grandfather came here at the height of the Great Famine. Anyone familiar with Irish economic history knows that the great potato famine was also one of the times of the most unprecedented rise in Irish economic exports - grain and corn to England. (Interruption) Mr. Speaker, you'll be good enough to claim the floor for me? Thank you.

Exports do not define economic growth or economic development. So then, we need to think about what the defining features of the moment are. It seems to me impossible for a government to put forward an honest appraisal of the economic moment in Nova Scotia in 2020, without taking account of the fact that food insecurity is today greater in Nova Scotia than in any province in the country. What do we mean when we say food insecurity? We mean the percentage of the people of the province who either report that they experience hunger themselves or they experience fear of hunger related to inadequacy of income in their home. This is the number one province in Canada in this respect. Perhaps members of the government would wish to say this is not the most important consideration - that's a reasonable economic consideration to have - but it is not reasonable to go forward without acknowledging the fundamental truth of that fact.

Nor is it reasonable to acknowledge - when we think about economic indicators - the fact that the province in Canada where consumers face the highest rate of delinquency on their credit cards today is our province. That is an economic indicator of a key level of importance that needs to be calculated, needs to be accounted for, and certainly needs not to be evaded. From the same point of view, we can think about the figures about child poverty and the fact that the trajectory of child poverty in our province remains not only negative but we're the only province in the country of which that's true.

Probably the key economic indicator, if we're trying to think about whether the economy is in a place where we want it to be - are we in a place where we ought to be satisfied, are we in a place where we want to be boasting or crowing - the key economic indicator would be, do the people have any money?

Well, the way to measure whether people have any money is to look at median income. So, where are we in Canada? Are we in the middle of the pack? Are we sixth, seventh, eighth or - we're not even ninth. We are tenth. We have the lowest median income in the country.

I want to submit that as we evaluate this budget, we want to ask the question: Are these key economic indicators here taken account of? It seems to me that they are not and that in this respect there is something about the whole budget enterprise that is not true.

So, I'm saying that the Financial Measures (2020) Act is not fair. It is not economically sound. It is not true. Also, I think another question we might want to ask when we evaluate this complex of a Financial Measures Act in the budget is this: Is it just? We look at that \$70 million tax cut and think about the opportunity cost that it represents - the spending, the investment that has been foregone in order for that \$70 million to be passed to the corporate sector.

We think about the desperate need in the province for new homes to be created, for affordable housing to be expended, for us to have a government that is excited and busy and a visionary in bringing forward real solutions to this problem of great scope. What have we got in this budget? We've got an investment that would create a total of 39 new homes. That seems to me a small number, in comparison to an annual \$70 million tax cut.

When we think about the great need that we have for people living in hospitals to have a place in long-term care, this is not a small matter. Last year in our province, we had 2,000 people who lived in alternate level of care arrangements in hospitals and waited there a long time, waiting and waiting to find a place in a nursing home. There wasn't a place in a nursing home. The government hadn't built any new nursing homes. We think about those 2,000 people and weigh that next to the \$70 million tax cut. In the comparison, it seems to me that the budget before us isn't just.

We think about all those people living on the list of people waiting for supportive small options housing for disabled persons. There is a list of about 1,600 people now and we have three years to go before the road map expires. We have a budget that allocates \$70 million towards corporations and sees to the housing of less than 100 of those people.

We think about our tremendous need in mental health services. Today in eastern Canada, if a person is overcome with depression or anxiety and they want to reach out for professional counselling support - if they live in New Brunswick or P.E.I. or Newfoundland and Labrador, that is available to them. They go and someone will see them today or tomorrow because as those provinces have invested in the productivity of labour and post-secondary education, they have also made the signature investment in same-day, next-day, walk-in basis mental health. But that is not available to us.

So, we have 2,000 people living in hospitals waiting for nursing homes. We have a population of people with mental health needs that are not being attended to. We have 1,500 people living - waiting for small options homes that haven't been constructed, and we've got who knows how many thousand people looking for affordable housing. We know we have 5,000 people just looking on the list for public housing alone and only 39 new homes are going to be constructed through this budget. I want to say that in this respect, the whole enterprise here of this Financial Measures Act in this budget is also not just. It's not fair. It's not sound. It's not true. It's not just.

I want to go back to the day that the budget was presented and the great contrast was put before the province of the crumbs that were being spent and offered on social spending in comparison to the magnitude of that \$70 million tax cut. I drew that comparison at that time to what seems to me is a banquet feast laid out on the table of the corporate sector of the province compared to crumbs cast on the floor for everybody else.

[5:15 p.m.]

That's an image that is drawn from my own scriptural tradition. It comes from a story in the New Testament about two people, only one of whom is named. One of them is Lazarus, and the other one is just called a rich man who is dressed in linens and expensive purple. That's all the story says about it. In the story, it says that the rich man dressed in purple had a wonderful, grand banquet set before him. On the floor beside him was, what the story called, poor Lazarus, who was passed, from time to time, some crumbs.

I won't go into the theological details of the story, but I want to point out that the story doesn't say that Lazarus didn't get anything to eat. It doesn't say that the man in purple and dressed in the fine linens wasn't spending anything on the needs of Lazarus. What it said was there was an unacceptable contrast between what was on the table and what was on the floor. It seems to me that what we've got in this budget is an unacceptable contrast between what is on the table and what is on the floor in terms of the spending of

this government, which means that we've got a Financial Measures Act that isn't fair, isn't true, isn't sound, isn't just. These are the reasons for which we'll be voting against it.

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

The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board.

HON. KAREN CASEY: I've listened. I certainly have to do some checking of facts here from the member opposite. Population, according to my records, did decline between 2009 and 2011. I guess maybe we can recall who might have been in government at that time, but I will check other numbers as well. I think when we're standing up here speaking about numbers, we need to use the accurate numbers. With those few comments, I'll close debate on Bill No. 243.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 243. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR SECOND READING

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 245.

Bill No. 245 - Brookside Cemetery Commission Dissolution Act.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. MARK FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 245 be now read a second time.

This bill was first incorporated in 1930, has run its course, and the Town of Bridgewater has dissolved the operations of that committee. It is no longer functional. Upon coming into force of this Act, all of the property, the liabilities, and obligations of the commission would become the responsibility of the town. After the coming into force of this Act, all of the gifts, trusts, bequests, and grants of property or income, or proceeds

from property, would be held in trust for the town to use for purposes of the town. Very straightforward.

THE SPEAKER: 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 Private and Local Bills.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

COLTON LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise here in my place this afternoon to speak on the 2020-21 Budget presented last Tuesday. Here we are at the beginning of March and already going through our provincial budget. For a few of us in this Chamber, it is our first time going through the process.

With that being said, I think my colleague, the member for Northside-Westmount, has more years of experience with budgets than years I've been alive, so I'm glad to have him by my side to answer a few of my questions.

From what I gather, it is much earlier than normal in a calendar year to go over a budget, but I'm not sure if it is indicative of events in the near future. It has to be done, so I guess that this time is as good as any.

The government's message, "Better Together" - is that a statement or a question? The constituents of Argyle-Barrington, residents of southwestern Nova Scotia, will answer that question. Will they feel left behind and taken for granted by this Liberal government, and they are not better with this Liberal government?

As I have indicated during my time in Estimates with the Minister of Health and Wellness, some Nova Scotians, particularly those in the health care sector, may wonder if this budget message should be “do more with less.” For paramedics, for example, this is noting the cut to the Emergency Health Services budget of \$6.336 million. That’s almost 9.6 per cent from this year’s budget over target budget, compared to next year’s estimate. In my opinion, based on the current state of the system, it requires a desperate investment.

Government says they are investing in infrastructure. Don’t get me wrong, infrastructure can be nice, but the associated price tag, not always so much. The solution to the health care crisis today that has existed for years now, that has not improved under this government’s tenure, due to their lack of vision and ineffective planning, is much more than “new and shine your hallways.”

This government has had six years to deliver real change in health care. What we needed years ago and still need today are health care professionals. Building new hospitals, we will still need those health care professionals to work in them. We cannot assume that if you build it, they will come. An aging population, an increased demand on the health system, retiring health care professionals, burnt-out health care professionals - in the years ahead, are we going to go from a health care crisis into a health care catastrophe?

This infrastructure may be admirable years down the road, once it is eventually completed. However, what won’t be admirable is the cost of these projects left for my children, my children’s children, and future generations of this province to pay, all slapped on the province’s credit card courtesy of the “bank of good debt.” Unfortunately, due to this government’s lack of vision, our crisis isn’t going anywhere soon. Rather than announcing an increase in nursing students years ago, using funds boasted in surpluses, here we are still faced with the same problem. There is a failure to anticipate on behalf of this Liberal government.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day Nova Scotians are paying \$4.82 billion out of their pockets, nearly 42 per cent of the provincial budget, for a health care system that is failing them: poor access to mental health services, to paramedic services, to family doctors, to specialty services, to cancer care, to dialysis, to long-term care, overburdened emergency rooms, closed emergency rooms, and I could go on. Nova Scotians do not feel as though they are getting value for a \$4.82 billion health care system.

Mr. Speaker, as the Opposition Party, we, along with thousands across the province, are often being criticized by this government for being negative about Nova Scotia’s health care crisis. We are not speaking so-called negativity. We are speaking the unfortunate reality for thousands of Nova Scotians from The Hawk, in my constituency, to beautiful Meat Cove in Cape Breton, who want and deserve better. This comes from the very same government that promised a family doctor for every Nova Scotian back in 2013.

I would be remiss if I didn't address the concerns from my constituents of Argyle-Barrington in regard to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal: deplorable road conditions, whether it be gravel or asphalt roads; potholes, potholes, potholes; gravel road grading; missing road signs; and Winter road maintenance to name a few.

There are many coastal roads in my constituency that are susceptible to flooding such as the Rocco Point Road, the Tittle Road, le Chemin de la Pré. These roads are in desperate need of attention and action to provide safety to these communities and their residents.

I previously addressed Exit 32 along Highway No. 103. It's a priority for me, and I hope that it will become a priority for this government. I look forward to eventually seeing it on a capital plan, hopefully sooner than later.

I want to take a moment to speak about an important piece of transportation infrastructure in southwestern Nova Scotia, one that has unfortunately been mismanaged and has failed to be effective for my region and our province. I'm talking about the ferry between Yarmouth and the United States.

Although I was happy to finally hear of a projected start date for this year in June of 2020, I do not want to fill myself with too much optimism. Similarly, the optimism that was conveyed by the government last year to business owners and residents of southwestern Nova Scotia during a failed season. This ferry needs to be open; this ferry needs to be transparent to Nova Scotians.

We need to see the approved Homeland Security Certificate approving the new port of Bar Harbor. We need this connection, but again, it must be reliable, accountable, transparent, and an effective service for all Nova Scotia. This service has a huge potential if it's done right, if it's done correctly. Our Party supports this connection.

La Nouvelle-Écosse est un fantastique endroit à demeurer avec encore plus d'occasions de s'épanouir. Je suis fier de mon patrimoine acadien et de ma langue française. Les Acadiens de la province vivent en milieu minoritaire assimilé et font face jour après jour à l'insécurité de leur langue. C'est important que notre province fasse de son mieux à continuer les efforts à voir l'épanouissement de notre langue française et de la culture acadienne ici en Nouvelle-Écosse. Nous devons nous pencher sur les stratégies pour que nos communautés acadiennes et francophones puissent prospérer davantage dans tous les sens ici en Nouvelle-Écosse.

Monsieur le Président, c'est un vrai honneur et privilège de prendre ma place ici dans cette Assemblée législative. Mon rôle comme député est d'écouter aux préoccupations de mes citoyens et de m'assurer qu'ils sont entendus. Cette tâche est toujours une tâche avec grandes responsabilités que je tiens en cœur.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of my constituency and all of the communities of Argyle-Barrington. There are far too many to mention. It is the people and the numerous communities that make Argyle-Barrington a great place to live. It's their love for their communities, their amazing hospitality, their community engagement, their empathy for their neighbours, and their support for local organizations' causes and businesses.

It is truly an honour to have a seat in our province's Legislature. It is also an honour to work with my fellow Progressive Conservative colleagues, with various backgrounds from across this beautiful province; we make a great team. I'm very proud to be part of that team and of my colleagues' hard work and vision for a better Nova Scotia.

My job as MLA for the constituency of Argyle-Barrington is to be their voice in this Legislature. It is about listening to their concerns and making sure that they are heard. It is about debating on the floor of this Legislature ideas and solutions to problems facing our province.

For me, it's about making Argyle-Barrington an even better place to live. It is about making Nova Scotia a better province to live safely, work, raise a family, and thrive in all aspects. It is a job that I have taken seriously since first being elected and will continue as long as I am serving my constituents.

[5:30 p.m.]

Mr. Speaker, this budget is much more than just dollar figures. It's also about examining a government's plan and vision and, in this case, lack of. The unprecedentedly divisive government has failed Nova Scotians. We stand with the thousands left behind without a family doctor, despite the Premier's promise in 2013 of a doctor for every Nova Scotian. We stand with those who do not believe that the Premier and his government's buildings plan will be the fix-all solution of our health care crisis.

We stand with those who do not have the trust or have lost trust in the Premier and his government. We stand with those who have had enough of this government's inaction, secrecy, poor accountability and lack of transparency. We stand with Nova Scotians. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

MURRAY RYAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't know if I want to thank my colleague for his opening remarks about my tenure in the workforce compared to his age.

It seems four score and seven years ago since the government introduced its budget, a budget that on the surface would paint Nova Scotia as a province that is firing on all cylinders, that is growing and robust. Spending is up, most departments can speak to added resources deployed into a variety of new programs, and a capital budget plan that is the

largest in the province's history. But it's also a year of anemic growth at .04 per cent, added debt and a modest surplus.

We are entering Spring and, aside from the snow receding, the days are getting longer, flowers and trees will soon begin to stir to life. Another rite of Spring is home repairs. Some tackle needed repairs, others prepare their homes for sale. I believe we are seeing an instance of the latter in this budget. The government is preparing to fix up its house to put it on the market, with the hope that at some point Nova Scotians will be in a buying mood.

While the house is being renovated, it would seem the government has neglected to fix the doors. Our health care professionals in the system provide excellent care to Nova Scotians, you just have to get in the door. Up to and exceeding 12 hours for emergency, 12 months for mental health care, years to get a family doctor. The government has announced various spending initiatives, from increasing doctors' pay to adding nursing seats. These all help, but neither were new problems. What took the government so long? They had five years of surpluses, after all.

During this session, as the days are getting longer, the four-hour drive from Cape Breton provides one with an opportunity to drive through a lot of our great province. It truly is a beautiful one, especially with Spring upon us. The snow is melting, everything just feels a little more fresh. Unfortunately, it's also challenging to truly appreciate the countryside when one needs to try to avoid another rite of Spring - the Nova Scotia pothole. Our Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal staff work tireless hours trying to plow, maintain and repair our roads, and they deserve our appreciation and thanks.

That said, the department lacks the resources to maintain what we have at a consistent standard across the province. Each region must balance their budget and priorities to the challenges and maintenance lists that they have and as a result make trade-offs, all in an effort to do more with less. We have ruts on many highways. The infamous Highway No. 125 in my riding - those ruts are continuous and they've directly contributed to many accidents, some fatal. We have communities that have been separated as a result of bridge failures, delays in replacing them, ferries removed from service for repairs.

The government has committed to twinning Sutherland's River, a particularly deadly stretch on the Trans Canada Highway; but on the Cobequid Pass drivers must still pay to get through the doors.

Our future rests with our youth. They have great potential and offer us hope. This year education will benefit from an additional \$49 million in funding, funding that will expand efforts towards inclusiveness, added support for adults and children with disabilities.

Once again, the house looks good, but the doors won't open. But they will once we have mobile classes rolled out, once Grade 5 students are moved up to middle schools. The pre-Primary program offers great promise and potential for our young, but once again, as I said last week, it was rolled out faster than a kid heads for the door when the school bell rings.

This year the Province is also committed to purchasing 166 P3 schools. They had no real choice in this matter; it was preordained many years ago. It was either purchase them or close them. Once again, no doors.

The government is starting or continuing construction of 16 schools. In my area, in 2016, Thompson Middle School in North Sydney closed its doors after over 50 years in operation. Students were relocated to Sydney Mines Middle School and the community was promised a new middle school for the Northside. Five years after the announcement, students are still being bused to Sydney Mines.

While the new middle school appears on the list of 16, there has been no information related to potential sites or much of anything else related to this school. If the current projections are to be believed, this school will be completed sometime around 2024-25, almost ten years after promised and eight years after the two schools were consolidated. In this case, the doors don't open, but at least it's because the school doesn't exist.

Madam Speaker, recent Statistics Canada numbers have referenced at length the concerning state of child poverty in Cape Breton being one in three. The number of people looking for community housing has never been higher; the need for food banks, never higher; people living below the poverty line, never higher. The government is increasing funding for low-income Nova Scotians and all the while we see increasing numbers living below the poverty line. There are shortages not just in housing but in affordable housing. Families can't get in the door.

This budget has something for almost everyone but all of four departments, but what of the middle class? Once again, the middle class is seeing that the door's locked in their face. The middle class drives much of our economy. They are the workers, the small business owners, and our neighbours, and yet they and all Nova Scotians have the lowest after-tax income in the country in the face of ever-increasing costs of living.

That will conclude my speech to Supply. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is carried.

[5:38 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CW on Supply with Deputy Speaker Suzanne Lohnes-Croft in the Chair.]

[9:48 p.m. CW on Supply rose and the House reconvened. The Speaker, Hon. Kevin Murphy, resumed the Chair.]

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. I'll ask the Chair of the Committee of the Whole on Supply to please report:

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

THE SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: That concludes the government's business for today. I move that the House do now rise, to meet again tomorrow, Thursday, March 5th, between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 11:59 p.m.

Following the daily routine and Question Period, business will include the continuation of the Committee of the Whole on Supply. We will also cover second reading of Bill No. 245, and third reading for Bill Nos. 220, 221, 223, 225, 226, 227, 228, 230, and 232. I would also note that the Committee on Law Amendments will sit from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is that the House do now rise, to meet again tomorrow, Thursday, March 5th, between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 11:59 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

The House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 5th, at 4:00 p.m.

[The House rose at 9:50 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 1739**

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Cadence Davidson was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Cadence Davidson and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1740

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Georgia Miller was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Georgia Miller and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1741

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Isabelle Hayward was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Isabelle Hayward and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1742

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Jaina Feindel-Sherry was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jaina Feindel-Sherry and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1743

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Jane Gatto was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jane Gatto and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1744

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Jeff Thompson was the coach on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jeff Thompson on his REC soccer team's victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1745

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Josie Thompson was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Josie Thompson and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1746

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Kiersten Leblanc was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Kiersten Leblanc and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1747

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Larissa Miles was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Larissa Miles and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1748

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Liera McBurney was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Liera McBurney and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1749

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Ruby Maycock was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Ruby Maycock and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1750

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Scarlette Patterson-Smith was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Scarlett Patterson-Smith and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1751

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Sierra Foley was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Sierra Foley and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1752

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Sophie Cruickshank was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Sophie Cruickshank and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1753

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Sophie Park was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Sophie Park and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1754

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas the Riverside Education Centre girls soccer team exemplified athleticism and excellent coaching to become the tier 2 regional champions; and

Whereas this marks the first time in REC history the girls soccer team has accomplished this feat; and

Whereas Sophie Smith was a key participating player on the REC team;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me congratulating Sophie Smith and her REC soccer team on their victorious season.

RESOLUTION NO. 1755

By: Hon. Iain Rankin (Timberlea-Prospect)

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

Whereas Owen Mahar, a 13-year-old third-generation race car driver from Hubley, has made the final three in a motorsports contest being held by U.S.-based trailers; and

Whereas Owen is the first Canadian to advance to the top 10 through a series of eliminating rounds which started with 1,500 and was narrowed down to 25, then 10 and now 3; and

Whereas Owen also excels academically as a junior high student with honours and is community-minded with a keen interest in helping those who are less fortunate;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Owen on his successful achievements in racing and wish him well in his racing career.

RESOLUTION NO. 1756

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Darlene Elizabeth Beaulieu formerly of Richmond Villa deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Darlene Elizabeth Beaulieu having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1757

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Catherine Ellen MacRae of Port Hawkesbury deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Catherine Ellen MacRae having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1758

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Colette Marie Marchand of Petit-de-Grat deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Colette Marie Marchand having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1759

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Catherine Patricia “Pat” McNamara of Evanston deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Catherine Patricia “Pat” McNamara having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1760

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Charlene Ruth MacRae-Stubbs of Grand Anse deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Charlene Ruth MacRae-Stubbs having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1761

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Doreen Anne Boudreau of Grande Anse deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Doreen Anne Boudreau having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1762

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Cecile Marie Baigent formerly of Louisdale deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Cecile Marie Baigent having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1763

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Clarence “Bill” Sampson formerly of Rockdale deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Clarence “Bill” Sampson having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1764

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Christine Ann Doyle of Whiteside deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Christine Ann Doyle having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1765

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Camilla Amelia “Whitty” Kew of Port Hawkesbury deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Camilla Amelia “Whitty” Kew having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1766

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Doreen M. Beaton of Port Hawkesbury deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Doreen M. Beaton having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1767

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Creighton Robert Leonard of West Bay deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Creighton Robert Leonard having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1768

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Claire Marie Bonin of D'Escousse deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Claire Marie Bonin having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1769

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Dugald MacLachlan MacKillop of St. Peter's deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Dugald MacLachlan MacKillop having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1770

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Diane Marie Nicholls formerly of Arichat deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Diane Marie Nicholls having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1771

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Charles Herman Boudreau of Arichat deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Charles Herman Boudreau having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1772

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Carl Joseph Boudreau of Arichat deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Carl Joseph Boudreau having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1773

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Daniel Clifford “Ciffie” Carter of Sampsonville deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Daniel Clifford “Ciffie” Carter having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1774

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Donald Calvin Ross of West Bay Road deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Donald Calvin Ross having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1775

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Dorothy May Dingle of Port Hawkesbury deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Dorothy May Dingle having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1776

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Catherine “Kay” Burns of Port Hawkesbury/Louisdale deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Catherine “Kay” Burns having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1777

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Cornelius Amedee Boucher of Petit de Grat/West Arichat deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Cornelius Amedee Boucher having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1778

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Duncan Robert MacMullin of West Bay deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Duncan Robert MacMullin having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1779

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Charles Ryan Muggah of West Bay Road deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Charles Ryan Muggah having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1780

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Donald George “Don” Waechter of Port Hawkesbury deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Donald George “Don” Waechter having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1781

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Clara Theresa “Sue” Procure of River Bourgeois deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Clara Theresa “Sue” Procure having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1782

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Doris Elizabeth Wright-Beaton of Port Hawkesbury deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on her family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Doris Elizabeth Wright-Beaton having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1783

By: Alana Paon (Cape Breton-Richmond)

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

Whereas any loss of life is tragic and imparts upon family and friends feelings of emptiness and loneliness; and

Whereas Donald “Donnie” MacNeil of Evanston deserves all the respect and honour we have to give for a life that touched so many people and left a lasting impression on his family and community; and

Whereas as we mourn, we celebrate the contributions to life, love and our memories from current or former deceased residents of Cape Breton-Richmond;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly honour and commemorate the life of Donald “Donnie” MacNeil having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 1784

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions’ *The Beast*; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Brook Clark was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled “Bling”;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Brook in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1785

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions’ *The Beast*; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Alyssa Millett was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled “Bling”;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Alyssa in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1786

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions’ *The Beast*; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Emily MacDougall was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled “Bling”;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Emily in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1787

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions’ *The Beast*; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Grace Gilby was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled “Bling”;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Grace in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1788

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions' *The Beast*; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Hailey Chatfield was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled "Bling";

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Hailey in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1789

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions' *The Beast*; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Jordan Rumsheidt was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled "Bling";

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Jordan in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1790

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions' *The Beast*; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Kenda Peltola was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled "Bling";

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Kenda in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1791

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions' *The Beast*; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Keni Hopewell was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled "Bling";

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Keni in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1792

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions' *The Beast*; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Madi Hopewell was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled “Bling”;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Madi in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1793

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions’ *The Beast*; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Megan Bitonti was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled “Bling”;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Megan in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1794

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions’ *The Beast* Competition; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Sophie Clow was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled “Bling”;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Sophie in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.

RESOLUTION NO. 1795

By: Hon. Margaret Miller (Hants East)

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

Whereas Dance Zone Productions participated in Millennium Dance Productions' *The Beast*; and

Whereas with an exceptional dancing performance, the senior dance troupe for Dance Zone was awarded the top honours as the overall winners in the senior division; and

Whereas Sydney MacNeil was a stellar performer in this troupe dancing in the winning routine, entitled "Bling";

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Sydney in her dancing achievement at *The Beast* competition.