



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy

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Third Session

THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2021

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House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2021

Sixty-third General Assembly

Third Session

1:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Kevin Murphy

THE SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to now ask the House for unanimous consent to move to Government Business.

THE SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Resolution 1.

Res. No. 1, re: Rules and Forms of Procedure: Winter-Spring 2021 Sitting - Suspend or Amend - notice given Mar. 9/21 - (Hon. G. MacLellan)

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

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, it is my honour today to rise and speak on this resolution, which will alter for the first time in our history the rules and procedures of this House - I believe, anyway, the first time in history - due to the ordeal we have been in in the last year.

It's been a year since we have sat in this Chamber together. Twelve months is a really long time, obviously, to not have been able to pose questions to help to make certain that we keep government to account, and also it's an opportunity as well, of course, to bring forward bills, debate other matters which are of great importance, not only to our own constituents, but also to the province as a whole.

On Tuesday, as an Independent member of this House, and within the rules and privileges that I still am able to utilize while sitting within this Chamber, I stood up and I basically said that I object not so much to the changes that are being put forth with regard to the rules and procedures of this House - temporary changes that we need to put in place due to COVID-19. It really was about the lack of consultation, the lack of follow-up training, the lack of preparedness.

I remember one of the last questions that I asked in this House before we rose last year at this time. We rose the day prior to the WHO declaring COVID-19 to be a pandemic. I asked the question around whether or not this province was actually prepared for what potentially was to come, to hear a little bit of snickering from perhaps some colleagues when I made mention that it was going to be sort of like looking at a M.A.S.H. unit coming down in the province to try and make up for perhaps the lack of planning.

Sure enough, it seemed unreal at that time, but in some places across Canada we actually did see that the military had to come in and help folks that were in long-term care facilities and set up alternative areas in case the amount of people that needed to access health care and emergency care became too much. It's been a terrifying year for many of us. It's been an overwhelmingly sad year to have lost so many elderly people, especially in this province, because of COVID-19. I speak specifically to the issue that happened at Northwood and all the families who have been affected and those who lost their lives within Northwood and across the province.

Thankfully, we're able to try and get things under control. I do want to say to the people of this province a great thank you for all the sacrifices and what you have done to help your community members, your neighbours. I know that many people did not have

their families present with them when they passed away, which is probably one of the most heart-wrenching things that I can think of that could ever happen to a family, losing a family member, and to that family member in their time of death.

[1:15 p.m.]

I don't easily rise to say no in this House. I'm a consensus builder. I don't like having to say no for just no reason at all. This isn't some sort of a trick or a ploy or to try and gain points. I truly am very concerned that it has taken this House of Assembly and all of its members a year to be able to get back into this House - except, of course, when we came in to prorogue in December. I don't see that as counting towards a real sitting, where you can get into the nuts and bolts and meats and potatoes, basically, of what needs to be talked about. A whole 12 months since we've been able to bring forward constituents' concerns.

I didn't want to waive away the opportunity and the privilege to be able to stand in this place and represent the people who are in Cape Breton-Richmond to be able to again not so much object on the changes, but object that not everybody in this Chamber really was involved with the rollout. Not everybody was involved with putting their two cents' worth. I'm not even quite certain what the entire process was of coming up with the new resolution and the new rule changes. We've never really been told. I'm hoping that maybe we can get some answers to that today.

As far as my experience in this House in the last almost four years since I was elected - I was elected at the end of May of 2017 - it's been quite an experience. It's been an experience as a woman that I would never have imagined could occur in a place that I would think should be the model for good behaviour. The model for good governance. The model of how we should treat one another with dignity and with respect. The model of where we would want our children to see that we'd never close for business.

In fact, as far as I'm concerned, being in this Legislature is an essential service. I didn't stop working throughout COVID-19. I had to adapt just like the rest of us. All Nova Scotians needed to, obviously. Yet, although I adapted and my staff adapted in our constituency, this House seemed to have taken 12 months to have to adapt and be able to open its doors once more so that we can stand in here and be able to utilize part of what is our privilege as a member of the House of Assembly.

I don't have a card that says membership has its privileges. In fact, I have a little bit of a difficult time with that word "privilege." The connotations around it are sometimes deemed as not very positive. I think of them not so much as privileges, but just the aspects that come with my position in this House that should be permitted to me in the same manner that they should be permitted to everyone else. I don't think of myself as more, and I would like to think that I am no less than anyone else who sits in this House of Assembly.

I know that there is a system, of course - that we have the Premier and we have our Opposition Leaders. We have those who have a bit more responsibilities with extra duties as ministers, so extra portfolios. With that comes a certain financial or compensation in the form of monetary compensation.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, I wish to say that although the Premier - and I congratulate him very much on his new role and for taking his seat in this House, and I wish him well, I truly do. Although we have a Premier, we have Opposition members, we have House Leaders, we have Party Whips - I'll talk about that some other time or maybe a little bit later.

Even though there are these positions, and somewhat of a hierarchy system, we are all MLAs first and foremost. We are members of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia. No one, from my point of view, should be having more or fewer privileges because, at the end of the day, I don't think that there should be any Nova Scotian - or I don't think there would be any Nova Scotian who would agree - that one Nova Scotian should have more or fewer privileges than any other Nova Scotian.

Yet, being in this House as a member of a partisan system, which is how I started my journey here - now I stand here as an Independent member of this House. Not somewhere where I thought I would find myself, but I am a firm believer that everything happens for a reason, Mr. Speaker.

I'm the first female MLA to be elected in Cape Breton-Richmond. I don't really think about that a whole bunch but, every once in a while, someone mentions it to me and, you know, it is actually important. It's important that women and young girls in Cape Breton-Richmond can see that a woman - a girl from the north side of Isle Madame, an Acadian, someone who comes from a minority group - that she actually can make her way to the highest level of governance within this province. It is extraordinary, really.

I mean, I did not grow up with a silver spoon in my mouth. I remember my mom saying there were a lot of tea biscuits made in the house to try and - we used to use it as kind of a filler. There were five mouths to feed. My mom worked really hard, and my dad had to make a very difficult choice to go off onto the Great Lakes and leave my mom at home on her own to take care of five children. It's kind of very similar to today where people go off to Alberta and have to leave their families behind because, of course, there is not enough employment, or perhaps employment that would bring in a large enough salary to be able to take care of a family that size.

My father was an incredible dad. My father sacrificed his life living in the bowels of a boat in order for his children to have food, in order for his children to have opportunity, in order for his daughter to be able to get to where she is today. I can tell you, although my dad is not with me today - and I know a lot of members of this House realize that my dad passed away the day before I was taking my seat in this Legislature for the first time - I know he is always with me. He blessed me with a very key message which I carry as one

of the key tenets when I'm coming into this House to do my important work as a representative for Cape Breton-Richmond.

My dad left me with a very simple message, and he was heavily under morphine when he was in palliative care. The doctor told us that he would not wake back up, so it is that horrible feeling of the vigil around the bed in palliative care at Strait Richmond Hospital. I'm panicking because I'm not here in this Chamber, but I really want to be there for my family. I don't want to leave them, but yet my responsibility is also to be in this House, so I was late getting here for the first time and taking my seat here.

My father died the day before I was supposed to come here, and even though the doctor said that my dad would not wake up again, my dad did. My dad woke up again in the middle of the night when my brother, my sister, and my mother were sleeping on the cots that had been provided to us, but I was awake and I was reading. My dad turned to me and he recognized me, and he said, "Alana, you must promise me to be good to one another." He told me that he loved me, and then my dad shut his eyes for the last time. Later that morning, he passed away.

I take that with me everywhere I go. It is my golden rule: Do unto others as you would like to see done to yourself. For my father, he gave to me: Be good to one another.

I have to say, over the last four years I have seen a lot of the opposite in his House. I have seen a lot of the opposite, not just in this Chamber, but within this system that we call our democracy. In fact our Lieutenant Governor, Mr. Arthur LeBlanc, had mentioned in the Throne Speech just on Tuesday he is a native of Isle Madame, West Arichat – "Je suis sur le nord d'Isle" - I am Acadian from the north side of the island, probably related. I have a lot of LeBlancs in my family. My great-grandmother was a LeBlanc, and I'm sure that there's interconnection there somewhere. In fact, I joke that I'm probably related to everyone on Isle Madame, because we come from very large families that all intermarry.

In his Speech from the Throne, I noted that Mr. LeBlanc made mention of Nova Scotia being the cradle of democracy - the place where responsible government was born. It really stopped me when he said that, because I had been thinking about it for quite some time before coming back into this House, that our democratic system should be, across the board, equal for everyone. Equal opportunity, equal access, equal advantages to be able to get yourself into this House, but not only get here. It's quite a journey just to get to this place. One, it's expensive. We never have these frank conversations, but it's all the money that you spend before the writ is even dropped.

It's all the expenses while you're an MLA. I have never been in such an expensive position in my life. It's a privilege to be here, but I see it more so as my responsibility to be here. It's my responsibility to be in this House and be able to stand up, either virtually or in person, to be able to speak about concerns within my own constituency.

You want to be able to stand up because the only thing that you promised constituents when you went around campaigning is that you would in fact be their voice in the Legislature. That was one of my campaign promises. A second thing that I asked of people was not, I want you to vote for me. I just asked them to vote. I just would like for you to go out and make certain that you vote, because it is extremely important that you exercise your democratic right to be able to put your X where you believe is the most responsible, or the person who basically can reflect best what you would like to be able to see in the House of Assembly.

Last time, that happened to be me. Again, it is a privilege to be here, and I thank the constituents of Cape Breton-Richmond for permitting me to come here and to be one of 51 people - not many people ever get to sit in this House - one of 51 people who sit here.

Again, I will reiterate - because it's important for me to say this at least probably seven times, as I've been told, in order for this to sink in - we have not sat here for really 12 months, give or take a day or so, and the one day we were here in December.

There's the issue of breach of privilege. There is the issue of why it took so long. There is the issue of lack of consultation with the members of this House who are all affected by any changes to the rules or affected by these doors being closed to us and not open for the last year.

For me as an Independent, and as a woman, and as a woman as well who perhaps is seen as thinking a little bit differently - I'm the square peg sometimes trying to fit into a round hole. I'm a little unconventional, perhaps, in my thought process. I like to dig into things. I like to read. I like to see where things can be improved. I'm a systems person. I can confidently say here today that I don't think that the rollout of this process was probably the best that it could have been. I believe we could have all done better. However, I didn't have an opportunity to be able to be part of that process.

People say, well, you don't have a House Leader, you don't have a Party Leader, so really, what can you get done, Alana? Well, I think we saw on Tuesday that if you know the rules, it's always like whoever knows the rules best probably wins the game. I don't think that this is a game by any stretch of the imagination, but if you do a deep dive into the rules and procedures, there are ways around, although difficult.

[1:30 p.m.]

I don't really think that it should be that difficult for me, really, to be able to stand up in this House and talk about these things. There are ways, actually, to be able to utilize rules and privileges to your constituents' advantage and to the advantage of Nova Scotians.

However, when you take a look at this nice little green rulebook that we have - I think there is a copy of the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly in my

desk - the rules and privileges are actually - well, I'm going to come right out and say the word. Some people may not like the fact that I'm going to utilize it, but I am going to say it. The rules are discriminatory, Mr. Speaker. The rules and privileges of this House do not permit every member - and again, every member, I would think, should be treated equally and should have equal access, should have equal opportunity, but every member does not.

If you are an Independent member in this House - and I didn't choose to be one. It was chosen for me. I was shown the door. So basically what I am saying is that the rules and privileges when you are an Independent member, whether you are removed, whether you choose to remove yourself, or whether you choose to even put yourself forward as an Independent candidate, you don't have access to the same things here. I am not speaking about what I have access to and wanting to scream and yell about, oh, I do not have the same privileges as everyone else.

No, my point in this is that all the thousands of people that I have at home - Acadians, First Nations community, Irish settlers, people from Scottish descent - we have more German immigration coming in, and we have people from all over the place - but for the base, which are Acadian and First Nations for the most part, all of those thousands of people, being that I sit as an Independent, do not have access to the same resources that everybody else does in this House. How on earth in 2021 can we possibly find ourselves talking constantly about the importance of equity?

I believe that our new Premier has just put out that he is being responsible to go and do a deep dive into policies in different departments to make sure that things are equitable. How on earth can we even begin to think that we should be doing a deep dive into departments or into how other people do business when we can't even see what is right in front of our face? What's right in front of our face is that in this House not everybody is treated the same way. Not everybody has the same access as everyone else. Not everybody has the same opportunity.

To sit here as a woman, especially the first woman to be elected in this Assembly for my constituency, and to have been put in this position, in some ways, Mr. Speaker - and someone said this to me earlier, you know, Alana, maybe this is why you were elected. Maybe it actually took a woman to be removed from the partisan system for which our foundations of democracy are built in this province - maybe it actually took a woman to be chucked out, ostracized, told that she's probably not good enough, told she's not going to be winning her seat back anyway, told basically, there's the door, you're not wanted anymore. It doesn't matter that the people of Cape Breton-Richmond voted for you. You are not worthy enough. That was the message.

It put me in quite a predicament. It put me in quite a predicament where - you know, one of my greatest difficulties - and I remember there was an elder at a conference that I was at in Wisconsin years ago. I was there for something called Wisdom of Our Elders, and it was a conference on experiential education. I was just mid-20s, ponytails, cut-off

shorts with probably a pair of long johns underneath, probably my dad's, didn't have a lot of money. In an old Subaru, my friend and I drove in November from Nova Scotia all the way to Wisconsin, got into a couple of terrible snowstorms, but you know what? We got there.

I had no idea really why I was working so hard to get there. I remember when we left here that there was this blanket of snow that we went through at the airport. I thought, that was a very cleansing experience. I'm leaving Nova Scotia behind, and we're going on this adventure. Then when we arrived, after snowstorms - one of the worst snowstorms, actually, that they had seen in quite some time in the northeast of the United States, and camping in our car because we didn't have enough money, of course, to pay for our hotel bills, and doing the best that we could to get ourselves to this conference.

I remember when I arrived. There was a very tall Lakota elder who came to me, and he said, "We've been expecting you." I said, "I don't understand what you mean. I'm sorry we're very late getting here. We got lost." He said, "No, we've been expecting you." I thought, okay, I'm from Nova Scotia. I probably stand out. Never said anything else. That same man sat around the talking circle, because we had a sacred fire that they had burning the entire time of the conference.

He came back to me at the end of the conference, and he presented me with the eagle feather, and he presented me with the directional ribbons, east and west. Actually, the way that I travel is mostly east and west, not north and south, oddly. He said, "You need to go home, and eventually, you'll figure out what it is that you're supposed to do." I remember he took me by the shoulders, and I will never forget this. It's like he was looking into my soul, and he said, "You need to learn to ask for what you need." He said it twice.

Mr. Speaker, to this day, that advice is extremely relevant because I don't ask easily for what I need. I don't like to impose on people. I always feel as though when I'm asking for something, and maybe because you're often told, stop bothering me, you're being a pest, you're taking up too much time or resources - for whatever reason, I've always struggled with asking for what I need.

When you actually do stand up and ask for what you need - I've never had a problem with asking for what other people need or problem-solving other people's issues - in fact, I feel I might be a little gifted in that department. I love doing it, and I don't find it cumbersome. It's an aspect of my job that I absolutely love. I don't have any issues asking for what other people need, but I have a hard time asking for what I need.

So when you actually go and ask for help for what you need - and you really don't think that it's a big deal until it maybe becomes a big deal - and you're basically told that we're not going to help you with that, you're taking up too much of our time, you're taking up too much of our resources, that's not a priority for us, I want you to stay quiet on something, I don't want you to stand up and ask this question, you kind of ask yourself,

why bother asking for help? How is it that I'm actually going to be able to ask for help for other people while I'm here if I'm not able to stand up and actually ask the questions that the people in my constituency are asking me to bring forward?

I'm the elected official for the constituency of Cape Breton-Richmond, Mr. Speaker, but within the partisan system, what I've learned is that there's something called Party discipline. It's not on the table anymore, so I can speak about this openly. There's a consensus. It's expected, basically, whether you feel uncomfortable or not with something and you're not 100 per cent behind a bill or you would like to put an amendment in but the rest of the people around the table are not comfortable with the amendment, you basically need to say yes or no. Everybody needs to come in here, and the idea behind it is that with Party discipline everybody comes in, shows a united front, and you say yes or no whether you are comfortable with it or not.

I am not okay with that and I voiced that I was not okay with that, and I can assure you that the response obviously was not favourable.

The second thing, Mr. Speaker, is that when you are the elected official, the people are asking you to speak on their behalf. They are not asking the hierarchy of a partisan system to speak on their behalf. It is you who represents the constituents, nobody else in this House. But within the partisan structure, this is a whole hierarchy of who makes the decisions, who basically tells you what question you can ask and what question you can't. You are not free to bring forward what it is that you want.

I had my own experience in this House. I remember on a Friday morning when everything is really tight and you're trying to obviously have a very quick caucus meeting before you get in here. I had done my due diligence and researched an issue that had to do with a municipal issue that was going on in my constituency and I was basically told, Alana, even though it has been approved, like the night before, I don't want you to ask that question.

Of course, I asked why? I think anybody would want to ask why, especially if it's something that, again, your constituents who elected you are asking you to ask about. I am not really given a reason - I am just being asked not to ask that question. Well, that is not good enough for me - I need to know why you don't want me to ask that question.

I was basically told that my time in lineup, my time in that session, too - I didn't get an opportunity to ask a lot of questions. It was after we had just had an election of a new Leader so the first session was a little bit skewed from my perspective because not everyone had an opportunity to ask as many questions as everybody else.

I was extremely anxious to be able to ask this question. It was a Friday, I was going back home, and I had told people I was going to ask it. If you make a commitment and a

promise you want to follow through with it. It had been approved so I thought it was okay, but moments before coming in here it was like no, x me on that.

So, we are going through a lineup and I am getting more and more anxious. I am seeing in the gallery of this House someone who is not an elected official at home but who has been brought in, basically part of the fold of the new partisan structure at home, within my former Party and a member of the staff, glaring at me. I thought to myself, what in God's name is going on here? What is going on here? I am being told to keep my mouth shut on a question that I have done due diligence, on and yet I'm being told that because a certain person is in the gallery we don't want you to ask that question.

Well what happened, Mr. Speaker, because I think anybody who knows me - I don't want to be aggressive. I like to be assertive but also I'm going to follow through on what it is that I have promised. Basically, what happened is that we are going through a lineup and when I'm supposed to stand up, the House Leader asked somebody else to stand up in my place.

One or two of my colleagues looked at me and said, it's not your place, Alana, to ask a question. I said yes, it was supposed to be. So, when she was finished the question - I guess some would see it within the partisan structure as defiantly - I stood up anyway and asked my question.

[1:45 p.m.]

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I paid for it and I have paid for a lot of things for which I suppose within the partisan structure would be seen as not following the Party line, being defiant, daring to have your own opinion, daring to actually follow through with what it is that people are asking you to do on their behalf while we are in this House - and we are not in here very often.

We are Members of the Legislative Assembly and as that, that is the only membership that I or anyone else needs to have to be able to do their job in this House. But that can only be done, Mr. Speaker, if we actually do a deep dive into the privileges that are allocated to all the members of this House and recognize that everybody in this House - whether they want to be a member of a partisan political Party, or they want to be a non-partisan member, as I am - needs to have equal access and opportunity to resources. All resources.

Mr. Speaker, I remember the first session, which was in the Spring - sorry, was in the Fall because I was, I don't even know what to call it - I was booted out. I was let go. I was shown the door from the PC caucus on the 25th of June. I remember it was the day before my birthday. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know what was going to happen to me. I have been called mean-spirited, I've been called belligerent. Imagine being called belligerent, being characterized as belligerent in front of a full room

of people at your own annual general meeting in your constituency by a member in this House, who I would have thought had my back.

It was so frightening. I didn't know what was going to happen to me. I had reporters after me. There's no transition team that comes and parachutes onto the scene and helps you out when you're ousted from - what it felt like was being ostracized. You're being shunned - I think that's the word I'm looking for - from the political family. For what, I ask? Because I'm a strong advocate for the people that I serve? Was I a threat? Did I not vote for the right person in the leadership? Was it a problem that I came across, basically, that I decided to be a neutral party in the leadership race? I didn't want to take sides, I just want to do my job.

That reminds me, actually, of my Acadian ancestors. My grandfather was there when the Proclamation Order was read. I have a copy of it - that's actually the second thing that I take with me every single time I come into this House. It's the Proclamation Order that actually would not allow Acadians who came here to Halifax to try and argue the case that they didn't want to have anything to do with the wars going on at the time between the British and the French. They had carved out a wonderful life for themselves, they had worked hard, they had built dyke systems, they basically were the holders of the breadbasket of Nova Scotia. We have Grand Pré, we have the entire area that, obviously, was then completely taken away from them.

My ancestors - and I can tell you that within the very marrow of my bones, Mr. Speaker, and I truly believe that there's something to be said about cellular memory - I, as an Acadian, I wasn't there during the expulsion, but I can tell you that it was always part of the story that I was always told within my community of how our ancestors were mistreated, booted out, everything stolen from us, and told that we were a threat.

You can imagine, Mr. Speaker, hundreds of years later having the first woman descendant from that experience finally making her way to this House - a House that I have been taught from grade school that is the people's House. It is not the partisan House. It is not the political Party House. It's supposed to be the people's House, from what I understand. I have found out that that's really not the case, Mr. Speaker.

There are a lot of inequities here. There are a lot of discriminatory rules and regulations here. We need that to change. We need to be able to do better. If we continue on the course that we are on, to not be comfortable talking about the issues that perhaps are not very palatable - it's not palatable to talk about the fact that the French and the English, they were having issues back during the time that the Acadians were booted out. It's not even sometimes palatable, for example, for me to even feel comfortable not just talking about the fact that I am an Acadian, but whether anyone in this House is comfortable with it or not.

The reason why I'm here, as well, Mr. Speaker is because brave souls came across from France - I can just imagine the conditions on the boats - landing here in 1642, when my first European ancestor arrived and married into the First Nations. They married into the Mi'kmaw. It makes sense. Beautiful women. Wonderful people. They worked, actually, very strongly together.

I wonder at times, and I think I read this in an article by someone who may have been a Harvard professor or a very learned individual in the United States, who was imagining what this province may look like as far as representation and the system that might have been put in place had, in fact, we hadn't been colonized in the way that we had.

The Acadians and the Mi'kmaq worked very closely together. They intermarried, which as in the case of my family - the LeJeunes - happened. I don't know the names of my grandmothers at that time because I'm lucky enough to see it on census reports. They are just listed as squaws. A horrible word to have to use. Or savages - there's an even worse word to have to use. Those were the only indicators to me on census reports that those are the representations of my first grandmothers here in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, about a year ago, I had brought forward what I thought was a reasonable bill to be able to try and level the playing field of where I saw that there was inequity and inequality within our rules and procedures. That is not tabled any longer. We have been prorogued. I will be, in fact, bringing that MLA Equity Bill back again this session.

It basically asks the members of this House to look at changing the rules and procedures of this House that are just simply so out of date and so out of step with the times that it would put any member of this House - speaking of myself at the moment and the people that I serve because, again, this is not about me. I am only the one person who has the privilege to sit here on behalf of the thousand people that actually stand beside me when I am here.

I am here to tell you that they are being, from my point of view, and I'm not a lawyer, but there's been plenty of Charter challenges in Canada. We do take a lot of our precedents from the parliamentary system in the House of Commons. I cannot fathom how it is that no one has caught before - maybe it's just because there hasn't been a lot of Independent members who have sat in this House for very long.

In fact, a small little piece of odd trivia is that when we came together during Confederation and the Fathers of Confederation came together, to be able to form the confederacy that now makes us this beautiful country of Canada, one man here in Nova Scotia, I think there might have been two originally, I'd have to check my research but I know for sure that one man sat in this House as an Independent. He didn't sit as a partisan member. It's quite ironic because he has the same name as my current life partner, Charles Boudreau. Charles Boudreau ended up becoming in fairly short order a Liberal, but he did

sit as an Independent in this House when we began the journey of responsible government in Nova Scotia. I feel as though there is a legacy there.

In fact, in the same way, perhaps we could have done things differently when my ancestors were asking the Crown to not have to sign off on an oath of allegiance because they did not want to take sides. We know what happened to them. In the same way I ask that I want to remain neutral and I wanted to be able to represent and be able to speak for myself on behalf of the people that I serve without encumbrance, without interference, without feeling intimidated, without the fear of reprisal, just without fear altogether. That hasn't been the case.

I realize now after acclimatizing to the idea of sitting here as an Independent that it's going to take someone to stand up and say, enough is enough. I have been locked out of my office. I have been accused of being mean-spirited towards people with disabilities - when my own brother is a paraplegic. Does this House realize that when my brother got into his car accident only a kilometre away from our family home, that my mother, my sister and I were the first people on the scene. My next door neighbour was dead on the road and my brother, we couldn't even see him, he was so crumpled up and I just remember he had a screwdriver that had pierced him through the chest.

I didn't realize that our neighbour was dead, and as is the case, sometimes children - as much as you want to protect them - find their way through the crowds, even though you're told to stay in the car. I felt badly that our next door neighbour in fact was not really being the focus of attention, yet everybody was trying to help my brother who was in the car. So I went over and I sat beside him on the road. His eyes were wide open and I remember very beautiful blue eyes that he had. I sat there not knowing he was already gone and telling him that it was going to be okay.

[2:00 p.m.]

You can imagine when I see myself and as a reflection on my family as well, or my mom, who took care of my brother through his entire recovery, his rehabilitation, we had to completely remodel the entire downstairs of the house. It was very difficult to have to go and live through that again with my family, and I can't say anything about that because he'd say, Alana, it's going to look weak. It's going to make you look like a victim. It's going to make you look like you're talking about stuff that happened a long time ago, and it doesn't have anything to do with today.

Well, it does. I can tell you, when something like that happens to a child and to a family in a small community, it changes everything. I see every curb, I see every doorstep, I see everything that might in fact be an encumbrance for my brother to gain access to anywhere he might want to go.

So, as much as perhaps the members of this House may have thought me mean-spirited in objecting to spend \$12,000 or how many thousand dollars of my constituency budget to pave a private business owner's driveway or a parking space, I'm sorry. When I'm given basically the a-okay that it doesn't have to be done and it meets code and basically being told after the fact, I'm going to hold the members within this House who sit on the House of Assembly Management Committee to account.

Not only is it not one or two people that put me in that predicament, it's all of you. You saw what was happening to me. I was tossed out of my caucus, I had no constituency office, I couldn't access my files, for goodness sake. I came to this House without anything available to me.

I would like to ask, I'd like to have a conversation, in fact, and an answer about why did that happen. Why have I not actually received a proper response if that's been resolved? Why? Gary, do you - I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to continue, I only have six or seven minutes left here. I'd like to be able to roll this up, but my point being is that - I'll take a breath.

I think we need to get real. As much as we have rules and regulations - and we're regulated to death, basically, pretty much - we need to be able to also use some common sense. We need to be able to treat each other with compassion and respect. We need to be able to open ourselves up so that everyone in this House has an opportunity to have an equal voice.

On Opposition Days, on Wednesdays while the House is sitting, I don't have an opportunity. I'm an Opposition member. I don't have an opportunity to bring business forward during Opposition business on a Wednesday. Why? I'm an Opposition member. Why wouldn't I be able to bring business forward? That's just a rule. That's just the way it is, Alana.

We're based on a partisan system. You don't have a Party leader, therefore you don't have a House leader, therefore you can't take this kind of thing forward. I'm thinking to myself, there's got to be something wrong here. Maybe just somebody hasn't questioned it before, but I'm questioning it now. I'm not the only Independent member that sits in a legislative assembly across this country, but I am here, and I'm here now, and I need to ask questions. I need to actually ask this House, as well. Again, one of the privileges is to sit in this House, is to sit in this House and ask questions, is to be able to access, whether remotely or in person, this process of sitting.

I can tell you that when I did my research, because I did in fact go back, and I realize that we received the letter from you on October the 9th requesting a conference call, and then on the 15th, I spoke with yourselves and the House Leaders to discuss a proposed plan. At that time, I made some suggestions. One of them was training that I asked could be suggested.

At that time, it was being suggested that I share my seat with Mr. MacKay, the member for Chester-St. Margaret's . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. Just like to remind the honourable member we don't use proper names here. We refer to them by constituency names.

The honourable member for Cape Breton-Richmond.

ALANA PAON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm hoping that I'm going to get it correct - that in fact I tried to correct myself. The member from Chester-St. Margaret's.

I said no, I'm not comfortable doing that. The member is not a part of my caucus. I barely know the member, and I'm not comfortable with the member bringing forward a proxy vote on my behalf or the behalf of my constituents. That was the last time, really, the only time that I was ever really consulted, and that was mid-October. I've never really heard anything since then. I've asked.

We were given a survey of what kind of technology and internet that we had at our offices at our disposal, and I'm sure everybody would agree that with rural Nova Scotia internet, things can be spotty - as much as we're rolling out some new connectivity through Develop Nova Scotia. We have never had an opportunity to sit and do a mock session to make certain that all the kinks would be worked out. I walked in here blind on Tuesday, not completely understanding how this was all going to work. It would have been great to actually be able to do one session at least and have a training module.

In fact, I know that it's in the House of Assembly that a part of our privileges is to make certain - not wanting to speak discouragingly about anybody or pointing fingers, but in the House of Assembly Act, it does say that the Clerk is responsible for training. I know that's obviously more than the Clerk, and there have been some difficulties there with new hires and some folks that haven't been hired yet. I just think that this could have been done better. I think overall that this House needs to do better.

As much, Mr. Speaker, as my experience is my own, I would never want to see anybody go through what I went through. I really wouldn't. In fact, my partner looked at me over the Christmas holidays and said, I think I would have given up a long time ago. That says a lot, because my partner is not someone who gives up. It's just exhausting to come up to roadblock and roadblock and roadblock and being told no - decisions being made without you knowing, without your consent, without your involvement. That affects you. Decisions being made to lock me out of my office because I was asking why. I'm not going to get into that again.

I believe very much that all of our spaces, provincially and otherwise, should be accessible to anyone, and I would remind everyone that as much as we need to be cognizant that there are people with visible disabilities, there are many people as well who have

invisible disabilities that we cannot see. Sometimes when those people ask for help, they don't want to tell you exactly what's going on because they know if you find out, if anybody finds out what the invisible disability is, that you're going to be at even higher risk within this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps it will take a woman to change what needs to be changed in this House.

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. Time allotted for the member's remarks has expired.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: I now move we vote on Resolution No. 1.

THE SPEAKER: All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The House will now recess for a few minutes.

[2:11 p.m. The House recessed.]

[2:28 p.m. The House reconvened.]

THE SPEAKER: Order, please.

Just before we get into our daily routine today, as Speaker I direct that for the duration of the Winter-Spring 2021 sitting of the House of Assembly, the following changes will be instituted:

1. Members may use electronic devices of any kind during Question Period.
2. Members may read from their electronic devices so long as the device is operated silently, does not impair decorum and is not used as a telephone, recording device, camera or prop. For greater certainty, this does not prohibit a member from using an electronic device to appear virtually.
3. Just as members may not take photos in the Legislative Chamber, members may not take photos or images of their screen while being used for virtual attendance at the proceedings of the House.
4. The galleries are closed to all except Legislative Television staff and such others as the Speaker may direct.

5. Masks must be worn at all times by all persons in the Legislative Chamber, other than the Speaker or the person presiding or a member recognized by the Speaker who is speaking.

6. The original of an introduced bill will be provided to the Clerks, rather than the member introducing the bill. The member will receive a copy to read from on introduction.

[2:30 p.m.]

7. Members appearing in person table documents in the usual manner. Members appearing virtually may - and are encouraged to - arrange for a member in the Legislative Chamber who is appearing in person to table documents on their behalf. Members appearing virtually may table documents electronically to the email address noted in your memo. On receipt of the document, a copy will be printed by a Legislative Page and delivered to the Clerk's Table for processing.

8. Petitions should be reviewed by the Clerk before tabling. Members appearing virtually may send a scanned copy or photographed copy of the first page to the Clerk at the email address noted in your documents, for review and tabling. Members must subsequently perfect the tabling by delivering the original petition in person or by mail to the Clerk's Office at Province House. Either the scanned or photographed copy of the first page or the original must be received at least one hour before a sitting day begins in order to be tabled on that particular sitting day.

Those are the new directives for our new reality.

We will now proceed with the daily routine.

PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a petition for the upgrading of the Brookville Road in the District of Pictou County. The operative clause reads as follows:

We, the citizens of Brookville Road in the District of Pictou East respectfully request prioritization of this highway for upgrading and paving during the budget year 2021-22.

I agree with the contents of this petition and I have affixed my signature thereto.

THE SPEAKER: The petition is tabled.

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

HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition, however I would also ask to offer a warm welcome to the new members who were introduced to the House Tuesday, the members for Cape Breton Centre and for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River.

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition regarding the need for improvements in the community of Hubbards. The operative clause reads as follows:

“Whereas the community of Hubbards is continuing to grow, daily road traffic has increased, and new residences are being built. The safety of the roads needs to be addressed and altered to accommodate the increases in vehicle traffic, pedestrian traffic, and cycling traffic. Whereas the recent construction leading the twinning of Highway No. 103 will also increase tourism to visitors and residents to the Hubbards area, we, the residents of Hubbards request that the Department of Transportation build new infrastructure to address the issue of safety for pedestrians and cyclists in the area.”

The petition is signed by 173 people. I agree with the operative clause and I have affixed my signature.

THE SPEAKER: I will take the petition under advisement and consult with the Clerk on the validity of the format and I will come back to the House on that one.

PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 2

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

Whereas on Monday we will mark one year since Covid-19 arrived in Nova Scotia, and today, March 11th, marks one year since the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic; and

Whereas while everyone has been affected by this pandemic, nobody has felt the harsh reality more profoundly than the families of the 65 Nova Scotians who succumbed to this virus; and

Whereas these Nova Scotians and their families motivate us to look for every opportunity to stop this virus in its tracks and prevent it from causing any more suffering and grief, while still allowing Nova Scotians to live their lives with as much normalcy as possible;

Therefore be it resolved that on this day of national observance to commemorate those who have died of COVID-19 and the significant impacts we have all felt because of the virus, I ask that all members of this House please observe a moment of silence in remembrance and respect.

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.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

I would now ask that all members please rise as we observe a moment of silence for those lost over the past year in the pandemic.

[The House observed a moment of silence.]

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

The honourable Premier.

RESOLUTION NO. 3

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

Whereas Chapter 33 of the Acts of 2010, the Auditor General Act, provides that “Subject to the approval of the House of Assembly by majority vote, the Governor in Council shall appoint a person to be the Auditor General” “for a term not exceeding ten years”; and

Whereas Michael Pickup was approved by the House of Assembly and appointed by the Governor in Council as Auditor General by Order in Council 2014-162, dated April 29, 2014, and effective July 2, 2014, and has retired as Auditor General effective July 30, 2020; and

Whereas an open competition was held for the position of Auditor General by an external selection committee and the Governor in Council by Order in Council, subject to the approval of the House of Assembly, has revoked the appointment of Michael Pickup as Auditor General and shall appoint Kim Adair-MacPherson as Auditor General effective May 3, 2021;

Therefore be it resolved that the revocation of the appointment of Michael Pickup as Auditor General and the appointment of Kim Adair-MacPherson as Auditor General for a term of office of 10 years, effective May 3, 2021, be approved.

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.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

RESOLUTION NO. 4

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

Be it resolved that:

1. One Chairman of Committees and Deputy Speaker be appointed from each of the Opposition caucuses.
2. The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes and the honourable member for Dartmouth North be the Chairmen of Committees and Deputy Speakers.

3. The honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes be the Deputy Speaker within the meaning of the House of Assembly Act and the House of Assembly Management Commission Act.
4. The annual salary of the Deputy Speaker, established pursuant to the House of Assembly Act, be divided equally between the two Chairmen of Committees and Deputy Speakers.

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.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried. (Applause)

The honourable Government House Leader.

RESOLUTION NO. 5

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

Whereas Annette Boucher, Acting Chief Clerk of the House of Assembly, retired in December 2020 after a distinguished career in the Public Service; and

Whereas Annette has served our province as Assistant Clerk of the House, as Legislative Counsel, and previously as Registrar for the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal and Prothonotary for the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Annette has earned the respect and, indeed, the friendship of members of this House and legislative colleagues because of her exemplary dedication to our operational success;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House join me in congratulating Annette on her retirement and express our sincere gratitude for her outstanding service to the Nova Scotia Legislature and the Province of Nova Scotia.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried. (Applause)

Just before we move on to the next government notice of motion, I think it's fitting, as we give our thanks to the outgoing Acting Chief Clerk, Annette Boucher, that we take a moment and recognize the new Chief Clerk and welcome James Charlton to the table. (Applause)

I'd also like to acknowledge that Karen Kinley is also joining the Clerk's table to help get us through this session, so please welcome Ms. Kinley to the Clerk's table as well. (Applause)

The honourable Government House Leader.

RESOLUTION NO. 6

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

Whereas the South Garden at Province House has recently undergone a rehabilitation to make the garden to make the garden more usable, visible, and accessible; and

Whereas the Halifax Foundation provided a significant grant to be put towards the lighting portion, including highlighting the building's architecture and the statue of Joseph Howe; and

Whereas the Halifax Foundation generously contributed \$100,000 to complete the project;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Halifax Foundation for their support in preserving and enhancing the South Garden for all Nova Scotians to enjoy.

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.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 7

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm reading this as Minister Responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

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

Whereas March 8th is International Women's Day, a day to recognize and celebrate women and girls in all our diversity and the difference we make to the world, and the work to advance gender equality means addressing gender-based violence, economic insecurity, and underrepresentation in leadership; and

Whereas the theme for International Women's Day 2021, "Choose to Challenge," is a call for each of us call out gender bias and inequality and work together to create an inclusive province; and

Whereas women-serving organizations and their staff have worked tirelessly to ensure Nova Scotia women and girls continue to have the support and protection they need during the pandemic;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly thank the staff of women-serving organizations for their dedication over the past year and pledge to work together to advance gender equality so all women and girls in Nova Scotia are able to succeed.

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.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Community Services.

[2:45 p.m.]

RESOLUTION NO. 8

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

Whereas social work makes a difference in the lives of Nova Scotians every day, and the services provided by social workers help to make communities in our province stronger; and

Whereas social workers offer supports to help families to be their best, children to thrive, and our citizens to overcome challenges and to make positive contributions to their communities; and

Whereas March is National Social Work Month, with a theme of “Social Workers Are Essential,” and it is an opportunity to recognize the commitment that the women and men in this profession bring;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking social workers for their hard work and dedication to Nova Scotians and the community.

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

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 9

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

Whereas the annual Open Data Contest was held on Saturday, March 6, 2021, with 10 impressive pitches being made to a panel of judges who selected the top four entries; and

Whereas the top prize went to Team CEI, a real-time restaurant and bar capacity tracking app to help patrons select an establishment that meets their needs for social and dining service and safety during this pandemic; and

Whereas second prize went to Team Canada's Ocean Playground, third to Team Discover Nova Scotia, and fourth prize to Team Representation Matters;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognizes all participants in the 2021 Open Data Contest and congratulates the winner of this innovative competition.

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

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver. Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services.

RESOLUTION NO. 10

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

Whereas findings from the Poverty Action Research Project identified transportation issues as a significant impact on members of the Sipekne'katik First Nation in their ability to access education, training, resources and employment; and

Whereas to remove the significant barrier a cross-government team developed by Driver Education and Licensing Project to assist voluntary participants from the SFN community to acquire a valid driver's license; and

Whereas transportation to an Access Nova Scotia office was identified as one of the barriers in obtaining a driver's license, the team travelled to the First Nation community to provide driver training - theory and practice - support for meeting licence restoration requirements and driver testing;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly recognize the Driver Education and Licensing Project as an action that addresses systemic poverty to bring about positive outcomes for participants in the community.

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

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver. Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 11

HON. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I am speaking as the Minister responsible for the Voluntary Sector.

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

Whereas Joy Saunders from Lunenburg received the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers for her campaign entitled "Walking For Joy," which raised awareness and funds for front-line health care workers; and

Whereas as the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers is a Canadian decoration to honour exceptional volunteers for their passion, dedication, and commitment to their communities; and

Whereas on September 12, 2020, Joy achieved her goal of walking 102 times along an 800-metre loop, raising \$79,000 for the Victorian Order of Nurses Nova Scotia before her 102nd birthday;

Therefore be it resolved that this House congratulate Joy Saunders on receiving the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers and thank her for her outstanding commitment and contributions.

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.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 12

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

Whereas Cole Harbour's native first-round draft pick and Pittsburgh Penguins captain Sidney Crosby continues to make significant achievements to his career in the National Hockey League; and

Whereas on February 20, 2021, Sidney Crosby reached a notable milestone by playing his 1,000th National Hockey League game while Nova Scotians, Canadians, and the world watched with pride; and

Whereas Sidney Crosby continues to be one of the greatest hockey players and inspires youth from every corner of our province and beyond;

Therefore be it resolved that this House congratulate Sidney Crosby on playing his 1,000th game in the National Hockey League, proving that with heart and hard work, big things do come, in fact, from small communities.

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.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Labour and Advanced Education.

RESOLUTION NO. 13

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

Whereas the Women in Trades office at the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency hosted a virtual event for International Women's Day on March 8th to recognize and thank women in the skilled trades for their hard work, dedication, and contributions to paving the way for other women to follow; and

Whereas the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency is helping women break through systemic barriers and enter a career in the skilled trades by working with industry, community organizations, and equity groups to create respectful and inclusive workplaces; and

Whereas in the last five years the number of women registering at Apprenticeship in Nova Scotia has increased 67 per cent, a number that continues to grow year over year;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature join me in congratulating all women who choose a career in the skilled trades, and thanking the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency for their leadership in helping to create an inclusive and diverse work force in 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.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

RESOLUTION NO. 14

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

Whereas communities across this province continue to rise to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic through the resilience, spirit, and resourcefulness that Nova Scotia are known for; and

Whereas each year the Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award celebrates and formally recognizes the power, strength, and diversity of vibrant communities across Nova Scotia; and

Whereas this year 13 Mi'kmaw communities, 49 municipalities, and 20 villages across Nova Scotia have received this prestigious award from the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia for their ongoing efforts to help Nova Scotians adapt to significant and ongoing change as a result of the pandemic;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the House of Assembly recognize, congratulate, and thank all communities and their residents for working together and for their leadership, care, and compassion they have demonstrated when our province needed it the most.

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.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

RESOLUTION NO. 15

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

Whereas on July 2, 1920, Major John Alexander Rudland was appointed as Nova Scotia's first fire marshal by the province's first Fire Prevention Board; and

Whereas with the abolishing of the Fire Prevention Board in 1939, the fire marshal was made chief fire authority of Nova Scotia, and all 67 fire chiefs who were local assistant fire marshals across the province were tasked with investigating and reporting fires, inspecting old buildings, and educating the public on fire prevention; and

Whereas today the fire marshal and the 18 dedicated staff across the province continue to work with the province and municipal partners to support their efforts in achieving fire, building, and life safety, supporting the provincial fire services, and educating the public on fire prevention;

Therefore, be it resolved that all members of the House Assembly recognize the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Office of the Fire Marshal of Nova Scotia, and the important work they do in promoting fire, building, and life safety.

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.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 16

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

Whereas on March 8, 2021, International Women's Day, Cat Taylor was included as one of the faces of female Canadian winemakers on International Women's Day on CTV Calgary; and

Whereas realizing her future belonged in winemaking, she is the assistant wine maker at Lightfoot & Wolfville, Nova Scotia's only biodynamic winery; and

Whereas Ms. Taylor went to Bordeaux, France, for an immersive wine experience and graduated from Bordeaux School of Agricultural Engineering with a Master of Science and Technology;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House recognize the outstanding accomplishments of Cat Taylor, biodynamic viticulture and winemaker at the award-winning Lightfoot & Wolfville winery.

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

[3:00 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 1 - Entitled an Act Respecting the Management of Police Identity to Prevent Unlawful Activity. (Hon. Randy Delorey)

Bill No. 2 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 203 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Homes for Special Care Act, Respecting Staff Levels. (Tim Houston)

Bill No. 3 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 246 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Labour Standards Code, Respecting Sick Leave. (Gary Burrill)

Bill No. 4 - Entitled an Act to Provide for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Nova Scotia. (Hon. Chuck Porter)

Bill No. 5 - Entitled an Act Respecting a Lyme Disease Strategy for Nova Scotia. (Tim Houston)

Bill No. 6 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 246 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Labour Standards Code, Respecting Organ and Tissue Donation Leave. (Kendra Coombes)

Bill No. 7 - Entitled an Act to Establish the Office of the Healthcare Ombudsman. (Tim Houston)

Bill No. 8 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 7 of the Acts of 1996. The Occupational Health and Safety Act. (Susan Leblanc)

Bill No. 9 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 114 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Crown Lands Act. (Hon. Chuck Porter)

Bill No. 10 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2010. The Personal Health Information Act. (Karla MacFarlane)

Bill No. 11 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 32 of the Acts of 2014. The Health Authorities Act. (Karla MacFarlane)

Bill No. 12 - Entitled an Act to Establish the Chief Dental Officer. (Karla MacFarlane)

Bill No. 13 - Entitled an Act to Provide Transparency to Health Authority Expenditures. (Karla MacFarlane)

Bill No. 14 - Entitled an Act Respecting the Prevention of Pressure Sores in Long-term Care Facilities. (Barbara Adams)

Bill No. 15 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 33 of the Acts of 2004. The Protection for Persons in Care Act. (Barbara Adams)

Bill No. 16 - Entitled an Act to Establish a Provincial Concussion Strategy. (Barbara Adams)

Bill No. 17 - Entitled an Act to Establish a Provincial Frailty Strategy. (Barbara Adams)

Bill No. 18 - An Act on the Status of Palliative Care in Nova Scotia. (Barbara Adams)

Bill No. 19 - An Act to Amend Chapter 33 of the Acts of 2010. The Auditor General Act. (Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin)

Bill No. 20 - An Act to Amend Chapter 38 of the Acts of 2011. The Medical Act, Respecting Sexual Misconduct. (Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin)

Bill No. 21 - An Act to Amend Chapter 30 of the Acts of 2007. The Gunshot Wounds Mandatory Reporting Act. (Kim Masland)

Bill No. 22 - An Act to Amend Schedule A of Chapter 1 of the Acts of 2018. The Education Act, Respecting Emergency Aid at School. (Kim Masland)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

[3:15 p.m.]

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

N.T.L. DAY OF OBSERVANCE FOR VICTIMS OF COVID-19 - TRIBUTE

BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, today marks the first National Day of Observance for Victims of COVID-19 in Canada. It has been 365 days since the world heard the word “pandemic” for the first time. In fact, in the last 360 consecutive days, at least one Canadian has died each day from COVID-19.

In that time, 65 Nova Scotians have lost their lives, while 53 of those individuals resided at the Northwood long-term care facility. Sixty-five and 53 are not just statistics. They had names, they had loved ones who miss them, and they died behind locked doors during an unprecedented time of isolation. It has been a heartbreaking year.

Today when we remember them, we must also pledge to do better, to improve conditions to prevent spread of disease, to restore their dignity. While we do that, we must thank all of the front-line workers who went in every day to save lives to ensure those numbers weren't even higher.

I am honoured to stand in the House today to pay tribute to all Nova Scotians and Canadians - especially those who lost their lives - and to their loved ones who had to endure such unimaginable grief.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

NEW PREMIER - CONGRATS.

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to take this moment to congratulate the new Premier on assuming his place today on the first day of regular business of the House since he has come to this position.

In my, and our, experience, the Premier is a person who is accomplished in the important art of listening, and certainly this is a skill that will serve him well in the position that he has come to. I, and we, wish him good health and good judgment in the carrying out of this position, which is, of course a place from which a great deal of good can be done for the people of the province.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

YARMOUTH HOSP. FDN.: COM. IMPACT - THANKS

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, high-quality health care is a vital and critical component to any successful community, and community investment has always contributed to service expansion for patients in communities across our province.

The Yarmouth Hospital Foundation has successfully raised over \$20 million since it was established in 1970. On average over the past 10 years, the Foundation has contributed close to \$400,000 annually to the Yarmouth Regional Hospital. This money was used for MRI; CT scanner; portable X-ray and ultrasound units; infant ventilators and incubators; laparoscopic suites; lab equipment; renal dialysis; cardiology; cancer centre; wellness centre; and the list goes on. The foundation ...

THE SPEAKER: Order, please.

I would invite the honourable member for Yarmouth to do this member's statement under Government Notices of Motion tomorrow, as it's to do with your portfolio.

ZACH CHURCHILL: It's to do with a very local issue in my area. It's not related to my portfolio.

THE SPEAKER: My apologies. Please proceed.

ZACH CHURCHILL: The foundation puts on many fundraising and highly successful events, including golf tournaments, annual galas, and radiothons as well.

This week, the Yarmouth Hospital Foundation received an anonymous \$22-million donation - an incredibly generous gift that will lead to the expansion of services at the Yarmouth Regional Hospital.

I ask this House to join me in thanking the anonymous donor for this incredible gift, and to thank the Yarmouth Hospital Foundation for building the level of trust through the community, their reputation to allow this to happen, and for the impact that the foundation has had and will continue to have on the Yarmouth Regional Hospital and the health services that it delivers to western Nova Scotia.

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

**CHANDLER, ANDREW - EXEC. DIR.:
CHESTER PLAYHOUSE - CONGRATS.**

HUGH MACKAY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and welcome Andrew Chandler as the new executive director of the Chester Playhouse. Andrew served as founding artistic producer of Kick At The Dark Theatre Co-operative, where they won

three Merritt Awards nominations, including one win. He also served as administrator of the Halifax Theatre for Young People. Most recently, he finished a six-year term on the board of Theatre Nova Scotia and currently serves on the board of the Bus Stop Theatre Co-op.

Andrew says he intends to be a champion for diversity and inclusion, especially to bring emerging artists within our community so that the Chester Playhouse truly reflects the richness of our community's stories.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating and welcoming Andrew Chandler as the new executive director of the Chester Playhouse.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

SMITH, AUSTIN AND NIKI: FOOD CUPBOARD - THANKS

KENDRA COOMBS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge Austin and Niki Smith of Reserve Mines. They saw a need in the community and decided to help with fulfilling that need.

Austin and Niki built and maintained a food cupboard in the community. Their efforts to ensure that residents in our communities who are food insecure have access to food and other supplies is worthy of note and very much appreciated.

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

MAIN-À-DIEU VOLUNTEERS: COM. SERV. - THANKS

BRIAN COMER: Mr. Speaker, I sit here today to commend the community of Main-à-Dieu, Cape Breton - specifically Seymour Forgeron, Joe Forgeron, and all the volunteers who came together to build a new home for Barbara Lahey at no cost to her and her family.

This idea was brought forward by Seymour who, after stopping by for tea with Barbara, realized she was living in a home that was beyond repair.

The members of this community began raising money for materials through fundraisers such as a fish chowder dinner. In turn, they received many donations from people across the country.

It is a true honour to sit here today and take this opportunity to applaud the men and women of Main-à-Dieu on their dedication to such a meaningful project and their continued community involvement.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

BLUENOSE ACAD.: FOOD BANK DRIVE - RECOG.

HON. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, I recognize students and staff at Bluenose Academy in Lunenburg for their outstanding fundraising efforts to support organizations and families in our community.

Last Fall the school held its annual food drive to collect items for the local food bank. Despite being unable to collect items door to door, they held the food drive within the school and collected about 1,500 items to donate.

The initiative was put together by the school's social justice committee, which is made up of 14 Grade 7 girls and led by teacher Kim Tibert.

The committee also organized a Pyjama Day fundraiser and collected \$1,300 in donations for families at Christmas time. They were able to buy toiletries and groceries for three families and fill stockings for 10 students.

The group has set up additional fundraisers to support organizations such as Souls Harbour Rescue Mission and Harbour House in Bridgewater.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you and the members of this House join me in recognizing students and staff at Bluenose Academy for their volunteerism and outstanding fundraising efforts.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

PAYZANT, JOHN WM.: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

STEVE CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in praise of the late John William Payzant of Sackville. In 1969, in one of the first shopping malls in the province here in Nova Scotia, John established a hardware store. One year later he build Payzant Home Hardware Building Centre in Lower Sackville, and during the local affordable-housing boom in the early 1970s, John provided the construction materials to build and grow this community, often extending credit to young families. He was always willing to lend a hand to anyone in need.

Today John's family continues his legacy by expanding the business to numerous locations in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of the House of Assembly join me in acknowledging John William Payzant, a great community-builder and patriarch, for his

extraordinary contribution to the residents, homeowners, and organizations that make up the community of Lower Sackville.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

MITCHELL, EVELYN: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, on the heels of International Women's Day, I would like to pay tribute to a phenomenal woman and long-time resident of Dartmouth North, Evelyn Mitchell, who died in 2019.

Born in Northern Ontario in 1933, Evelyn, as her daughter Caron wrote, "split firewood, went fishing and helped raise chickens during the Depression." At 18 she married her husband of 68 years, Doug, a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Evelyn brought up her three independent daughters, who she taught to "do no harm but take no crap," and she took up basket weaving, copper tooling, ceramics, crochet, and upholstery, in addition to sewing and baking.

In the 1970s, when she learned that the Red Cross didn't drive patients from Dartmouth to treatments and appointments, she received permission to run a driving service out of her home. Later Evelyn devoted herself to practising and promoting therapeutic touch, which she discovered was her calling.

Evelyn Mitchell would have been the last person to think that she was leaving a strong legacy for her daughters and others, but her life and love inspired their independence and strength in the world.

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

ELECTED WOMEN: TRAILBLAZERS - THANKS

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, in recognition of International Women's Day on March 8, 2021, and as the first woman elected as the MLA for Cape Breton-Richmond, I would like to welcome all the women elected in the province's last municipal election. Their growing presence in all levels of politics and leadership roles in the public and private enterprise is largely due to the sacrifices of the trailblazers who paved the way for the other women throughout the years.

Amanda McDougall, Amanda Mombourquette, and Melanie Samson now join the ranks of their municipally elected predecessors within my constituency: Brenda Chisholm-Beaton, Gail Johnson, Shirley McNamara, Madeline Libbus, Andrée Sampson, Audrey Boudreau, Vera Doucette, Margo Landry, and Elizabeth MacNeil. Municipal governments

are key stakeholders in their communities whose decisions impact the daily lives of constituents.

I wish to recognize and thank these women and those who Choose to Challenge in order to take their place in public service. It is my sincere hope that their example will encourage other women to seek and fill leadership and decision-making roles in public service.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

DAUGHTER, CAITLIN: BIRTHDAY WISHES

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment today to mention something that happened on this date just over three decades ago. Simply put, my life changed. I became a mom. Giving birth awakened feelings in me that I never knew I had. I fell head over heels with my baby. I now understand why mothers in the animal kingdom attack anything that gets between them and their offspring. It was instinctive and overwhelming.

It has been my privilege to be Caitlin's mother since that day. I watched her grow from that cute baby who kind of looked like E.T. into a strong, smart woman who has endured a lot the past couple of years and come out the other side laughing. I could not be more proud of her strength in the face of adversity. I love her and admire her and wish her everything good in the year ahead and always.

Happy birthday, Cait.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, hairdressers are creative and original and work well in a setting that allows individualism. Owner Betsy Cameron has served her community for more than two decades (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford, please mute. We will allow the honourable member for Pictou Centre to start again.

TRUE COLORS HAIR SALON: BUS. SUCCESS - CONGRATS.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, hairdressers are creative and original and work well in a setting that allows individualism.

Owner Betsy Cameron has served her community for more than two decades at True Colors Salon located in the Town of Trenton. Cameron's business continues to be very successful because her staff places customer experience as their top priority. True

Colors staff always have an eye for detail and want each of their clients to look their very best. They are well known for embracing and staying current with new fads and trends in their industry.

Betsy's vibrant and pleasant personality puts her customers at ease. Her staff pay careful attention to detail. They are reliable, enthusiastic and good at working independently and multi-tasking. Congratulations on your well-deserved success.

[3:30 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS:
RELOCATION FROM DARTMOUTH CORE - ATTENTION**

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring your attention to the exodus of mental health supports in the Dartmouth core. Three crucial mental health offices - Connections Dartmouth on Portland Street, Belmont House on Alderney Drive, and the Wyse Road clinic - were consolidated and are moving to Portland Hills, well out of the accessible cluster of services, including my own office in the downtown core.

While this move may save on costs, it is devastating for clients, many of whom I have heard from directly. This new space may be accessible to downtown by bus, but it is a long journey on foot - impossible from Dartmouth North - and is far removed from other non-profit providers, food banks, and meal providers that clients typically access.

We know that without the ability to access services, they may as well not exist. I'm sorry to see these services pulled from the heart of our Dartmouth community, and I will work diligently with my colleague from Dartmouth North and, hopefully, with this government to address this issue for our constituents.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

The honourable member for Kings South has his mute button on.

We'll move on to the honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

N.T.L. DAY OF OBSERVANCE FOR VICTIMS OF COVID-19 - TRIBUTE

HON. LENA METLEGE DIAB: Mr. Speaker, our world has changed enormously over this past year, but Nova Scotians have rallied around each other and weathered this pandemic as well as any other jurisdiction.

On this National Day of Observance, I want to honour the memory of all those lost to the coronavirus. They won't be forgotten in our hearts and our prayers. I also want to thank all our essential workers, food bank volunteers, grocery clerks, lab techs, 811 employees, and NGOs. I thank the transit and taxi drivers, all our health care and long-term staff, teachers, those providing child care.

The list of thank yous is endless but I want to make the point to also thank Armdale's Guardian Pharmacy team who reached out to me early in the pandemic and on Tuesday administered the very first pharmacy-based vaccine in our community.

We flattened the curve and have kept it down by sticking together. To all Nova Scotians, thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

WELDON, RICHARD: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to pay tribute to former Dartmouth East MLA Mr. Richard Weldon.

Mr. Weldon was an individual who dedicated himself to public service and to his community of Dartmouth East. He served as both a provincial and municipal representative as well as many other community-focused positions for over 30 years. He was elected as an MLA and served as an MLA from 1978 to 1984. Mr. Weldon always kept himself busy and his record conveys what a phenomenal advocate he was for his constituents of Dartmouth East.

I ask all MLAs to join in passing sincere condolences to his family, particularly to his sons Scott and Mark and to his many, many friends in Dartmouth East.

THE SPEAKER: The time allotted for Statements by Members has expired.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Rule No. 43(1), I'm making a motion for an emergency debate on emergency health services, specifically ambulance service. This is an issue that is important to all members of this House and, indeed, all Nova Scotians. This is an issue that quite literally is a matter of life and death for many Nova Scotians.

When Nova Scotians pick up the phone and call 911, they expect that help is on the way in a matter of minutes. It's important not only that this critical service is available, but that it's working as it should be and that Nova Scotians have confidence that an ambulance will be on its way when they need it. Unfortunately, paramedics say the system isn't

working as it should be. Recent news reports confirm that the system is broken. This is an issue that must be addressed urgently.

I ask that the business of the House be set aside to deal with this urgent matter in emergency debate.

THE SPEAKER: In response to the request for emergency debate, as Speaker I have received more than two hours' notice of the matter required under Rule No. 43(2).

Under Rule No. 43(4), I am required to decide whether the matter is proper to be discussed. I have considered the factors set out in Rule No. 43(4A) and I've decided that this is a matter of grave concern to Nova Scotians and it concerns the administrative responsibilities of the government and could come within the scope of ministerial action.

It is not on the Order Paper for discussion. I have no indication that it is likely to be debated within a reasonable time by other means, so I will read the motion and ask whether we have the leave of the House for the debate to take place.

The motion is that the business of the House be set aside for the purpose of dealing with an issue of urgent public importance. The subject of the issue has been described by the Leader of the Official Opposition as - and I'll just summarize - the state of Nova Scotia's ambulance service.

The question: Does the House agree to give leave for the motion to be debated?

Leave has been given.

This debate will take place today at the moment of adjournment as provided under Rule 43(11).

The House will now recess for 15 minutes and we'll come back with Question Period.

[3:35 p.m. The House recessed.]

[3:53 p.m. The House reconvened]

THE SPEAKER: Order, please.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

THE SPEAKER: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM.: ASTRAZENECA VACCINE - ACCEPTANCE DELAY

TIM HOUSTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the first question that an Opposition member can ask in 366 days, my question is for the Premier and it's about vaccines.

Like many Nova Scotians, as I watched last Tuesday night I was surprised to see our Premier on national TV say that he wasn't sure whether or not he would accept 13,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine. It seemed odd to me at the time because every premier in the country is eager for every drop of vaccine that they can get their hands on. I actually had to rewind it and listen to it again. This was just the day after Nova Scotians had crashed the website because they were so anxious to get an appointment for their vaccination. Even the host of the program was gobsmacked that the Premier wasn't immediately grabbing these vaccines.

I'd like to give the Premier the opportunity to explain to Nova Scotians why he was waffling on such a simple question.

THE PREMIER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

At no time did I ever think that we'd be saying no to any vaccine, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important to make sure that we are listening to Public Health and Dr. Strang. That's how Nova Scotians have been so successful so far in the pandemic, making sure that we're following restrictions, making sure that we're getting vaccines out in our major vaccine program.

As soon as Public Health had a plan in place - I want to thank Doctors Nova Scotia and the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia for getting that out and getting it into the 26 pharmacies across the province - that's when we gave the go-ahead, but at no time were we thinking about not accepting that vaccine. It has always been a matter of how, not if.

TIM HOUSTON: Nova Scotians were surprised to hear the hesitation, because saying that you are not sure if you accept the vaccinations because it might impact your plan is kind of like saying you are not sure if you want your raise at work because it could impact your budget.

Of course we want the vaccinations. Health Canada had approved it. The Chief Medical Officer for Canada had said it was safe and effective. But the very next day, after the Premier was on national TV, the government issued a release that said yesterday the Premier directed Dr. Strang, Nova Scotia's Chief Medical Officer, to develop a plan to provide the most effective use of the vaccinations. The Premier was on TV one night saying he is not sure. The next day he said he had directed Dr. Strang to take some action.

My question for the Premier: did the Premier give the directive to accept the vaccinations before or after he made his appearance on national TV that evening?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, to be clear, we always intended to take vaccines. We will always take vaccines in the province of Nova Scotia. We had the benefit of having better epidemiology than any other province in the country.

As soon as the discussions began with Public Health and Dr. Strang, I asked Public Health and Dr. Strang to find a plan for those vaccines. We found a plan and we actually gave our decision to the federal government a full day early.

We had a couple of days to let the federal government know how we would be using that vaccine. It was always a matter of how and not if.

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Premier's response. Certainly we should be accepting every vaccination we can get. Other Premiers are pounding the table saying they want more vaccinations.

From day one in this province, we have been under the impression that the Premier's Office has been putting its weight behind the directives of the Public Health officials in the province, so when I read that the Premier was issuing a directive to Dr. Strang, it seemed a little odd to me. It was certainly a change in pace.

My question to the Premier: was the directive that he issued to Public Health an indication that Public Health is now waiting for directives from the Premier's Office, or does Public Health know exactly what to do with the vaccines?

THE PREMIER: I want to congratulate Nova Scotians for handling the pandemic so well. We have been leaders in the country. We have adopted masks early. We have been testing more than most provinces, both for close contacts and asymptomatic testing. That is how we are keeping our cases low.

Zero cases today, Mr. Speaker. We have flattened the first curve. We are flattening the second curve now. As long as we continue to work with Public Health, and not politicize COVID-19 like the other side of the House, we will continue to lead the country.

PREM.: PAID SICK LEAVE - REJECTION

GARY BURRILL: My question is for the Premier. A year ago, on March 4th, as the pandemic was advancing on our country, I asked the Premier's predecessor, when he sat in the place where the Premier sits now, if he would establish paid sick leave in light of the pandemic for the people of Nova Scotia. He said no.

Now, after all the infections and all of the hospitalizations and all of the deaths, we know that the second most common place where the virus is transmitted, after long-term care, is in workplaces. We also know that more than half of the workers in Nova Scotia are often forced financially to go to work even when they are experiencing symptoms, because if they don't go to work they don't get paid.

So, I want to ask the Premier: Will he acknowledge that the decision a year ago to not proceed with paid sick leave in our province was a mistake?

THE PREMIER: I appreciate the question from the member opposite, Mr. Speaker. Those Nova Scotians who are sick or feeling ill should not be going to work. I want to be clear about that.

That matter is between the employer and the benefits they have with their employees. There is federal protection in that regard. We are in a pandemic, and we continue to be in the pandemic, so we need to make sure that we are listening to Public Health and when there are symptoms, and even when there aren't symptoms, for Nova Scotians to get out and get tested. If they are asymptomatic, we have tests available across the province, and that's how we're going to continue to lead as we manage this pandemic.

[4:00 p.m.]

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, the Premier is skirting the weight of the evidence here. A year ago this week, the first person in Canada passed away from COVID-19 and it happened in the context of a long-term care facility where they had recently cut back on paid sick leave. An employee went to work in that facility although they were having some flu-like symptoms because, they explained later, they were financially forced not to be able to miss that shift. The result was it was COVID that they had, and in the outbreak that took place, 20 people passed away. The evidence is carrying a great weight here.

I want to ask the Premier, in light of the evidence about the heightened and severe role relative to public health of having paid sick leave. Will he commit for the people of the province to introduce paid sick leave in this session of the House?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question again from the member opposite. The sick day benefit is something that I think that employers should have a discussion about with their employees. I'm encouraged by those employers who have stepped up to do so. Many businesses are struggling as well across the province right now.

That's why we brought out benefit plans for them as well, and we're happy that the federal government has come out with the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit program that does pay Nova Scotians and all Canadians up to \$500 for sick time over two weeks, and that's been recently extended for the period of time of four weeks. We've always said in

this province that we would fill the gaps. In this case, the federal government has stepped up and provided that benefit.

GARY BURRILL: It is not a matter of employers; it is a matter of government's responsibility for the provincial Labour Standards Code. Today there are even many front-line health care workers in Nova Scotia who don't have paid sick leave. As a matter of fact, the government itself employs hundreds of casual registered nurses who do not enjoy the benefits of paid sick leave because we don't have it in our provincial government Labour Standards Code.

I want to ask the Premier about this. Is it within his standards, is it acceptable to him that we should have in Nova Scotia the government employing front-line health care workers who don't have the protection, in a pandemic, of paid sick leave?

THE PREMIER: I appreciate the question. If you look across the country, the vast majority of provinces don't have what the member is suggesting. The federal government does provide protection, especially in the context of COVID. There is a program that I support, the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit program, that does provide protection and remuneration for those Nova Scotians who have to take a day off of work, and if they are sick, or if they have any symptoms at all, they should stay home.

PREM.: ASTRAZENECA VACCINE - EXPIRATION

TIM HOUSTON: Health Canada approved the AstraZeneca vaccine on February 26th. Nova Scotia finally accepted the vaccine on March 3rd, and the government announced that it hopes to deliver the 13,000 doses by April 2nd. It has been well established that the AstraZeneca vaccination has a 30-day expiration period.

My question for the Premier is: Can we infer from the fact that it was received on March 3rd, and the hope is that it will be used up by April 2nd - can we infer that the 13,000 doses will expire on April 2nd?

THE PREMIER: That's why we had to act quickly, which we did. We answered the call from the federal government a day earlier than we needed to. The vaccines are on the way. We have the cohort of ages 64 and 63 that will be receiving that vaccine on a voluntary basis. I want to thank again Doctors Nova Scotia and the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia for stepping up to be a partner as we deliver that vaccine, and if we have any left over after those ages have a chance, we'll start descending down the age brackets.

TIM HOUSTON: Acting quickly is not generally the phrase that Nova Scotians have in mind with the vaccine program here in this province. I don't think there's a measuring stick that would say we're doing well by vaccine rollout. We're last in the country for per capita vaccine distribution. We've administered less than 60 per cent of the doses that we've received.

We're also last in the country. It's taken almost three months to ramp up to get going, and now we know that with this AstraZeneca - the AstraZeneca timeline is very tight. We saw what happened last week with the website crashing. We know the problems that we've had in this province.

My question for the Premier is: Is the Premier confident that every dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine will be delivered before it expires on April 2nd?

THE PREMIER: Again, criticism of the advice of Public Health. The member knows very well that we had the policy in place to hold back the second dose. Many of the experts saw that as a good thing, especially with our leading epidemiology and our low cases that allowed us to give a second dose to those most vulnerable, notably in our long-term care centres across the province.

Now we're looking at evidence that it's shifted, so we no longer have to hold back that second dose, but up to this point we were actually among the leaders of those that are vaccinated in its entirety - getting their second dose - we're actually among the top. Dr. Strang has said that, and now we're going to move forward in a way that we can expedite that first dosage. That's what Nova Scotians expect of this government - to work alongside Dr. Strang and Public Health.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM. - COVID-19 VACCINE: ROLLOUT - TIMELINE

TIM HOUSTON: The Premier is quick with politicization and criticism, but the facts also matter. Facts are important, Mr. Speaker. The reality is P.E.I. also is holding back doses. P.E.I. is not last in the country in per capita vaccinations. Do you know where they are? They're actually first. We should be toward the top two. This Province had almost a year to plan for a vaccine rollout. It had certainly two months since Phase 1 inoculations started across the province, but time is only useful when it's used. Despite having time, when the Province started taking appointments for those 80 years old and over, the system crashed. It crashed and with only two weeks to deliver the AstraZeneca vaccine, the Province can't afford to waste another week to come back and say book next week.

So my question for the Premier, despite the hiccups in the rollout so far: Is he confident that the system is ready to meet the tight timelines of the AstraZeneca expiration?

THE PREMIER: I have full confidence in those health care workers who are out working every day to make sure the vaccines get out. Even over 1,000 volunteers have stepped up, 400 of them retired pharmacists, those that have experience inoculating Nova Scotians. I'm very proud of Nova Scotians that continue to step up.

We were the first province in the country that actually used pharmacies to deliver vaccines. We have 10 mass clinics that are setting up right now. We have clinics setting up in the pharmacies now with prototypes in Spryfield and Shelburne. We're working on full cylinders, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to make sure that we are leading the country.

Zero cases today. That speaks volumes. On behalf of all Nova Scotians, I want to thank all Nova Scotians for the work that they continue to do, following restrictions, keeping their distance, wearing masks, and keeping their social circles small.

TIM HOUSTON: Nova Scotians have done the work. There's no question about that. We've done the work. We've stepped up. They just want their government to step up now. They just want to know when they can get their vaccination. That's all they want. They want to know why we're last in the country.

We're all over the map on what's happening here. When the initial announcement was made about the AstraZeneca vaccination, the announcement from the government was that everyone between the ages of 50 and 64 would have access to the vaccine on a first-come, first-served basis. Fifty and 64, Mr. Speaker. Now we're hearing that, well, maybe not quite. Maybe it's just 63 years old and 64 years old. That's a change.

I'd like to ask the Premier: If I was 63 years old - which I'm not - but if I was 63 years old, what are the chances - don't let the gray hair fool you - what are the chances that I would actually get a dose of this vaccine in Nova Scotia as the government has suggested?

THE PREMIER: Again, it's a voluntary choice. We did say that we would start with a cohort between 50 and 64 as other provinces had, but we are starting at the higher end of that cohort because we want to make sure that the system isn't overwhelmed. We had the online booking system for AstraZeneca, which by the way we started with that worked well before other provinces like Ontario and B.C. We've done the work so that we would be ready for when we had a robust supply. We're ready for that robust supply, Mr. Speaker.

I'm very proud of the work and the nimbleness of having all our health care workers on this. Everybody's working around the clock. That's going to continue to happen, and we're going to continue to use the vaccines as they come out, or increase supply. We're encouraged by the Pfizer vaccine. We're going to continue to adapt on a daily basis.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM. - COVID-19 VACCINES: POLICE OFF. - PRIORITY

TIM HOUSTON: Nova Scotians are anxious for this system to work. The only problem is that their first glimpses of it are that it's kind of not working. The website that

we've spent \$1 million as taxpayers on to buy crashed on the very first day. First responders, front-line workers, all essential workers, they've been there for us for the past year. They have been our heroes, but it's time to now be there for them.

On Saturday, we learned that there were at least four Nova Scotia police officers who had tested positive for COVID-19. When the Premier announced some changes to restrictions on Thursday, no mention of these infections Friday at a briefing. No mention of these infections.

My question for the Premier: Will he explain why we are not prioritizing police officers in the vaccine rollout?

THE PREMIER: They will be part of the second phase. As Dr. Strang has said over and over and over again, the evidence shows that, by far, the mortality rates are of those age cohorts. That is why the priority is very much in our long-term care centres, especially, starting with those over the age of 80 and working backwards. The more we distract from the core plan, the less efficient the overall strategy will be. That's what Dr. Strang and Public Health are continuing to advise us.

Yes, we're having conversations every day. Just yesterday, Dr. Strang met with the police association. We're going to start to look at how we prioritize other groups where necessary. The core plan always will be to focus on those who have the higher chance of mortality, Mr. Speaker.

TIM HOUSTON: I know the Premier has suggested today that it was always his intention to take the AstraZeneca vaccinations. That was a little different than the natural reaction on the national media when the national media was kind of set afire by the statement. There was always an option to use those vaccines. We should take every vaccine we can get because Nova Scotians are interested in it.

My earlier question was about how many of the 63- and 64-year-old Nova Scotians who can apply on a first-come, first-served basis to get those 13,000 doses. How many would actually get it? There wasn't really an answer, because it's a very small percentage.

There's one group of Nova Scotians that those 13,000 doses would cover many times over, and that's our police officers. I'm wondering why it didn't occur to the Premier, when he was offered 13,000 doses, to say right away, well, look, we can use these on our front-line police officers who are interacting with the public day in and day out. Let's take them and do that. Why didn't it occur to the Premier to immediately vaccinate police officers with "extra vaccines" that weren't part of their plan, apparently?

THE PREMIER: What we do is we listen to Public Health. Public Health has been clear that the number one factor is to look at the aged population. That's what we're doing.

It's very important that those who are most vulnerable and most susceptible to mortality are the ones who get the vaccine first.

I want to be clear. The supply is starting to increase. If it continues and we're reliant on that supply from the federal government, all Nova Scotians - police officers and other professions - will have that opportunity to get their first shot by the end of June. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

PREM.: SHE-CESSION - ACTION

CLAUDIA CHENDER: My question is for the Premier. On February 5th, 11 months into the pandemic, the former Premier acknowledged for the first time the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women. To address this, he announced a \$5 million contribution - a gift - to a venture capital fund. We know that a \$5 million investment in child care would increase our provincial GDP by more than \$11 million and create 234 direct and indirect jobs.

Will this Premier finally acknowledge that we are in a she-cession and tell Nova Scotians what, if any, immediate action will be taken to address it?

THE PREMIER: Yes, I'll definitely acknowledge that we are in a she-cession. This recession has impacted women far more than men. It's different than past recessions where it's hit industrial activity more. This is hitting a lot of our service sectors. It's hitting a lot of employment where we have predominantly women working.

The child care issue is one that I care about very much. I do believe in universal child care. That's why it was mentioned in the Throne Speech as a priority - to start that conversation to see how we can leverage that priority of the federal government. I also support helping women in their entrepreneurial pursuits. I think that we can do both. I don't think that it is one or the other. I think that a conversation has to be had with child care and improving how we subsidize child care.

When we came into government, child care workers themselves were the lowest paid in the country. We raised them up. We've invested year over year in how to subsidize that more, and we're going to continue to invest in child care to support women and parents overall in the province.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Considering that Nova Scotia was the only province in the country not to provide child care for essential workers, and considering the former Premier's belief that child care occurs organically, you can't blame us for our cynicism.

[4:15 p.m.]

In the Throne Speech, the government indicated, as the Premier just mentioned, that they would work on a comprehensive national child care strategy. Pre-Primary just isn't enough. Federal and provincial Liberal governments have been promising to deliver universal child care for decades. It was promised in 1993, it was promised in 2004, and it was promised in 2011. The parents of the children in my community - who will lose two regulated child care providers serving over 75 families by July because of the destabilization of the sector - can't wait another 30 years, Mr. Speaker.

Will this Premier commit to investing in a universal, affordable public system of child care in this budget?

THE PREMIER: Actually, we were the only province during the pandemic that invested in child care to keep the child care sector whole when we had restrictions come on, and we weren't going to be able to use the capacity at the child care centres. We do support the sector. We are going to continue to support that sector, and the federal government has stated priorities in this area. That makes me very optimistic that we can have that conversation to ensure that we are going to invest towards a universal health care system because I do think that is the next step for our social safety net.

Pre-Primary is a good program that both Opposition Parties voted against, but we did support that program. It is the largest social program to help people in Nova Scotia in my lifetime. As we move forward, we are going to have to look at ways that we continue to subsidize for those that aren't at the age of four.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

H&W - PHYSICIAN WAIT-LIST: GOVT. PROM. - FAILURE

KARLA MACFARLANE: A doctor for every Nova Scotian - that is what this government promised the people of Nova Scotia in 2013. In 2016, the wait-list for a doctor was around 6,000 people. In December 2020, the wait-list was over 50,000. Here we are today, just three months later, with a wait-list of over 60,000. Nova Scotians are waiting anxiously to see if this government has a plan to provide their key platform commitment, a doctor for every Nova Scotian.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: Why has this government failed in its clearest promise to Nova Scotians?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: We have actually managed to attach over 180,000 Nova Scotians to a family physician here in the province. We have seen an incredible trend of attaching more patients and Nova Scotians every year except this year.

The numbers have gone up this year. There's two key factors that have impacted that. One is that COVID-19 has impacted particularly our recruitment of international doctors. We do have international doctors who are trying to get here. The pandemic has impacted our ability to get them here sooner. Also, an unforeseen factor that has impacted this is that we have actually had a lot more people move to Nova Scotia from other parts of the country. In fact, of those folks who are unattached right now - we do surveys with them - 30 per cent indicated that they are new to our area. We have seen an exceptional growth in our population, and that has driven up the number of patients who are no longer attached.

I will remind the member that we now have the most competitive compensation package for family physicians in Atlantic Canada and many specialists. We're training more doctors here in Nova Scotia than we ever have before. We are also looking at expanding primary care access points to patients through pharmacies by expanding their scope of practice and through nurse practitioners. We are also piloting . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order please. The time allotted for the answer has long since expired. I will just take this opportunity - this is our first interaction with a question being posed virtually and an answer being posed virtually. I will encourage the members to keep track of the 45-second clock which appears on your screen only, not the Legislative TV broadcast screen. It is on the member's screen, and it is the lower clock there.

The honourable member for Pictou West.

KARLA MACFARLANE: Year after year and month after month, our doctor crisis has gotten worse. We all know that. During the last year, many cancer screenings have stopped, blood collection was drastically reduced, and surgeries were postponed or cancelled altogether. With doctors leaving our province or choosing to not come altogether due to current government red tape and regulations, we are not only seeing an increase of the doctor wait-list but we are seeing a lack of access available to Nova Scotians.

While we may see a physical list of over 60,000 Nova Scotians without a doctor, we have been told by the government's own officials that the list actually only represents half of the people looking for a doctor. My question is: Will the minister agree that our current doctor shortage has definitely reached a crisis level?

ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, in fact we have more doctors in this province per capita than any other province in this country. We do have an attachment issue right now, we've seen those numbers go up. A big part of that is because more people are moving here because we're one of the safest places to be in the world, so that has pushed the numbers up.

I'll remind the member we're enhancing access points for primary care from pharmacists through nurse practitioners, through virtual care and we're piloting a program

to do that with RNs as well. It's not just about finding a family doctor for every Nova Scotian, it's for finding the right access point to primary care to serve their needs in the way that best serves the medical conditions they're dealing with.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

H&W: NSHA DIRECTIVE - DISSATISFIED

COLTON LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, in March of 2019, the CBC reported that the NSHA was working to reduce off-load times in five hospitals throughout Nova Scotia. The health authority was to deliver its new policy on maximum allowable times in roughly 30 days. The then-Minister of Health and Wellness said it should help clear the ER backlogs. The minister at the time said, "We know that people are staying too long, ambulances are staying in some of our busiest hospitals too long." I'll table that quote.

My question for the Minister of Health and Wellness is: If the Nova Scotia Health Authority was working on a policy two years ago, why was there a need to issue a directive on Monday to the NSHA? Is the minister dissatisfied with the leadership of the NSHA?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, we know that off-loading is a complicated issue. There was a directive issued a couple of years ago, we did see some improvements during that period of reducing the amount of folks that were going into ERs, doing a better job of decanting some patients to other health services and finding some efficiencies in the system but we know more work needs to be done.

In this new directive, we actually have time standards in place: 30 minutes for off-loading and 12 hours for in-patient flow. I spoke recently with the paramedics' union, with EMC, as well as with the CEO of the health authority on this issue. I believe that we're going to have a lot of co-operation with the leadership in the health authority to get to the bottom of this issue and see further improvements this year because we know how critical it is for patient care in our system.

COLTON LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I beg to differ with the honourable minister because speaking with paramedics since then, those off-load guidelines didn't work. In fact, I worked in that system at that time and I can assure you it wasn't working at that time. Here we are in 2021 and the minister is issuing another directive to reduce the off-load times. The minister said in a press conference on Monday that there's lots of motivation to see service improvements for offloads.

I don't know how he can make that statement when he has had to reissue a directive that was already given two years ago. If directives were the magic sauce, it should have worked initially. My question again to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: Why should anyone believe that this is the directive that is actually going to solve the problem?

ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, off-loading is a very complicated issue that involves a lot of other aspects of our health care system, not just EHS and not just our emergency rooms. We have a comprehensive plan in place to increase long-term care facilities, for example, to get more people out of hospital. We are looking at giving paramedics more flexibility in terms of treatment on-site and not forcing them to bring all their patients to the emergency department if they don't have to be there.

We're also creating new access points for Nova Scotians, particularly those who don't have a family doctor, to keep them out of our emergency departments for things like prescription refills. We've done that by expanding the scope of practice with pharmacists, with nurse practitioners and other health professionals as well.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

H&W: PARAMEDIC INCREASE - CONCERN

COLTON LEBLANC: It's finally nice to hear this Liberal government actually acknowledge that there's issues with the EHS system.

On March 8th, the government finally released the long-awaited Fitch and Associates report which was supposed to set guidelines for improving the EHS system. As part of the release of the report, the government announced that it has no plans to increase the number of paramedics on-the-job in Nova Scotia. Despite an abysmal record of hitting response time targets, there is no contemplation to hiring additional paramedics.

My question for the Minister of Health and Wellness is: If the answer to the problem was process improvement, wouldn't the process have been improved with the last directive to improve off-load delays?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: In fact, we are hiring new resources into our ambulatory care system. Those will be for LifeFlight.

What the Fitch and Associates report indicated is that we have one of the most sophisticated, world-class systems in North America. One of the challenges we have is that 40 per cent of ambulance time is actually spent doing non-emergent care: transporting people between facilities in non-emergent issues, bringing people home from the hospital, and bringing people to the ED who might not necessarily need to be there.

This is about changing our system from being focused on response times and transportation with our paramedics to focusing on critical outcomes for patients, and ensuring that 40 per cent of time our paramedics are spending doing non-emergent care is removed from them so they can focus on doing the most critical work we know they do - saving lives and responding to emergencies.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

PREM.: MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES - COMMIT

SUSAN LEBLANC; Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Police services have explained that they are not qualified to help people in acute mental health crisis. Both the Truro and Bridgewater police have said that they are not suited to the work. Bridgewater's deputy chief has said, "We're not full-time mental health caseworkers. We're not in crisis management every day. We don't have that experience from working full time . . . that's not our profession." I can table that.

Both chiefs say that much more needs to be done to help Nova Scotians in crisis, especially in rural areas. My question for the Premier is: Does the Premier agree with these police services, that when people call an emergency line in mental health crisis, they should not be met by the police?

THE PREMIER: I agree, we can do a lot more for mental health and addictions, especially what's been shown throughout the pandemic. I am worried about those Nova Scotians who are experiencing mental health challenges and addictions. That's why we created a new Office of Mental Health and Addictions within the Department of Health and Wellness.

We'll be hiring a clinician at the head of that office who will be working to ensure that we have more community supports - more capacity in communities - so that we do have more availability for mental health supports in Nova Scotia.

SUSAN LEBLANC: I'd like to thank the Premier for his answer.

As an example, Mr. Speaker, last year alone 602 Nova Scotians in mental health crisis were met by the police after seeking help through the provincial crisis line; 7,390 more were referred out by police after someone called 911 searching for help. The police are interacting with people in mental health crisis in Nova Scotia every day.

My question for the Premier is: Will the Premier commit, as part of his new initiative in mental health and addictions, to creating a province-wide mental health emergency response service?

THE PREMIER: As the member referenced in her first question, there is a crisis line that can be called and responded to immediately. There's also another line, if it's not of an urgent nature.

We're going to continue to bolster support for that and the Kids Help Phone and other supports we have. We're going to make sure that we have more mental health supports in schools.

We did increase the budget last time, but we're going to look at this upcoming budget to make sure that we are supporting mental health in a more aggressive way.

THE SPEAKER; The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

H&W - SOUTH SHORE: PALLIATIVE CARE CENTRE - OVERDUE

KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. When we approach the end of our lives, we all want the final hours for our loved ones to be comfortable, dignified and close to home. Unfortunately, that will not be the reality for every Nova Scotian. Over 25 per cent of the residents in Queens and Lunenburg counties are age 65 or older, well above the provincial average, but we do not have a dedicated palliative care facility.

My question to the minister: A South Shore palliative care centre is long overdue; will the new Minister of Health and Wellness commit to funding one?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I do think Nova Scotia could benefit from more dedicated palliative care centres. There are different ways that you can approach that, by using facilities that we currently have access to or by building new ones - and I will tell the member that we are looking at expansion of palliative care services in this province.

KIM MASLAND: I thank the minister for his response. We don't even have designated palliative care beds in South Shore Regional Hospital, Queens General Hospital, or the Fishermen's Memorial Hospital. It is vitally important that we do have some type of designated palliative care.

I'd like to share with the minister part of an email that I received from a constituent whose wife recently passed away, so he can understand the urgent need of such a facility. It says:

No palliative care centre designated beds in hospitals, and the final hour or days for some loved ones could be spent in an emergency room. Staff working in these locations are caring people, but have no alternative but to leave the patient to die, sometimes alone, maybe on a gurney in an open hall because there is no other place to support them.

This gentleman who wrote me this email has asked for me to help him fulfill his late wife's dying wish - to help others die with dignity and to make sure that the South Shore palliative centre becomes a reality.

Why does this government continue to deny seniors and other residents of Queens and Lunenburg Counties the dignity end of life care that they so deserve?

[4:30 p.m.]

ZACH CHURCHILL: Our government actually has invested in increasing access to palliative care beds across our province. There are beds in place along the South Shore, and the projects that have been successful are when community partners come forward and support palliative care projects with local funding as well.

We have seen that happen in Yarmouth, we have seen that happen in Shelburne, we have seen that happen in Cape Breton and other parts of the province. We will work with communities to ensure that folks have access to these critical services that are particularly important for helping people end their lives with dignity.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

H&W - VALLEY HOSPITAL: DIALYSIS UNIT - UPDATE

JOHN LOHR: My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness.

After seven years, three ministers, COVID-19, and lots of promises, the long-awaited dialysis unit at Valley Regional Hospital remains unopened. The first promise for more dialysis chairs and a new facility goes back to the Dexter government, a promise before the 2013 election. This government then increased the number of dialysis chairs that were going to be put into the facility.

However, since our last meeting it has come to my attention that the chairs for the dialysis project were purchased through an alternative procurement process on an emergency basis, costing over \$226,000 - and that has been tabled. A FOIPOP describes how the deadline for tendering the chairs had passed and an alternative process was needed to meet a forecasted arrival date of May 12, 2020.

My question for the minister: If an alternative emergency procurement was required to keep this project on schedule a year ago, why are so many people still without this service of new chairs that were due to arrive May 12th, 2020, and why are they still travelling through winter conditions to Halifax?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: It's my understanding there's still a plan to complete that project. I know that COVID-19 has impacted numerous projects, not just across Nova Scotia but across the world in terms of supplies. We do use alternative procurement processes to expedite projects on occasion. We have a plan for that.

This is something that I can look more into for the member and provide him with a full update on the state of the dialysis unit in his community.

JOHN LOHR: I look forward to that update from the minister.

Another long-awaited project, the Valley Hospice, was opened after 20 years of advocating by local residents to see this project come to fruition. The opening didn't last long when a flood closed the hospice again in December. A FOIPOP by our caucus reveals the minister of the day was not briefed on the issue and when the hospice may reopen. We now know it is partially reopened.

My question for the minister is this: Is he aware of what happened to cause the flood at the Valley Hospice, and whether or not warranty and/or insurance by the builder will cover the repair costs, or are the taxpayers stuck with another bill for unplanned repairs?

ZACH CHURCHILL: My understanding is there is a broken pipe that impacted the flooding, and that the repair process has been ongoing.

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

SNSIS: CYBERSECURITY - TRAINING

ALANA PAON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services.

The 2020 Report of the Auditor General noted several cybersecurity concerns, many of which were brought forward in previous years. The recent cyberattack on 50,000 current and former Nova Scotia Health employees should act as a warning, as threats have grown in scope, volume, and severity, exacerbated by COVID-19.

Nova Scotians' personal information is at risk, more now than ever before as several provincial services move to the virtual world, with provincial employees accessing the government network while working remotely. When asked about the Office of the Auditor General, SNSIS indicated mandatory training on cybersecurity is limited to only some of its employees, those who process credit card transactions.

My question is: Why doesn't every user of the province's network receive cybersecurity training so they are better able to understand their role and responsibility to protect the private information of Nova Scotians?

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Cybersecurity is something that we at Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services, and indeed throughout all of government, take extremely seriously. We do our best to make sure that all of our users across the Nova Scotia government and working with our partners at Nova Scotia Health and the Nova Scotia Health Authority make it a priority as best as they can.

In fact, we have enhanced our cybersecurity, and we have recently hired an extremely qualified director of cybersecurity whom I look forward to working with and making sure that we are as protected as possible.

ALANA PAON: I thank the minister for her response. The Province must have strategies in place within the public sector to protect taxpayer assets and maintain public confidence. The 2020 Report of the Auditor General stated that 10 departments and nine public service units have not completed a fraud risk assessment. Those departments include Agriculture; Communities, Culture and Heritage; Education and Early Childhood Development; Energy and Mines; Environment; Fisheries and Aquaculture; Lands and Forestry; Municipal Affairs and Housing; Seniors; Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services.

So, I ask the honourable Minister: How is this acceptable in 2021?

PATRICIA ARAB: We work constantly to make sure that we are operating - that we are in the best position possible in terms of our AG reports, in terms of the threat-risk assessments. We work with our departments, we help, we encourage them, and we are working through to make sure that the recommendations are met.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

H&W: BREAST CANCER - SUPPORTS

TIM HALMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Cancer diagnosis can be devastating for individuals and their families, and I think we all recognize that every family in Nova Scotia, every family in Canada, has been impacted by cancer in one capacity or another. We all recognize our health professionals provide an unbelievable quality of care to those battling this disease.

However, we know that more can be done to provide supports, specifically with breast cancer supports through Medical Service Insurance. So, my question to the minister is this: Could the minister clarify for this House what is covered by MSI for breast cancer supports, specifically as it pertains to prosthetics?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I will ensure that the member has all the complete information on that to distribute to his constituents, and I'll make sure that everyone in the Chamber has access to this information as well.

TIM HALMAN: I certainly appreciate the minister's response. It's my understanding that unless a patient has private coverage, then patients are left to pay for prosthetics and wigs out of their own pocket. I believe all recognize how critical it is to offer cancer patients as much support as possible while they're battling this disease, and for them to come out the other end strong in order to maximize the recovery.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, breast cancer assistance is not considered by the Department of Health and Wellness as necessary and is not covered by MSI. My question is this: Has there ever been a review of breast cancer assistance, and if not, will the minister commit to conducting a review of the MSI coverage of breast cancer assistance?

ZACH CHURCHILL: In fact, we've been meeting with our doctors who are responsible for cancer treatment in the province. I want to congratulate Dr. Hollenhorst on taking over for Dr. Drew Bethune. We're in very good hands in terms of cancer treatment.

This issue is one I'm happy to look into and investigate what options are available now for Nova Scotians and what's possible in the future.

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

H&W: COVID-19 VACCINE - ACCESSIBILITY

KEITH BAIN: This month, the province began making the COVID-19 vaccine available to Nova Scotians over the age of 80.

While this is very welcome news, my constituents continue to express concern about vaccine accessibility for those living in rural communities. For example, there's a major transportation issue for those over 80 in the North of Smokey area who have to travel up to three hours one way, and over two mountain ranges, in order to go to Cape Breton University for their vaccine.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: How does this department plan to make things easier for those residents by having the vaccine available in their community?

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: We have a comprehensive plan to make sure that vaccines are accessible in every single community in the province. No community should be further than 45 minutes for accessing the vaccine. As supply increases in Nova Scotia, so will the outposts where vaccines are going to be delivered.

I want to assure Nova Scotians that we are in a race to get to herd immunity and we will be making sure that vaccine clinics are accessible. We're doing that through our own clinics, working with family practitioners and also with pharmacists. We are really ahead of the curve on this plan and I look forward to getting to herd immunity here in Nova Scotia.

KEITH BAIN: At last count, there were 119 residents over 80 in the North of Smokey area. That's beyond those who are in a nursing home. The only thing the region needs now is a supply of the vaccine, as our local health care providers are standing by and

ready to administer doses to the population. In fact, five doctors in the area have already contacted Public Health to offer to vaccinate these residents.

Again, my question to the minister . . .

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

We will now recess for 15 minutes and we'll be back.

[4:43 p.m. The House recessed.]

[4:58 p.m. The House reconvened.]

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that the adjourned debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne be now resumed.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition with 41 minutes left.

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to stand today and talk a little bit more about the response to the Speech from the Throne.

Really, what we're talking about is the type of province that we want to live in, yes, but we also have to be honest about the type of province that we do live in and the challenges that we have before us that need to be addressed. I think when you ask Nova Scotians what their number one concern is, the number one thing on their minds, a lot of times the response is health care. If you were to separate health care into a couple of buckets - primary health care, mental health care, seniors care - they would then show up as one, two, and three.

I do want to welcome our Deputy Speaker, the member for Dartmouth North, to the Chair. (Applause)

If you ask Nova Scotians, health care, health care, health care. The reason they say health care, health care, health care is because our health care system truly is in crisis. The health care system, particularly over the last seven years, through two successive mandates from this government, is deteriorating. The crisis is deepening.

[5:00 p.m.]

That is why we were hopeful that we would see more on health care in the Speech from the Throne. That is why we have to remain hopeful that we will see something coming forward here.

Maybe we will see a change of pace, but there is a lot of opportunity to improve the health care system. That is the positive of all this. There is a lot of opportunity to improve the system because of the state. We have people in the health care system who work incredibly hard, doing incredibly good work, and I would say if you can get into the system you will get good care. You will get the finest care, but the problem for too many Nova Scotians is getting into the system.

A couple things I want to talk about today that we would have hoped to have seen in the Speech from the Throne, where the government laid out its vision for Nova Scotians. We had hoped that there was more of the vision that had to do with making sure they can access health care. Right now, we know that there is an issue. I hear the new Minister of Health and Wellness referring to the fact that we have more doctors in this province than any other province. It is an interesting statistic that the government uses a lot of ways to try - they use it in different ways to frame the discussion.

There are a lot here, but they are not all family doctors. A lot of them are specialists. We have a regional hospital here in the Victoria General Hospital. We have a teaching facility here in Dalhousie Medical School. We have lots of health care professionals in here. What I think the discussion needs to focus on a little bit too is access to primary care. That can be nurse practitioners, it can be family doctors, it can be people who are qualified to provide primary health care to Nova Scotians.

In terms of family doctors, there are currently 130 job postings in this province for physicians. One hundred thirty. So as much as the Minister of Health and Wellness always says we have a lot, we need more. In fact, by the department and Nova Scotia Health Authority's own admission we need 130 more, because that is how many job postings there are. When you look at and when you try to understand and try to get the government to understand, as we have, the situation with the physicians that we have - because if you want to recruit, you need to retain - happy doctors help recruit - you need to understand the demographics of the doctors that we have here in the province practising right now.

Over 50 per cent of our doctors are over the age of 50, and 31 per cent of the current doctors we have are expected to retire in the next year. That is a staggering number that

speaks very directly to, in many ways, the demographics of the province, but certainly the demographics of our - over 50 per cent are over 50, and 31 per cent are expected to retire in the next year. I suspect it would be better to say “would like to retire,” because we all know those health care practitioners around the province, including doctors that want to retire but can’t, because they just won’t do that to Nova Scotians who are their patients.

We have struggled to recruit in this province. We have not only struggled to recruit, but we have struggled to retain. What I was hoping to see from the government, as they laid out their plan for the future - I was hoping to see something about improving access to health care. I was hoping to see some sort of plan that would actually not just say that health care professionals are respected, but actually show some appreciation for them. Right now, in the province, we’re a long way from that. Right now in this province, we don’t even know really how many doctors are working in the system. We know that they don’t know that. It is not something that they really focus on.

There are no human resource metrics. I’m sure that statistic of 31 per cent wanting to retire in the next year is probably a surprise to somebody in the Nova Scotia Health Authority. We need to really understand what we have, and I think nobody has summed up the culture of the Nova Scotia Health Authority, and our health care system was best summed up by Dr. Robert Miller in his open editorial in the newspaper last week.

Dr. Miller pointed to the faults of the system, including bureaucrats who “have never seen the inside of a medical school,” and the concept of accountability within the system is as visible as the Loch Ness Monster, according to Dr. Miller. Imagine being a health care professional working in Nova Scotia, working hard to provide good health care, and feeling that the system around you - your boss - has that little respect for you.

There’s a long way to go. I would have liked to have seen something in the Speech from the Throne that spoke to the need to improve the culture and the need to respect the people who work in our health care system. We didn’t see that. That’s not in the Speech from the Throne.

We know that there is an issue with compensation. I did hear the Minister of Health and Wellness say that they’ve moved the compensation up to be more competitive with other jurisdictions. Compensation is part of a person’s decision-making process. Not the only one. We know that quality of life is a big part of it, too.

The reality is that this government made quite a significant mistake. I think what they were doing was well-intentioned, but there was a serious unintended consequence and a ramification that they didn’t understand. They kind of jumped into something.

When there’s a need for more hospitalists working in our hospitals, they recognize the need for more hospitalists. They put the compensation at a certain level to attract

hospitalists. What it's doing is pulling away from family doctors because the compensation is a little higher to be a hospitalist than a family doctor.

The workloads are dramatically different. There was a very recent example of a family doctor in Richmond County leaving the practice of thousands of patients to become a hospitalist. We know that that's an issue.

I think there's a lot of work to be done around building a culture of respect, building a culture of appreciation, making sure the compensation is in line. I would have liked to have seen that in the Speech from the Throne. We didn't see that in the Speech from the Throne.

I would also have liked to see a plan to treat chronic illness in the Speech from the Throne. We have a lot of chronic illness in this province. We basically have a health care system that was designed generations ago to treat acute issues, provide acute care. As I said, it's very good. Once you get into the system, you will get good care.

But times have changed. The world has changed. We have a lot of chronic conditions in this province. The system has not changed to identify that and to deal with that and address that. Chronic conditions can be expensive. About 70 per cent of the health care budget is in support of people with chronic conditions, and still, the support is not getting there. We need to really look at what we're doing in this. I would like to see a major focus from the government on chronic conditions.

They don't have to look far, because there is a homegrown program right here in this province called the INSPIRED COPD Outreach Program. It's a program for people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). It is improving health care outcomes dramatically for those in the system, and it's very cost-efficient, because it's investing in prevention and investing in the right care at the right time. The statistics on INSPIRED show that every dollar invested in the program has an overall savings of \$21 to the system.

Those savings show up in the form of a 58 per cent reduction in emergency department visits. They're getting the care they need so they don't have to go to the emergency room. There's a 62 per cent reduction in hospital visits. They're getting the care at home. They don't need to show up at the hospital.

We don't have to look far. The INSPIRED program is inspiring. We should be doing more of that. We should be respecting those in that program. That should be part of the vision for the future of the Nova Scotia that we can have. We can be a leader in supporting those with chronic conditions. I would like to see those types of programs followed up.

We didn't see it in the Speech from the Throne. It's very, very possible to treat people with chronic conditions with respect and dignity and improve their health outcomes, and do it in a system that understands the needs and responds to those needs.

Also in this, when we think about the future of the province and what is possible in this province, we must be considerate of our youth, the next generation. Everyone likes to talk about supporting youth, making sure there are opportunities for youth. Talk will get you so far but it's action that really is what's necessary. We should be seeing more prevention planning for youth in this province.

I didn't do a word count on youth in the Speech from the Throne. I'm not sure if it was mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, but the national average for obesity in our youth is 12 per cent and in Nova Scotia it is 15 per cent. So we know we need to be supporting those youths, we need to be investing in them. Specifically, we could be investing in programming that speaks to this issue, a healthier lifestyle.

We know - we are all too familiar with the health impacts associated with obesity - diabetes, heart disease. So let's be investing in programming for youth at the right time.

I didn't hear about these types of programs in the Speech from the Throne. I think that rebates on electric vehicles, high-end electric vehicles - okay, I am also interested in our youth getting active and being supported so we have obesity rates that are well below the national average, not well above them.

This is the type of programming that the government had an opportunity to lay out as their vision for this province: a healthy Nova Scotia, healthier youth, a province where people can access health care, a province where health care professionals feel respected and valued and are listened to. These were all opportunities and so far, early in the mandate, they haven't showed up as a priority for this Premier, and that's a missed opportunity.

We've talked before about making sure that the health care dollars in this province are getting to improving health outcomes. Right now, as the cost - the investment in health care continues to go up, the outcomes are really going down. That's a real problem that I think should be a priority for the new Premier to really focus on and understand why, because the Nova Scotia that we want must address the issues of the Nova Scotia we have. Practical solutions, that's what were missing from the Speech from the Throne. Until we address the issues that we have with practical solutions, we will continue to see health outcomes deteriorate. That's not the province I want. That's not the Nova Scotia I want.

Right now, what do we have? We have the highest - one area of this province has the highest mortality rates in the country, and not just this year but for three years running - Cape Breton Regional Municipality, the highest mortality rate. We have more administration costs than any other jurisdiction and health care outcomes are going down.

How do you address all of those things? You actually have to have the courage to say here's the problem and the vision to say here's a solution. We've encouraged the government to actually get to work on a clinical health services plan and establish a clinical health services plan for every region because you would learn from a clinical health services plan. You would start to know 50 per cent of our physicians in that area are over 50. Thirty-one per cent of our physicians in that area want to retire.

Right now, that's not known. It would only be known if there was enough courage at the highest levels of government to say we want to know because we want to deal with it. But if you don't have respect for the people who are doing the work every day, if you're not really interested in the quality of life of the people who are providing the care to Nova Scotians, if you're not interested and you don't have respect, then you probably don't care, and if you don't care, you don't ask.

The reason we know these numbers is because we care. The reason we know these numbers is because we ask. We know that there's a lot that's possible in this province.

In terms of the things that we want to see this province leading in are things like education, things like job numbers, things like vaccination rates. I would like to see this province leading in those things. Those are the types of things we'd like to be leading the country in.

[5:15 p.m.]

One thing you don't want to see your province leading in: childhood obesity. Another thing you don't want to see your province leading in: smoking statistics. Smoking is not a stat you want to lead in and yet here we are. Nova Scotia has the highest rate of smoking in the country at 17.8 per cent. That is the highest rate of smoking in the country. Child obesity, smoking, we are leading on those. Vaccination rates, not so much. Job numbers, not so much.

So, I would like to see some acknowledgement from the government: we need to get healthy. We need to be - to have a true quality of life in this beautiful province that we have, there is so much opportunity - we need to be investing in people. And we need to be investing in our youth. Those are the types of things - those are the visions that I would like to see laid out in the Speech from the Throne.

And it wouldn't actually take a lot to think about investing in smoking cessation programs. The virtual care, the virtual programs, these things are widespread now. We could offer 24/7 access to smoking cessation programs and it wouldn't be a problem at all.

If you think about the costs of not doing that, if you think about the cost to our health care system of having the highest smoking rates in the country, that is a lot. If you think about the cost to our health care system of having high childhood obesity rates over

a lifetime, that's a lot. Now put that to the side and think about the impact on quality of life. Those are the types of things.

I know this government wants to reframe the discussion. They have said they want to reframe the discussion. They don't want to talk about gross domestic product, the GDP, the economy. They don't want to talk. They don't think that's a good measure of how a province is doing. They don't want to talk about the health care outcomes. They don't think that's a good measure of how the province is doing. They want to talk about something else.

This government is pretty - I will tip the hat. They are very masterful at moving the discussion away from things to what they want to talk about. As a matter of fact, we heard the Minister of Health and Wellness say today, you know what, the whole EHS thing, the fact that it can take an hour and a half for an ambulance to get there, we don't want to talk about response times. We have a different way to measure it. This is the type of stuff we see from this government a lot.

But I want to tell this government right now, any way you frame the discussion - if you leave an effort to reduce our childhood obesity out of the discussion, if you leave an effort to reduce the levels of smoking out of the discussion, you have done a disservice to Nova Scotians and it is your job to serve Nova Scotians.

So these are the types of things I would like to see, that type of visionary stuff in a Speech from the Throne. Let's set a goal to have the lowest. They are very good at being the lowest on a number of other criteria. This would be one that we would be happy to be the lowest on.

But I can't talk about the shortcomings of the health care system. I can't talk about the shortcomings of the Speech from the Throne without talking about the need to really address and provide proper addictions and mental health support in this province.

I know that the government, when they had their leadership contest, one of the candidates essentially took our plan for addictions and mental health and campaigned on that. I was honoured to see that. The actual Premier kind of went like a half-step.

I wish the people working in the Office of Workplace Mental Health nothing but success. We need to provide more services to Nova Scotians. I hope that that office has a measure of success. I would give them a lot more authority and I would give them the resources, but I would hold them accountable.

I think that in this province we do need to have a minister of addictions and mental health. We need somebody at the highest level of government that feels absolutely accountable to the people of the province, in making sure that they can access the services they need when they need them. We need somebody at the highest level of government

who feels absolutely responsible. Right now, we have that buried within a Minister of Health and Wellness who obviously has a lot of issues and will turn to - we'll hear it - it won't be long in a Question Period when we ask the question and the Minister of Health and Wellness will say, well, that's the Office of Mental Health, that's them, you know.

We hear that all the time from ministers - not us, it's the Nova Scotia Health Authority, it's somebody else, right? There's nothing that says leadership like "it's somebody else's department." We hear that from this government quite a bit. We will hear it when we have questions about mental health and addictions. We will hear the minister say, that's the Office of Workplace Mental Health.

What I want to see is the person over there stand up and say, I feel responsible for that and this is what we'll do. There should be a separate department for addictions and mental health, there should be a minister of it and I would like to see that type of all-in investment - not even financial, there's already a lot of money allocated to it. Money's one thing, but actual leadership on making sure that the money gets to the people is another thing.

I would like to see that type of vision from the government. By the way, since we initially launched our plan - we've been talking about this for a couple of years - other provinces are taking it up. We're seeing this in other provinces. They're realizing because the statistics used to say that one in five Canadians was impacted by addictions and mental health, now they say one in three. I don't know what the most recent report will be with COVID-19 and the stresses and pressures people are under. I can assure you it's not going down. Well, it's going down. It's probably one in two now, but it's not going away.

Once we have the type of buy-in at the highest level of government, which we could have seen that in the Speech from the Throne. We didn't, but we might still see it. Once we have that, I think really what we need to see is - in this province I would like to see universal mental health care. What we have right now is still a two-tiered system. If you have the financial resources, you can probably get access to care. If you don't and you have to rely on what's provided by the government, you could be waiting up to a year for service. As a matter of fact, I spoke to one family who's trying to get some help for their teenage daughter and they said it would be 18 months for her to see a psychiatrist. Eighteen months for a teenager.

So we have a two-tiered system. We should flatten that and I would like to work with the Premier on that. We have thousands of Nova Scotians who are qualified, properly trained to provide health to other Nova Scotians. They're social workers, they're nurses with additional training, they're family counsellors, they're psychologists, they're psychiatrists. We have a lot of highly qualified professional people in this province. They don't all work for the Nova Scotia Health Authority. If you read Dr. Miller's letter about what it's like to work for the Nova Scotia Health Authority, you can understand why they don't all work for the Nova Scotia Health Authority.

What I would like to see is us as a province having the courage to mobilize all of those resources, leverage all of those resources and say you're properly qualified to assist a Nova Scotian, you can do it and the province will pay. It will open up the billing codes. This is the type of stuff that I would like to see because it's so important to support people at the appropriate time in the appropriate place in their community to make sure that their quality of life is high, so then therefore the quality of life of those around them is elevated, the quality of life of their community is elevated.

I will say that what I'm talking about in universal mental health care - experts have said the plan that we put forward, and anyone can Google it - just Google "universal mental health care PC caucus." Google it, read it, and give us some feedback. The plan we've put forward is the most progressive plan in the country.

We could be leaders. We could be leaders and all the Premier has to do is pick up my plan and say I'm going to do this. There is a cost to it, but I will tell you, I will assure you that the cost of not doing anything is much, much higher. When we think about in Canada we say 500,000 Canadians will miss some time from work this year due to an addiction or mental health issue, that's a lot. That's a lot of lost productivity.

Imagine if we had the courage and the compassion to support those people so that they were always fully productive and their quality of life was high. Just imagine the impact on our economy. It would dwarf the cost of providing this support. I'm a big believer in universal mental health care. It is something that will help a lot of Nova Scotians, and I encourage this government to get on that path with us. It is at their fingertips; they can do it. They can do a lot of easier, more direct things as well.

There should be a three-digit help line in this province. Mental health emergencies don't happen Monday to Friday, 9 to 5. They could happen at any time. Somebody could go into crisis, and when somebody is in crisis it is pretty difficult to remember a 10-digit number. We should have a simple, three-digit number. There is a move nationally to let us be that. Let us be with that. Let us be leaders in that, in making sure that happens so that people can reach out.

We do have some help phone lines and stuff in this province, and I am sure they are providing good care to those who can reach them. I spoke to somebody on the weekend who called the crisis line and did get a call back - four hours later. Crises don't wait four hours for a return call. We should have a 24/7 mental health support line in this province. This is the type of stuff that I would like to see this government get behind, and I am here to work with them on that for sure.

I think the big area where the light has been shone on the deficiencies of this province, particularly over the last year, is in the way we treat our seniors. I will tell you that what happened to our seniors during COVID-19 will be a stain on our generation for all time. The greatest generation, the generation that provided us with the quality of life

that we enjoy today - the greatest generation - when they needed our help, we were not there. The loss of life in our long-term care facilities across this country and the loss of life here in this province, at Northwood, it will be a stain on our generation.

We need to make sure that our seniors live in dignity. We need to be a province that has dignity for our seniors, and we have been seven years under this government with not only no new investment in seniors' care, but cuts to the seniors' budget. That is how they balance their budgets, by cutting from seniors. And look what happened - tragic loss of life at Northwood; complete tragic loss of life. And why?

We now know that for years Northwood was reaching out to the government saying we need help, we need investment, and it lay on the side of the minister's desk who was not interested in providing that help. By not providing that help I guess, "saved some money for the taxpayer" - I guess? "Balanced a budget"? But what was the cost of that? Tragic loss of life. We will also remember that because of what was happening at Northwood, our entire economy stayed shut down for an extra couple of weeks. These types of decisions are very short-sighted.

This government had an opportunity in their Speech from the Throne to say we are not going to be short-sighted; we have an actual vision for this province. They didn't do it, because I don't think they have that vision for the province that is truly a healthier province where people can get the care they need, when they need it, where they need it - where people can feel like when they are aging and they need support it will be there for them.

I don't think our seniors feel that way. In fact, I hear from a lot of them who say, Tim, you are never going to catch me in a nursing home. Tim, not going to happen; not going to happen. That is the large tragedy in all this, because they should have comfort that when they need help it will be there but, in fact, they have fear.

We need more rooms in this province, yes, yes, we do. There haven't been any built since the last time the PC government was in. The NDP finished some of the projects that the PCs had on the books - they did, I will concede that - but I don't think they did any new ones and I know this government has really, really dropped the ball on that.

We need more rooms, we need more single rooms, we need more staffing. We also need something else. We need to establish a new level of care. Because aging in place is wonderful, we all want Nova Scotians to be able to age in place. We all want that. It's a good thing when it happens.

There comes a point in time when not everyone can stay at home. When they can't stay at home, the next option that they have is nursing homes. Their needs might not be complex, they might not have complex nursing needs, they don't need to be in a nursing home, but they can't quite be at home. We need a new level of government-funded care. Again, if you have the financial resources, these exist. They exist in wonderful places that

provide good care, but there should be government-funded care. We call it a level of supportive living between aging in place at home and being in a nursing home. We need government-funded supportive living.

[5:30 p.m.]

We can do it in this province. That's the type of vision that I have. That's the Nova Scotia that I want to live in. We can get from the Nova Scotia we have to that, but we need vision and we need courage. I didn't see that level of vision or courage in the Speech from the Throne. I think that's a missed opportunity.

I would say by doing that, by making those investments in supportive living, imagine how we will raise the quality of life of our communities. Imagine how we will support families, because we know what's happening right now. The government's not funding it; Nova Scotians are. They're funding it by somebody not being able to go to work because they have to stay and support and they have to provide care for a loved one or their friend. That's how it's being funded right now, and it's holding many, many Nova Scotians back.

There's a lot we can do to support our seniors. We're ready to do it. On this side of the House, we are ready to do it. There are no secrets here. There are no sound bites here, there are no secrets. We're being very, very clear with Nova Scotians. We put out very practical plans for what is possible in this province. Dignity for seniors. We put out a fully comprehensive plan in the summertime. There's room for improvement, of course, we're not so naïve as to think it can't get better. We get feedback from Nova Scotians, we make it better. We're being very honest about where we're at, we're being very honest about what's possible.

Then in the Fall we put out our universal mental health care plan. We're being very honest with Nova Scotians about what we see is possible in this province. Practical solutions to the challenges we have today. We're not looking the other way. This government can look the other way, this government can reframe, this government can change the channel, they can do whatever they want. We're not doing it. We are accepting the challenges that lay before us, and we're putting forward very, very practical solutions that will improve the quality of life of all Nova Scotians, from one end of this great province to the other.

The last plan that we put out, the most recent plan we put out, Hope for Health, where we talk about what's possible in accessing primary care, expanding virtual care - there are incredible opportunities in virtual care. I mentioned the other day in this House when speaking to this, between March 2020 and June 2020 in Nova Scotia, 7.6 per cent of doctors' visits were virtual. Seven point six per cent.

The government referred to that as an explosion in virtual care visits, and it was because they had done so poorly in catching up with the times to begin with that when they had to do it, when they got forced, we actually started to get some virtual. Guess what? Physicians like it. Patients like it. It's not for everything, but there are many issues - it's the right care at the right time in the right place. That's what it is.

That's where we're at - 7.6 per cent. In Ontario in the same time frame, 38.45 per cent of doctor visits were virtual; 7.6 in Nova Scotia, 38.45 in Ontario; 33.73 in Manitoba. Seven point six doesn't look like such an explosion anymore, I don't think. This is another area where I want Nova Scotians to lead. I'm tired of Nova Scotia lagging every other province. There's no reason for it. We have the most beautiful province, we have the smartest people in the country right here. We have every asset we need. We just need a government that has a vision for what is possible and a practical path, practical ideas, to unleash the potential of this province.

I think what we've seen in the Speech from the Throne is, on the one hand, a Liberal government with all kinds of nice government words that sound nice on a piece of paper and look good and probably do a little bit of training behind the scenes - oh, if we say this it will sound nice. That's what they're about.

They can be about that, because over here in this Party you have a PC Caucus that's focused on practical solutions. We're not hiding them for a campaign. We're putting them out there in the hope that this government says hmm, maybe we should do that. I hope they actually do that, because from seven years of sitting opposite, I know they don't have a bunch of ideas. They don't have a bunch of vision. They are devoid of any kind of vision for what's possible in this province.

We're not. We have a very clear vision of what's possible. Nova Scotia should be leading in the categories that it can be leading in and last in the ones that it should be last. We should be leading in education. We should be leading in vaccinations. We should be leading in jobs. We should be leading in access to health care. We should be last in childhood obesity. We should be last in smoking rates.

Until we have a government that understands the difference and the times that you want to be first and the times that you want to be last, you're not going to be where you should be. You are going to be where we are.

I was hopeful that this government would understand what's possible and believe in Nova Scotians. I haven't seen it yet. Tomorrow is a new day, Mr. Speaker. Maybe we'll see it when they put a budget before this House. Maybe we'll see it when they are debriefed on some of our plans that we've put forward. Maybe we'll see them come forward then, and that's fine, because we have a lot more plans for this province. We have a lot more vision for this province. The reason is because we do more than just say we respect people. We actually show it.

Our record in government shows that every single time the PC Party has been in government, Nova Scotians have been well served, because we are a government whose values don't change with the wind. We don't blow with the winds. The world can change, but values should never change.

The values of our Party are very founded: government that's accountable. We created the Public Accounts Committee because we want to be held accountable, even when it hurts. This government dismantled the Public Accounts Committee because they don't want to be held accountable.

We believe in accountability. We believe in government that listens. We believe in personal achievements. No Party has invested more in education than we have, because we respect personal achievement. We respect those Nova Scotians who are working harder to get ahead. Government that's accountable. Government that listens. Government that places a high value on personal achievement.

Socially progressive - we have a Human Rights Commission in this province because of the PC Government. We've always valued the rights of people to do and to thrive in this province. We've never wavered from being fiscally responsible.

Fiscal responsibility is more than balanced budgets. I'll go back to the Northwood example. It's about economic responsibility. It's about making wise decisions.

Government that's accountable. Government that listens. Government that places a high value on personal achievement, that's socially progressive, fiscally responsible, and embraces technology.

There is a lot possible for this province. The reason I am standing here in this House is because I want to be part of the government that unleashes the potential of what is possible.

It is an honour and a privilege to stand in this House. It's not perfect, but it is a privilege to represent Nova Scotians. I will always use my time in this House to focus on Nova Scotians. It's not about me, Mr. Speaker. It's about Nova Scotians and what is possible for this province.

I was hopeful that I would see a Throne Speech that said we understand what's possible and here's how we achieve it. I didn't see it but I'm happy to work with this government to help bring them there.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

TIM HOUSTON: With those tiny few words, I'd like to adjourn debate on the Address in Reply.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is to adjourn Address in Reply.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The House will now recess for 15 minutes.

[5:40 p.m. The House recessed.]

[5:57 p.m. The House reconvened.]

THE SPEAKER: Order, please.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the government's business for today. I move that the House do now rise to meet again tomorrow, Friday, March 12th, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 1:45 p.m.

Following the daily routine and QP, business will include Second Reading on Bill Nos. 1, 4, and 9, and with time permitting, Address in Reply.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for adjournment, for the House to rise and meet again tomorrow, Friday, March 12th, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 1:45 p.m.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

We will now move to the emergency debate, as requested by the Leader of the Official Opposition earlier today and endorsed by the House. The topic is ambulance service in Nova Scotia.

We will allot two hours maximum for the emergency debate, with no member speaking more than 15 minutes.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION UNDER RULE 43

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES - AMBULANCE SERVICE

TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, through an education campaign, paramedics themselves are sounding the alarm that the service in this province is not sufficient and not operating as intended.

We can see that education campaign on Twitter. Folks who are on Twitter, they're tweeting the Code Census out all the time to show the risk factor, the risk to public safety of not having a proper ambulance available to come should somebody need one. Paramedics are sounding the alarm and it's incumbent upon us as legislators to listen.

It's not just the paramedics that are sounding the alarm. Recent media stories - anyone who follows the media can see the media stories that have illustrated the tragic consequences when an ambulance is not able to respond quickly. We know that the health outcomes can be devastating when there's not an ambulance that is able to respond quickly.

[6:00 p.m.]

Nova Scotians deserve and expect help to arrive quickly when they call 911. Mr. Speaker, nobody wants to have to call 911. "Nine-one-one, what's your emergency?" I can't think of any worse thing to hear because the person who called that number is in an emergency. It could be, I need help for my spouse, for my child, for my friends, for my neighbour, for a stranger I've found. It could be a teammate. When you have to call 911, you are in a pretty desperate situation.

What's happening inside the vehicles, inside the trucks? Imagine being a paramedic in this province and seeing the call show up on your screen and knowing you're probably not going to be able to get to them in the time that you want to be able to get to them. We have paramedics in this province who are tired. We have paramedics in this province who are overworked. We have paramedics in this province who feel underappreciated, not respected by their employer and by their government, in the words of some of their union leadership.

That's what's happening, and it's not new. It's been happening for a while. In fact, in 2019, the Liberal government issued a directive. At the time, they realized there was a big problem here. They realized the sense of urgency that Nova Scotians were feeling, so they issued a directive that went from the Minister of Health and Wellness to the Nova Scotia Health Authority. It said that "[Emergency Department] team members must Offload ambulance patients within 30 minutes of the patient's arrival to the [Emergency Department]," and "Patients must not be kept in the [Emergency Department] longer than 12 hours following registration . . ."

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't think there's anything more that can show the disconnect between the government and the front-line workers than issuing a directive like that. Did the Minister of Health and Wellness or this Liberal government honestly feel that the people working in an emergency department needed the Minister of Health and Wellness to tell them that they should be able to off-load people? I don't think the front-line health care workers and our paramedics, I don't think they needed to hear that from an elected person.

They know, but adding insult to injury - this very week, the new Minister of Health and Wellness issued the same directive because I guess if you say something once and it doesn't take, you just say it again and that'll fix it, except when it won't fix it. The reason that it's not fixing it - and our emergency departments have been described as the canary in the coal mine. There's a lot happening there, and the Minister of Health and Wellness said today, yes, it's complex. Of course it's complex. It's supposed to be complex. It doesn't mean you don't do anything. It means you do something.

The emergency rooms are full because the people in emergency who need to be admitted can't get admitted because there's no beds in the hospital, because this government hasn't opened up any long-term care beds in seven years. So the system goes on and on. Do we ignore it? No. We shouldn't ignore it, but it has been ignored.

The solution to the crisis in health care that we have across this province, the solution to the crisis we have in our EHS system has been, by this government, to squeeze supply. That's not the solution that Nova Scotians expect. So, we stand with those paramedics. We stand with those front-line health care professionals. We stand with those Nova Scotians that are demanding action to fix this system.

Two directives. It takes more than words - it takes courage and it takes action. Two directives.

This week, or in the last couple weeks here, this government has shown it doesn't want to talk about this issue. Our caucus - my colleagues - tried to bring it before the Health Standing Committee. They want to talk about it there, but Liberal members voted that down, too. They don't want to talk about it because they still believe that if we look the other way, if we ignore things, it will go away. It doesn't go away, and I think the stories in the media tell the story about what happens to health outcomes when the government pretends a problem doesn't exist.

There is a lot that we can do in this province. We have a lot of potential, but we have to start with respecting our paramedics. We have to start with respecting our front-line health care workers. We have to start with respecting Nova Scotians.

That means accepting the challenges and then investing in the practical solutions around access to primary care, because when you can't access primary care, you go to the

emergency room and then the government issues a directive that says, well, the emergency room has to move people through the emergency room quicker and it shouldn't be so full.

Of course, it is full when people don't have access to primary care. That is the only option many Nova Scotians have, to go to the emergency room. When you don't have proper supports and treatment for your chronic illnesses, you end up in the hospital many times.

Again, all these things are interconnected, but there are very practical solutions to these issues. What we want to do on this side of the House is we want to work with the government to implement some of the very practical solutions that exist and that we have outlined for them and passed to them in our various plans we've put forward in our vision for what is possible in health care in this province.

For example, Mr. Speaker, in our Hope for Health plan we have been very honest and forthright, put it right on our website. You just Google Hope for Health PC Party, take a look through our plan and give us some feedback. We want to work with Nova Scotians on it. But under that plan, the 60,000 Nova Scotians who don't have access to primary care who are on a list wanting a family doctor, wanting access to primary care, those Nova Scotians who don't have that today and are then forced to try and go to the emergency room. Do I go to the emergency room or do I call an ambulance? These are decisions Nova Scotians are making that they should never have to make.

Under our Hope for Health plan, those Nova Scotians, those 60,000 Nova Scotians, would immediately have access to virtual care. It is not for everyone, but it is for a lot. It is the right care at the right time in the right place, a practical solution to give Nova Scotians access to care, to give Nova Scotians peace of mind that if they have a question, they can reach out. The answer may very well be to go to the emergency room. The answer may very well be to call 911, you need to get to the hospital right away.

That may be the answer, but the answer may also be something dramatically different that takes the stress level down and helps Nova Scotians with the right care at the right time, in the right place.

It is also why we recognize there is a significant investment that is necessary in long-term care. The very first plan we put out, way back in the Summer, Dignity for our Seniors, recognized the investment that is necessary in long-term care - more rooms, more single rooms, more staff. We have to get the levels of care up in our homes, up to 4.1 hours per resident per day, just like the Nova Scotia Nurses' Union report said. We agree with that.

Yes, it takes work to reach that goal, but if you don't set goals, then you find yourself in the situation this government finds itself in, where today the Minister of Health and Wellness said he wants to reframe the discussion away from response times. Well, of

course, you want to reframe the discussion away from response times, because you have presided over a system where it could take an hour and a half for an ambulance to get there. You have presided over a system . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. I'd just like to remind the honourable member not to refer to members of the Chamber directly, but indirectly through the Chair, if possible.

TIM HOUSTON: Sure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So there are practical solutions that exist, and as a province we need to start acting on them. We have outlined a number of practical solutions that would improve our health care system.

I believe that by focusing on improvements in primary care, improvements in long-term care, improvements in the quality of life of Nova Scotians, that we will of course then take some pressure off our EHS system, which is under incredible pressure, and the workload, the stress that our paramedics are feeling is not something that I don't think anyone in this Chamber could imagine except maybe for my colleague from Argyle-Barrington, who was very recently an advanced care paramedic. He probably understands the pressure, but for the rest of us it is something that would be hard to imagine. But just because it is hard to imagine doesn't mean you pretend it doesn't exist.

I am glad that we are having this discussion today. I hope that the discussion today has an impact on the members opposite. I hope that the discussion today, coupled with the media reports; coupled with the stories of our paramedics and the stress they are feeling and the anxiety they're feeling; coupled with the very real experiences of those Nova Scotians who have had to call 911 - again, let's imagine the circumstances, the range of circumstances that you have to call 911. None of them are comfortable circumstances. Imagine the emotions that are flowing through a person when they quick-call 911. Imagine that - I hope that this discussion, and the sum total of all those different things, has an impact on this government.

We finally saw the Fitch report this week. It was buried for, I think, two years. We finally saw that, and we had some nice sound bites from the minister. We had some nice sound bites from the government. But we are way past sound bites. If nice sound bites cut it, a directive issued in 2019 wouldn't have had to be reissued in 2021. Stop with the directives. Stop with the sound bites. Roll the sleeves up. Get to work. Show respect for our paramedics and show respect for Nova Scotians.

We are right here to stand beside you, to stand beside the government, and work on the practical solutions. As an added bonus, we've outlined a great number of practical solutions, and if the government needs them, we can make them available to them. They are on the website. They don't need to wait for anything else. If they have Google, they have our solutions, and we would be happy to work with them on that.

This is a critical issue. This is the canary in the coal mine for this province and I hope that we don't need another directive down the road. I hope that the government understands that now is the time to take the practical steps to alleviate pressure off the system and support Nova Scotians.

With those few words, I will take my seat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

SUSAN LEBLANC: I am glad to rise to speak to this critical issue, though of course saddened at the conditions which make it necessary and the fact that we even have to have this as an emergency debate. It's not an exaggeration to say that paramedics have been sounding the alarm for years about this issue and so has our caucus.

First, it is important to put on the record some of the basics of the situation at hand. These are the things we know: paramedics are overworked and burning out. They spend hours waiting to offload patients at the hospital. They can work 16-hour shifts without eating. We have been hearing about the various tweaks that this government has been trying for years now, with little result. The Code Critical issue is not just an ambulance or paramedic issue. It is a systemic, widespread health care system-wide problem that will not be solved by rearranging how our ambulance system works.

We need widespread reinvestment in our entire provincial health network. Our system is taxed to the limit and the entire health care system and its backlogs are at the root of the #CodeCritical crisis and paramedics being unable to offload their patients at the hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, for years this government has refused to release a comprehensive report, paid for with \$144,000 of public money, that analyzed the paramedic predicament. We know that this is called the Fitch Report. I will say off the bat that part of the campaign to have the Fitch report finally released by the government sent no fewer than 2,500 emails to me and to other members of this House to ask the government - to implore the government - to release the Fitch Report. The excuse that the government gave was that it could impact contract negotiations for our ambulance service provider, Emergency Medical Care Inc.

Finally, after those literally thousands of phone calls and emails from paramedics and their family members and average Nova Scotians who are concerned and, frankly, terrified at the state of our emergency health care system, the government finally decided to release the report years after it was completed.

[6:15 p.m.]

Of course, upon its release we can see the real reason why it was hidden for so long. The report details the extreme conditions in our health care system that paramedics are faced with when they're trying to do their job. The report states, "On average, EMC ambulances spend 1.5 hours offloading patients for Category 1 calls" or 3.25 hours measured at the 90th percentile.

The International Union of Operating Engineers Local 727 president, Mike Nickerson, has said that he has heard of a paramedic waiting longer than 24 hours to offload a patient. Twenty-four hours to offload a patient. Let's think for a moment about that patient and that paramedic. What an awful situation.

When writing the report, Fitch found that nearly half of the paramedics' time was spent driving people between different levels of hospital or nursing homes. Of those individuals being transferred between facilities, only two per cent required the skills of a paramedic or the equipment that is in one of the province's 180 ambulances. Response times are routinely overshot in urban areas.

Fitch calculated the cost of offloading delays faced by paramedics but that important information was redacted. The public is not allowed to know, according to this government. The report also says that offload times appear to grow exponentially after 2018.

The government's response to these challenges, which they have known about for years, was to issue a directive to the Nova Scotia Health Authority on offload times asking that they be limited to 30 minutes for emergency situations or 12 hours for transport. The former Minister of Health and Wellness tried the same thing in 2019. Offload times decreased for a period, but then increased after that again.

The government has said that it will be implementing 64 of the Fitch Report's 68 recommendations, but it has not explained which four recommendations won't be implemented. While I'm standing here, I would certainly urge the government not to implement the recommendation that suggests ambulance fees should be increased:

"Review of patient transport fees which may lead to opportunities for increases, particularly as they apply to non-Canadian residents. Additionally, amounts unpaid by Canadian residents could be collected by other means, such as at the time of driver's and other licence renewals."

I will remind the members of this House that ambulance fees can deter people from seeking medically necessary help. I will also remind people about our caucus's bill - which died on the Order Paper when the House was prorogued - to eliminate fees for medically

necessary situations. That the government is leaving the door open to increased ambulance fees is, frankly, unacceptable.

No one has to search very far to find horrific stories of people who wait too long for an ambulance. People die while waiting for emergency help, as we tragically learned last month with the death of April George in Bass River. Even more people live in fear of what could happen to themselves, or a loved one, if an ambulance isn't available to get to them.

I know of a family member, for example, who when visiting the province to spend time here and decide whether they wanted to relocate back home here to Nova Scotia, were unfortunately in a car accident in Halifax. An ambulance took the passenger from the other vehicle to Emergency.

Though she seemed fine, the paramedic on the scene said the daughter of the family should probably be seen, just in case, but there was not another ambulance to take her to the hospital. The family ended up deciding not to return to Nova Scotia. This experience was part of the decision.

As we find ourselves in a global health pandemic because of the COVID-19 virus, we know that paramedics are putting themselves and their families in harm's way to take care of Nova Scotians during this pandemic. They will do so again should we experience another wave of the virus.

Paramedics are still grappling with the same issues from before COVID-19 arrived, and some have intensified. Like many things in our province - many systems in our government and in our province - COVID-19 has shed a light on the cracks and the chasms in those systems. This is definitely one of them.

Paramedics are still working short and working extremely long shifts without breaks, being worn down, burnt out, and sometimes being assaulted at work. They now also have to contend with the risk of bringing COVID-19 home to their families. The stress is unimaginable, but IUOE 727's request for temporary housing for paramedics during the pandemic, as was provided in Ontario, was not granted.

A scan of the #CodeCritical campaign shows dozens in the last few days in all corners of the province. Last month, after resuming the #CodeCritical campaign, paramedics reported more than 40 Code Criticals in five days across every health care zone in the province in which very few or no crews were available to respond to local emergencies.

We know the problems and we know the solutions. Frankly, our caucus has flooded this House with solutions to this very complex, multi-faceted health care crisis that is at the root of the Code Critical problem. We have introduced legislation that would build

collaborative emergency care centres. We would keep community hospitals open in CBRM. We would allow physician assistants to work in the province and alleviate pressure in the system.

We have introduced legislation that would require regular publishing on emergency room standards. We have committed to building a room for every resident and clearing the wait-list for long-term care that causes the extreme shortage of beds in our hospitals. We're calling for emergency mental health response teams that would work to alleviate the burden placed on paramedics by mental health calls.

We are waiting for these to be taken up by this government. We are proposing ideas, but Nova Scotians can't wait much longer.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I'm very pleased to engage in this debate tonight. I want to thank the members opposite for moving this motion. I want to thank all members of the House for unanimously voting in favour of having this important conversation.

This is a critical aspect of our health care delivery system: 911 calls, ambulatory responses, paramedic care for individuals in crisis. This is key to saving lives and ensuring that people get where they need to be.

The day after I was sworn in, one of the first things I did was head over to the Emergency Medical Care communication centre to better understand this system, to talk about the #CodeCritical campaign. They did indicate - and I think it is important to be forthright about this - that there have been some discrepancies with some of the information that's gone out with Code Critical and what is happening on the ground.

I also then met with the union representatives, Michael Nickerson and Steve DeWolfe, to hear directly from them about their concerns. We can all speak frankly about the fact that our paramedics have one of the toughest jobs that there are out there. They answer to crises that only some of us can imagine, they work long hours, they work under duress, they deal with trauma, and they have had some very difficult working conditions. Over the last year, it's probably been more acute than before.

I am excited because I think we have a blueprint from this Fitch and Associates report that is actually going to help us transform the system to not only improve the working conditions for paramedics but, more importantly, outcomes for patients.

The Fitch and Associates report was done - and I know the member for Argyle-Barrington mentioned this - by experts who have been doing this for 30 years in the system. They did comprehensive diagnostics of our system and provided us with a very comprehensive technical report that gives us a very good blueprint to see some

transformative changes for our emergency service delivery system that I think will improve this. I think it's important that we actually discuss what these practical solutions can be in debate tonight.

It is important also to recognize that care does begin once 911 is called. I just read a story recently about a brother who saved his sister's life because of the direction that was given to him by the 911 centre. Care does begin when someone calls 911.

Fitch and Associates indicated that Nova Scotia has one of the most sophisticated - a world-class system when it comes to emergency responses and we are faring better than a lot of other jurisdictions across North America. There is a lot to be proud of but, of course, we need to modernize and evolve the system to better meet the needs of people.

One of the key findings in the Fitch and Associates report related to this conversation was that 40 per cent of ambulatory time is spent doing non-emergency or non-critical activities, like transportation from the hospital to the hospital, between institutions. That does create a lot of time pressure on the system of course and takes them away from responding to the critical areas.

We have already actually moved on a number of Fitch and Associates' recommendations - 45 of the 64 have already been implemented, and there are 16 that are at least partially implemented or are on the way to being implemented imminently. One those is utilizing non-ambulatory vans to transport non-emergency cases, patients from one hospital to another or to transport them home. These vans are actually built in Yarmouth at Tri-Star Industries Limited. They are the company that provides all ambulances to Nova Scotia and they actually provide ambulances across the world. We have three of these vans in place right now and we're looking at procuring the fourth one as well.

Also a key finding of the Fitch and Associates report that I think is worth recommending tonight is the fact that we need to expand the scope of practice for paramedics and give them more flexibility for treatment of patients on-site. The standard is that paramedics pick up a case and they deliver those folks to the emergency room. We all know there is a bottleneck in our emergency departments, for a number of reasons - non-urgent, non-emergency cases that are in there of course with the urgent and emergency cases. And we will get into this later, but of course access to primary care impacts those numbers.

The Fitch and Associates report is asking us to not just look at response time, not just look at our ambulatory system as a transportation system, that is where we are measuring it solely based on response times, but to actually look at patient outcomes. That is changing the focus of the system and the focus of care for paramedics and ambulatory services, which I think is very important. A paramedic will be able to treat a patient on-site and release that patient and they don't have to bring those folks to the emergency

department. It's all about getting the right resources to the right person, for the right reason at the right time.

On that front, off-loads are a system problem. This has been a system problem for a long time; it is not new. We have issued two ministerial directives on this because that is our tool to direct the health authority, and this is not a directive that goes to front-line workers. This is a directive to the CEO and the board of the health authority to develop plans to address the issues that we're recognizing in the system.

Of course there are a lot of factors that impact off-load times - beds that are taken up in hospital, folks waiting for long-term care facilities, the amount of patients who are in the emergency room of course, and inflow of patients within the system. Of course access to primary care impacts that as well, when people who need prescription refills or have a cold or a non-emergency issue and are going to the emergency department to deal with that because they don't have a primary care physician.

We are approaching this problem on a number of fronts; we have worked with the health authority on it. We have done a very good job of recruiting doctors to Nova Scotia - I think 550 have been recruited in the last three years. We have attached 180,000 patients to family physicians, but we are also at the beginning stages of expanding the scope of practice for other front-line health care providers, like pharmacists and like nurse practitioners.

We are running a pilot for registered nurses as well. We believe creating these access points - and expanding virtual care as well in Nova Scotia. We have signed agreements with the federal government to help fund expanding of virtual care as well. Finding these new access points, enhancing these access points, the primary care, will take pressure off our emergency department system.

We have created more bed space for long-term care. We spent and invested hundreds of millions of dollars to do so. We've built spaces at Villa Acadienne and Eskasoni and other communities across the province. We just released our plan to build seven more long-term care facilities and build them under the new standards around infection prevention as well, so these will be safe facilities that people can be very excited about and feel safe in. This will of course take that pressure off the hospitals as well.

We are approaching this comprehensively. I think that the changes that we are going to make by use of the Fitch and Associates report on the EHS system will be a part of that, ensuring that more patients will be treated on-site and released, that our ambulatory fleet and our paramedics are spending less time - again, 40 per cent of time spent on non-emergency things. Taking that non-emergency pressure off of them, we think, will help with this. Increasing access to primary care is going to be key to this and expanding our long-term care facilities. These things will over time improve that situation in our emergency departments, which are a problem right now.

[6:30 p.m.]

We know that paramedics are in this business to do what they trained to do and that's save lives and treat patients to the full scope of their abilities, and moving on this report is about ensuring they can do that.

I do want to talk about keeping the Fitch and Associates report confidential. That was important. This report informs our negotiations with EMC. Because they're informing negotiations with EMC and we needed to achieve certain contractual agreements to meet the Fitch and Associates report blueprint, it was important to keep that confidential. There's no contract that is negotiated in public, and the timing of this report being released was totally linked to the fact that contract was signed, sealed and delivered and finally completed. I think that contract is going to help us improve this situation as well. We have better cost measures in place, and I think we have more transparency and accountability as a result of this contract with EMC.

I look forward to working with the members opposite on this. I know this is an issue that impacts everybody. I'm particularly interested in working with those members in the House who are former paramedics. I know we have one in our ranks, the Minister of Lands and Forestry, and also the member opposite, my neighbour, the member for Argyle-Barrington. I very much look forward to hearing what their thoughts are on our plan to implement the Fitch and Associates report, and the fact that 45 of the recommendations have already been implemented, which do include additional resources into the system, particularly through the air ambulance program. We have a new team put in place for that, and there's been a new chopper that's been purchased over the last number of years as well.

We're looking at a system that is enhancing resources, that is better utilizing and deploying resources in the system to allow paramedics and our ambulances to focus on the most critical cases that we know they're going to have the greatest impact on the lives of Nova Scotians as well. We're changing the system to relieve some of that pressure that we're experiencing in our emergency departments. These are, I think, practical solutions that we're moving forward with. We do have the ability to transform this system and I think it's going to be to the benefit of paramedics and even more importantly, the patients.

I want to take a moment to thank Mr. Nickerson and Mr. DeWolfe for taking the time to speak with me. This is the beginning of a relationship that we're going to have. Their feedback is going to be critically important for me as we move forward on further implementation of these recommendations.

I want to thank paramedics, including the members in the House, for the service they've given to our communities, for taking on such a really challenging job and for giving it to the best of your ability. You folks save lives and you keep people safe and this system can be improved to make your job easier, more effective, more efficient. I think we'll be able to save more lives in this province as a result of this important work that we're moving

forward with. I look forward to hearing the comments of all members of the House who are interested in this debate.

[6:30 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

COLTON LEBLANC: I want to thank you very much for your consideration in debating this matter of urgent public importance. A year since we've been in this Legislature, and I think it's long overdue. It's unfortunate that we do have to have this emergency debate on this system that impacts each and every one of our communities. It's not an issue just here in southwestern Nova Scotia. It's not just an issue in HRM or in Cape Breton. It impacts every one of the constituencies here in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to imagine being one of Nova Scotia's 1,200 paramedics and getting ready for work, showing up at your base, getting your truck ready, doing your truck check. You're entering into a world of unknown. You don't know how many calls you're going to do, what type of calls, where you're going to end up travelling in the province, how many times you're going to be sitting on the side of the highway being the only ambulance for hours in certain cases, how long you're going to be stuck in a hospital in off-load delay, if you're going to be subject to physical or verbal abuse, if you'll get a lunch break, or even if you'll get a bathroom break. That's the reality of the system, and it's something that has been clearly articulated by paramedics, not just this last year, but for years now.

As they enter their workday, they all walk into a world of unknown, but what they do know is that the system is broken. It's completely unacceptable that the state of EHS - and the paramedic union has been sounding the alarm for years now. I thank them very much. I thank the IOUE for their #CodeCritical campaign because it is sounding and exposing the realities of the ambulance system in Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, when those who we call for help are themselves calling for help, it's incumbent on government to listen. It seems to be very clearly articulated by the paramedics I speak to - not just locally in my constituency or in southwest Nova Scotia, but those I've gotten to know from across the province - that their pleas for help are falling on deaf ears.

The long-awaited Fitch report finally saw the light of day this past Monday. It was commissioned in 2018, prior to my time in this Legislature, and it was great to hear government accept this report and the majority of its recommendations, because it is an admission of the challenges and the issues within the EHS system. But Mr. Speaker, what happened Monday after reading through the Fitch report really didn't expose anything new. It just reaffirmed what Nova Scotia's paramedics have been saying for years now. Although we had an expert consultant company come in - and I really appreciate and value

their work; they are experts - we have our own experts here in Nova Scotia, and they're our front-line paramedics. I just really wish that government had had much more of a listening ear to their concerns and started addressing the system issues not today, not last month, but years ago.

Now I want to do a quick timeline check here, Mr. Speaker. The report commissioned in 2018, after a couple of delays, finally got into the hands of the minister in October 2019. That was 17 months ago. Again, I want to underline that \$144,000 of Nova Scotia's taxpayers' dollars went to pay for this report. It was highlighted in media that this report wouldn't see the light of day until contract negotiations were completed, and the minister stated that as well this evening during debate.

We later found out, despite being told for 14 months that contract negotiations were ongoing, that contract negotiations only started four months ago. So, while Nova Scotian paramedics were screaming at the top of their lungs, government sat on their hands waiting and seeing. Quite frankly, it's sad to see that that's what took place while we continued to see the structure of our EHS system crumble. Mr. Speaker, all while Nova Scotians themselves called for action on this file; all while Nova Scotians called 911, waited and waited and waited for an ambulance and paramedics to come; all while patients waited in hospital beds hours, if not overnight, long times to transfer from one facility to another; all while the paramedic union continued to expose the realities of the system; all while the PC caucus acknowledged the issues within this emergency affecting our emergency health system and strongly advocated for change, government just sat by and waited.

As I noted, Mr. Speaker, the Fitch report didn't expose anything new. It re-emphasized, affirmed, what paramedics, our experts, have been saying for years: that there are problems with increased response times; there are problems with low-acuity calls; there is a significant volume of large transfers, that we need to look at the system delivering alternate transport models. I agree that we need to do that.

It's great to see a trial being done right now with the new vans, but I don't know why we have to reinvent the wheel when we're addressing that. We have community transit networks in our communities right across the province, from Yarmouth to Cape Breton, that provide a service to their communities. I see the opportunity to invest in these networks, to support their growth, to support their ability to fill the gaps. It's not necessary to reinvent the wheel and have a government-run taxi service.

Of course, the clear reality that 40 per cent of the time, paramedics are doing non-urgent care - and of course, our off-load delays. Mr. Speaker, the first key finding in the report is off-load delays. It's quoted, "extremely long duration patient off-load times."

Like I noted earlier during Question Period, I was working in the system when the first ministerial directive was issued, and it didn't work. As I had questioned the minister, I really have a hard time understanding how this new ministerial directive is all of a sudden,

with a snap of the fingers, going to work. Nova Scotians are questioning, how is this directive going to be different. What's going to happen with the Nova Scotia Health Authority if the directive is not adhered to, if these timelines aren't met? What are the repercussions? I would be very interested in speaking with the minister and learning more about what the plan actually is, because there hasn't been, really, other than the Fitch report and discussion of the 64, or 68, recommendations of the timeline for the implementation of these reports.

Mr. Speaker, it has already been said this evening that health care is complex. And it is. It has been very complex for years. Nova Scotians pay a lot of money for health care. 45 per cent of our provincial budget goes to health care. They're questioning day in and day out, are they getting that value for that \$4.6 billion health care budget? Quite frankly, the answer is no. Our emergency rooms are overcrowded, overburdened, and under-resourced.

Again, thinking about the ministerial directive, I don't know how telling administration through this tool that the minister referred to, how that's going to in fact have a positive impact unless they're given more resources, more staff and whatnot - what they need, what our front-line health care workers are telling government that they need, I don't know how it's going to work. The ministerial directive has been said to be a tool to address the off-load delays, but maybe it isn't the sharpest tool in the toolbox; if it didn't work then, I question if it's going to work now.

[6:45 p.m.]

Long-term care waits - it has been said before a number of times that this has a significant impact on the transition, the movement, and the flow of patients within our health care system. The growing numbers of Nova Scotians on the Need a Family Practice registry - there are 60,000 people who can vouch for that one, Mr. Speaker.

We can say that we have recruited doctors, but how many doctors have we retained? How many doctors have we lost? If you do check and balance, what's the net at the end of the day? Sadly, Mr. Speaker, the report commissioned in 2018 and the data collected at that time was a very different system. Things have gone downhill very, very quickly.

There has been no identification of any HR - human resources, staffing - issues within the system. The minister previously stated that they were going to hire more LifeFlight paramedics, and that's great to complement the critical care program.

But paramedics are telling me that there are more than 200 paramedics off right now for various reasons. If we have 200 paramedics off right now, while at the same time paramedics are being told to take your vacation, you need a break, but the same day, having vacation denied on their schedule, I don't understand. I guess I'm not understanding a lot

of things right now. I don't understand how we cannot see the need to significantly ramp up our staffing complement.

The report did not significantly address the poor morale and the mental health issues facing the paramedic population. The job of a paramedic, I can tell you first-hand, it's a physically demanding job, but it's also a mentally demanding job. Paramedics are burning out, they're fatigued, and they're looking for a way out. As a former paramedic, speaking with many who are my friends, that hurts. That breaks my heart. You get into the profession because you love what you do, and when they're at that point in their career - it's at various points in their career, whether it's a couple of years in or a couple of years left before retirement, and they are saying, I need an out because I cannot take the system anymore. That breaks my heart.

As an elected official looking for the betterment of my community, and not only my community but the province, I can see at the end of the tunnel that there's grave consequences if we're unable to not only recruit new paramedics, but retain the ones that we have, the highly skilled and dedicated paramedics that we have.

Mr. Speaker, government's unhurried action on this file, sadly, over the last number of years has prevented paramedics from doing their job and doing what they love. Paramedics are highly skilled professionals dedicated to their province, dedicated to their profession. They have a huge arsenal of medications and skills that they can essentially bring to your living room or anywhere in the province for that matter, emergency room care. Nova Scotians cannot wait another 14 months, the time that government had this report in hand, for positive change to be seen. Nova Scotians want better, and most importantly, Nova Scotians deserve better.

I hope that this sounding of the alarm from Opposition Parties, from the paramedics union, from paramedics themselves, from Nova Scotians from one end of the province to the other - I hope that alarm is finally starting to ring in the ears of the governing Liberals, Mr. Speaker.

I want to end my remarks on this debate by thanking our front-line paramedics and all those who work day in and day out - it's 24/7, 365 - those behind the scenes, whether it be fleet, those working at our communications centres, those who keep the wheels going round and round. Health care is complex, but I can confirm that the EHS system itself is complex. Without acknowledging the work that they do for us, I think we'd be in a much more difficult situation.

I want to end on this. The reason why I and my colleagues are so passionate about this issue is that we recognize it could be our loved ones today. It could be anybody's loved one in this province. I just fear the day that I get a phone call at my office, knowing that the system should have been better and can be better and we didn't do enough to address the issue. With that, thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre.

KENDRA COOMBES: It is an honour at this moment to stand here and discuss this important issue. We have known about the problems facing Nova Scotia's ambulance system for years. It is just one of the many symptoms of the deep and complex problems in our health care system. Emergency room closures in communities mean ambulances have to travel farther and wait longer to offload patients into overcrowded hospitals. Unscheduled emergency room closures increased by 30 per cent in Cape Breton in 2019 and 2020.

COVID-19 has only intensified the issues and has increased the numbers of unfulfilled shifts which have taken ambulances off the roads. Yesterday at 11:20 a.m. and again at 11:45 p.m., there was a Code Critical in Richmond County. How can the Liberals claim that emergency health care is available when most regions of our province are facing closed emergency rooms and out-of-service or half-staffed ambulances? Cape Breton hospitals have the highest death rate in the country, and yet the Liberals' answer to the crisis has been to close down community hospitals on the Island, one of which is in my riding.

The government needs to learn to listen to the paramedics and other front-line and health care workers when they sound the alarm about working short and working extremely long shifts without breaks. They are worn down and they are burned out.

Paramedics and all Nova Scotians who rely on essential services deserve better, and I will leave you with this. If tonight there's a Code Critical in CBRM, and the closest ambulance is in Baddeck, and that person is having a heart attack, they're likely dead by the time the ambulance gets to them.

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

ALANA PAON: It is my honour to stand and to speak on this matter that we have brought forward for emergency debate this evening with regard to the state of ambulance service within the province. In particular, we're speaking about the issues around Code Critical.

It has been brought to my attention - of course it was in the media - that there were two cases of Code Critical that happened yesterday in Richmond. My constituency and my constituents are very dear people. I get calls to my office at all times, and many of those calls come from seniors. We all know that we have an aging population here in Nova Scotia, and my rural community has a high percentage of seniors who rely on good health care and access to good health care.

We're very blessed in our constituency in Isle Madame. My hat's off to the services that are available in both our long-term facilities at Richmond Villa and as well at the St.

Anne Community and Nursing Care Centre. The care that our seniors in these facilities receive is absolutely top-notch, but we all know that there is a need, there is a lack of more long-term facility beds. We have a backlog that exists within our local community hospital at the Strait Richmond Hospital, where we have patients who are waiting to be moved into a long-term care facility bed. They are waiting sometimes for months at a time in a bed at the Strait Richmond that could be used for other patient care.

[7:00 p.m.]

I have seen as well that we have seniors who are coming in to the emergency room and spending days at a time and we all know that an emergency room environment is not the most private, is not the most comfortable of areas to have to spend days, weeks at a time. So when you see people who are coming into an emergency room for something that is not really an emergency per se, it's not something that needs immediate care but they are there simply because there is nowhere else for them to go.

I had a mother who was calling me who was really concerned about the state of access to mental health in our area and having basically no other option when a member of the family is thinking obviously not fantastic thoughts about perhaps ending their life, in a desperate situation having to go to the emergency department again and again to try and ask for help, to try and ask if there is a place basically that their family member can be an intake patient so they don't have to take the family member back home because they are absolutely terrified that something is going to happen to their family member overnight. They are always basically in emergency mode themselves in trying to be vigilant about making certain that they are giving the care that really should be the care that is given within our health care system.

I have had situations where people have called me and are absolutely terrified of what will happen if they cannot access an ambulance. What happened yesterday with seeing that Code Critical, it's not the first time we've seen it all over the province but of course I'm here representing the constituents of Cape Breton-Richmond. When I see something like that, I think about many of the people I know in Cape Breton-Richmond who, again, we are fortunate to have some excellent doctors and some excellent health care facilities and practitioners within our community who do extraordinary work.

When I see these codes coming in that there is a possibility that you're going to call 911 - my mom is 84. I'm here. I'm not there. My brothers and sisters are away, and I know she is fortunate that my aunt and uncle are just down the road, but my aunt and uncle are 85 and almost 90. The population on Isle Madame and in Richmond, in Cape Breton-Richmond, the same as the CBRM, the same as in a lot of places in Cape Breton, we have an aging population, so of course it is a natural kind of production to understand that we are going to have an increased load on our health care system, we are going to have to have an increased capacity to be able to access 911 services but we wouldn't have to access that quite so much if we didn't have such a systems failure overall.

Really, that is the way I would describe this, Mr. Speaker. It is an overall systems failure. I said a little bit earlier in the House that I am a systems person. I like to be able to know where my keys are, I like to be able to understand where to call, how to do things. If there is a system in place, it maximizes efficiency, but more so than that, maximizing efficiency obviously will also assist in being able to decrease costs, one would think, but it also gives the end user, who are the constituents, all of our constituents, it gives them the sense that we're organized, we have a capability of actually answering and responding to their needs at the most critical time, when they need our help.

The issue here is not whether or not we have health care providers who can actually do the work. We just don't have enough of them. The ones we have are burned out. It is just extraordinary for me to hear these stories about patients in ambulances for over 24 hours, waiting to be offloaded at a hospital.

[7:00 p.m.]

We are not a Third World country here, Mr. Speaker. We are in the First World here. I don't understand how we could get to this situation and how it can be continuing on. To have this report available - and I understand it's very important, obviously, that there's a certain amount within the negotiation process, I understand that there's certain information that perhaps you'd need to keep embargoed - as we call it here in the House, for our Bills, you embargo things for a certain period of time.

But to have this information available for three years while people in my community who are suffering - I'm going to use that word - who are suffering because they can't access the health care that they need. They are worried, which anybody with high blood pressure, when there's an increase in anxiety level because you're concerned that you're not going to be able to access emergency services when you need it. That actually puts them even at more risk. You're adding an extra layer, an extra element of a possible health care issue on top of the ones that they already have.

I'm flabbergasted that we have had this information for three years - I shouldn't say "we." I didn't have it, members of this House didn't have it, the Opposition didn't have it. The government had access to this information for three years while our first responders - and, again, our ambulance service is multi-layered. It's not just - we think of it as the ambulance that arrives at the door and the paramedic that comes in to assist us. This is multi-layered. It's the LifeFlight system, it's the 911 system - all integrated into this.

There are several different layers that I was reading in this report that not even I took into consideration. There's the whole coordination and management of it all. There's a fixed-wing flight, there's the LifeFlight helicopter, there are maintenance issues. It's all interconnected as far as - is what I said. It's an overall systems failure and it's a system that needs an overhaul. It's far overdue for it, but I find it a huge affront to not only my constituents in Cape Breton-Richmond, and some of those are obviously health care

providers - I find it an absolute affront to those who have had to possibly lose loved ones because there is a delay in being able to actually have someone come and help you.

When you're calling 911, you're at the very cusp, basically. You are at the situation where you need help immediately. You're hoping that somebody is going to arrive within a very short period of time. Thirty minutes is, I think, the standard that was put here, the longest period of time that it should take for an ambulance to arrive. That would seem forever for most people that are in a crisis situation, but as we know - and it's wonderful to hear that paramedics are going to be providing other services in-house, almost like some doctors are providing home care and home medical services.

When I was a kid on Isle Madame, the doctor would oftentimes come to our door and come to see us, as opposed for us to actually have to go to the doctor's office. So it's wonderful to be able to hear that paramedics, who are highly trained individuals and who have my utmost respect for what they have to deal with on an ongoing basis - they've seen some of the most horrible situations.

We've heard a member here in this House speak about the trauma, the PTSD, let alone all of the trauma that comes from a huge accident scene or a massive emergency situation. You have the other first responders as well that are trying to coordinate and work with the paramedics. It affects them as well. This has a ripple effect, is what I think the term is. It has a ripple effect that goes out.

It's not just paramedics who are in a desperate situation here to try and be heard, to try and get assistance. It's those who are the front-line health care workers, it's those who are the recipients of the health care, but it's also everybody else around them that are trying to give them the support that they need to be able to do their job effectively and not to put themselves in jeopardy themselves without having a proper amount of rest, not being able to access - for goodness' sake - to go and utilize the washroom.

We're talking about mental health here in this House quite a bit. We throw around the term "mental health." I think we need to start thinking from the very basic perspective of the dignity of the human being that we are asking to provide services in a critical situation. To ask the paramedic to stay on an ambulance for 24 hours - I don't even know how that's legal, to be perfectly honest with you, and I don't think that it should be. No one should have to be in that situation. No one should have to go without eating a proper amount of food at regular intervals during the day to try to get their job done, especially somebody who is working either for or in affiliation to a government or government services.

Again, we need to hold the bar high. We should be the model for the behaviour. Here in Nova Scotia, cradle of Confederation, the cradle of responsible government, we need to do better. We need to be setting the standard. We need to be holding the bar high.

We shouldn't be constantly falling behind everybody else and looking at basically what the solutions are. It's good to look at best practices from anywhere and everywhere else, obviously. Sometimes you don't have to reinvent the wheel.

We need to start looking at not just dollars or cents and efficiency. We need to be actually looking at the human being component here. It must be degrading to have to be on an ambulance that whole time. It must be really quite difficult on your mental health to feel like you're not valued, like you're not being heard. I have a bit of experience with that.

My heart goes out to anybody who is an employee who tries to provide service to be able to assist anyone in this province in a moment of crisis. My heart goes out to you, and I certainly hope that this government will be able to implement the recommendations within this report and that you'll get the help that you need.

THE SPEAKER: The House will now recess for just a few minutes.

[7:07 p.m. The House recessed.]

[7:14 p.m. The House reconvened.]

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable member for Kings West.

We'll give him a second here.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to enter into this debate on the EHS system and the current state of where we are. I think sometimes it's good to go back and take a look at where the EHS system came from, because over the years there have been tremendous incremental improvements. I would say that really this is from the Murphy report of 1994 to the Fitch report, and both were milestones in the advancement of paramedicine in our province.

If we think back prior to Dr. Ron Stewart being elected to office in 1993 and the ambulance service that existed up to that point in time, basically it was a collection of people in funeral homes who had St. John Ambulance training and a few private and public services in a few of the counties across Nova Scotia.

Dr. Ron Stewart had actually not just been working as a doctor in southern California - Orange County in particular - but he was involved with the development of paramedicine in California. After getting elected, he saw the opportunity to advance paramedicine in our province.

He commissioned Dr. Mike Murphy from the IWK to develop a report that became known as the Murphy report and led to the establishment of the paramedicine system in 1994, which brought Medavie and the development of the EHS into service.

[7:15 p.m.]

By 2004 those early beginnings had allowed for everyone from the funeral homes, the few public and some private systems, to finally all merge together under the EHS system that we have today.

I think what it's important to take a look at from 2004 is that at that point in time they put the emphasis on three areas that really carry over into our paramedic service today. Those were standards of patient care, performance, and competency. So over the years those areas have seen the growth of a tremendous group of professionals who now are 900 in the province of Nova Scotia.

Throughout those years, the emphasis has been on a service of excellence and expanded scope of practice. For example, we all have seen what happened in 2011 with the extended-care paramedic program where paramedics could look after some of the work in our long-term care facilities and also in our collaborative emergency centres. That whole work of the paramedic has undergone a tremendous change in their scope of practice over the years.

I just want to talk a little bit about this service of excellence, this creed and mandate that paramedics take on. I had the good fortune to be Minister of Health and Wellness for about four years altogether. I went to their Long Service Awards on at least three occasions. The pride of profession and the number of years of service and commitment to our province that are acknowledged at those Long Service Awards - with every one of them, you can see that sense of calling, of how much regard they have for the profession they are in, and the number of years combined with perhaps a public or private service and then a merging into EHS. What really struck me was not only their work, not only their work in that ambulance, or in the ambulance bay ready to spring into action, but the number of hours of commitment to their community to train firefighters.

In fact, many being firefighters had that dual role in our rural communities in Nova Scotia, to be both a professional on the job as a paramedic but also then as a volunteer. Going to a Long Service Award was a real eye-opener of the kind of people who are attracted into paramedicine.

When I talk about the development of paramedicine in the province over now these 25 or 26 years, to see the scope of practice change, when they could deliver, for example, the clot-busting drugs. Think of that day for the life of many Nova Scotians who have been saved by the work of a paramedic. It was no longer the long trip to an emergency room or from some part of the province to the QEII, where our cardiologists would go to work. Paramedics saved many lives just from that one change in their scope of practice.

One of the areas that came under tremendous scrutiny when I was Health and Wellness Minister was our LifeFlight. At that time, around 2014, our LifeFlight had about

a 78 per cent response in terms of their ability because of, you know, the amount of maintenance that is required on a helicopter. Routine maintenance requires long hours when the helicopter is down. Then we had Transport Canada say they could no longer fly over densely populated areas and land at the QEII and the IWK. That's where I really saw that adaptability, that tremendous expertise of the EHS and our paramedics. They immediately put in a much larger ambulance vehicle, a regular day to look after our most serious patients coming from across the province by LifeFlight; they had to land by the container pier and no longer on our hospitals. So, they put together both a regular ambulance and a neonatal unit in one vehicle to be able to respond in that time of very, very different need.

It's that kind of response and growth as we see in the profession that has always struck me. More importantly, we responded to that 78 per cent response time as a government to get us now to two helicopters that give us about a 97 to 98 per cent response time for LifeFlight, along with the fixed-wing aircraft when needed as well.

It's easy sometimes to speak in terms of the excellence of service, but when you're looked at by an outside agency as to how well your paramedics, their response and capabilities are, and to hear time after time, that we have one of the best services in North America, certainly in Canada, it really speaks to the professionals who do their job day in and day out.

Are they under tremendous pressures? Absolutely. No question about that. It's because of that growing demand, many have talked about the aging demographic in our province which is indeed one of the realities we now face.

One of the areas that I was aware of even before becoming Health and Wellness Minister was the growing use of our paramedic system to transport non-urgent care patients. I believe that we will take the Fitch report – we have already begun with a pilot to remove part of that service from our well-trained paramedics. So, we need to have them available for our emergencies and not in transit somewhere, because we are now moving a dialysis patient, we're moving a person in a home or a community service centre, like Fundy Villa in the Valley, to go for an X-ray.

We have to get our paramedics free from some of that work that has become embedded and built into their work. I believe that that one area alone is going to make an enormous difference because every time we can relieve some of the pressure points and allow for why really they became a paramedic and the work they wanted to do, I think more and more as we target and direct their efforts that way.

While we talked about giving EHS a directive, it is really going to be incumbent on Medavie, EHS, government through the Department of Health and Wellness and through Nova Scotia Health - all of these bodies, I think, working now to have some renewal of paramedicine and the delivery of that life saving, that vital service in our province. That's

why I feel the Fitch report, the new five-year contract and all of these four or five bodies, along with the College of Paramedics - which only came into existence, I think, April 1, 2018 - to see all of those bodies now come together to renew our system, I think will put us again at the very top level providing Nova Scotians with the great service that we have come to expect.

That expectation has certainly grown over the years. When it's not delivering at its very best, we take notice. Our government is committed to taking the Fitch report and most important of all, I have always believed that whatever sector we're dealing with, it's the voice of people in the system. Paramedics know the solution and the more that we embrace what they are trying to say for some time, but I think now we are at that point where we can deliver because we know some of the solutions.

As tough a day as our paramedics will have with the demands on them, we should never lose sight - there are probably members in the House and many families across Nova Scotia that owe the life of their loved one to the high level, the high quality, the excellent service that paramedics offer our province. I think, given a little bit of time for this renewal and paramedicine will deliver for all Nova Scotians. Thank you.

[7:30 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

TORY RUSHTON: I want to congratulate and thank the member for Kings West for his debate on the other side of the floor right now and congratulate him on his recent announcement that he is going to be leaving politics and thank him for his service. I recall sitting in a boardroom when that member was Minister of Health and Wellness, so I thank him for his services. That's sort of a few seconds to build him up before I tear things apart, so to speak.

In all seriousness, this isn't a new issue. This isn't a new issue for Nova Scotia at all. My statement about if paramedics know the solutions, well then, when is this government going to wake up and start listening? This has been going on for quite a while.

I am a very proud 21-year veteran of the fire service. My first pick was going to be paramedicine. In the late 1990s I learned pretty quick that the paramedic career was not for me. I did a few ride-alongs, and I did many calls, but for many different reasons, the fire service was my calling. Out of those 21 years, I was a very proud fire chief of my fire department in Oxford.

This has been an issue not just in HRM today or Cape Breton tomorrow or Yarmouth last week. This has been an issue all over Nova Scotia for many years. In many places in rural Nova Scotia, bases are up to 20 minutes away. What did the government do

when they implemented the EHS program? The first service started taking on medical first response calls, if you will.

There was resistance. Let's not deny the fact that there was resistance. But now we have departments that are taking it very seriously because there are not ambulances in those bases all the time. This has been taking place for years.

The ambulance base in Parrsboro, it's a 20-minute to 40-minute drive to Advocate, if the ambulance is there. Springhill to Advocate is 70 minutes, if the ambulance is there. Let's go even further down the road. The next base, in Oxford, to Advocate Harbour is 85 minutes, if the ambulance is there.

Mr. Speaker, do you know how many times in the last number of years of just being elected or the number of years prior to that, when I was fire chief, that I would get phone calls that our parking lot at the ambulance base is empty? There's no lights on, no one is answering the door, and the ambulance is locked up inside. That indicates to me and that indicates to my residents in Cumberland South that the ambulance isn't in service.

Mr. Speaker, this was an issue before Code Critical. This was an issue before COVID-19. This was an issue in 2014 when as chief, I along with many other fire chiefs got together. We were at a lecture from the then-minister, and there were many good aspects to what EHS was supposed to be. A lot of very highly trained, highly skilled, and highly professional paramedics were involved in this EHS system. We have lost many of them, to be replaced with many more highly trained, highly professional, highly dedicated paramedics right now.

But how long are we going to keep them? How long before this system burns them out? How long before this system burns out the fire service that is offsetting some of the calls in rural Nova Scotia? Not just now in rural Nova Scotia, also in the bigger communities in Nova Scotia, fire departments have been forced to cover their communities while ambulances are away with the Medical First Response Program. They are a piece of the puzzle. When the Medical First Response Program was set up, it was set up as a model with available ambulances.

Mr. Speaker, my issue in 2014 as fire chief was the lack of coverage we had in the Oxford area. In 2014, 2015, and 2016 - year after year - I as chief and my municipality would have to reach out to EHS and say we're not a medical first response fire department. We have agreed to go on time-crucial calls, but we are not a medical first response fire department. Why are we seeing seven, eight, nine, or ten calls a month, month after month? When we would ring that bell or sound that siren, we would all of a sudden see an ambulance posted back in Oxford for a short period of time.

Where there's a will in government, there is a way to fix a solution. We don't need sound bites for this. We need a solid plan. I was very excited to hear the new Minister of

Health and Wellness say that he's willing to reach across the floor and listen to Opposition members, work with Opposition members, because this is what this system needs. It does need collaboration. And what I'll say to the Minister of Health and Wellness right now, tonight - my offer stands right here to work with you to come up with a solution to this problem.

Paramedics are an integral part of our emergency services. Mr. Speaker, our House of Assembly would not stand if it were not for a minimal four walls, and the emergency service is built with many walls. Some key walls I can think of: police, fire, search and rescue, and paramedics are an integral part of that. When we're getting calls from fire services, from family members, that people are waiting up to 80 or 90 minutes for an ambulance to respond, and the response we get back from EHS - it doesn't matter when you call 911, there's always an ambulance on its way.

When the ambulance is coming from a county or two away, that's more time for that family to become fatigued or stressed. It's more time - pre-COVID-19 - for a fire service to become mentally fatigued and stressed. And before the paramedics even arrive - and I talk to them almost weekly now when Code Criticals come out strong - they're getting stressed before they even get on scene, Mr. Speaker.

We hear from paramedics in every MLA office, I'm sure, that they can't get their vacation time, they're refusing overtime. People who would work overtime non-stop, they're being forced to refuse overtime because they need some time away from the system. They need some time away from the system.

In talking with some of my more rural residents, they didn't even know what Code Critical was, but they knew what the situation was when they had to wait over an hour for an ambulance to respond to their areas. This is a serious situation, Mr. Speaker. It's been going on for a long time. This is not something new since COVID-19. It's not something new since Code Critical. It's something that the paramedics felt no other way but to sound the alarm in one way or another.

I can recall as a fire chief being five minutes down the road from the Basin in Oxford - 40 minutes later, an ambulance arrives from another county away. Mr. Speaker, this isn't just driving harder on the paramedics who want to do right. This is driving even harder on our municipal officials, our elected officials in our Chambers today.

A little bit in closing. We don't need sound bites. We need a solid plan. We need a progressive plan. We announced a progressive plan of virtual health care last year and got laughed at. I don't expect the new Minister of Health and Wellness to laugh at it. I know he won't laugh at it. I have more respect for the Health and Wellness Minister than that.

Mr. Speaker, there is an issue, and we're here on the opposite side of the House - on the Opposition side, not the government side - but we've heard many people here speak

tonight about how professional the paramedics are. We had a good history lesson of how EHS became, a history lesson of where we came from, from our ambulance services in the 1980s to where we are today. And I may joke around about tearing the then-minister apart, but it's a serious situation, and I know his heart is in the right place.

We need to act now because this is not a new issue. It wasn't a new issue when I came in. It wasn't a new issue when I was knocking on doors in the by-election of 2018. It's not a new issue when we go back to the doors in 2021 or 2022, whenever that election may be. It is an issue to Nova Scotians. It's a very important issue to our paramedics.

We stand here on the opposite side today of the Legislature looking at the government and I welcome that invitation to be here. Mr. Speaker, we will be here and we will assist in this issue with the Minister of Health and Wellness and the governing party.

We're willing. We've heard the paramedics' cry. We don't need to take another relief pressure and down service into another emergency service. We have highly-trained, highly-equipped professionals in our ambulances. We need to take this situation seriously.

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

GARY BURRILL: Just to add some thoughts to this important debate at this important time, after months and months and months of insistence that the revelations of the Fitch report be made public by health care advocates in lots of quarters and by the operating engineers, the paramedics' union, and from ourselves. Earlier this week, at long last, the report was released. Although it is a report that includes a wide range of subjects and comes to some dozens of recommendations, there are a couple of ringing truths from the Fitch report that I think deserve to be briefly underlined.

One is this - the findings of the report ratify everything that the paramedics' union has been saying to the Code Critical program for a long, long time. They prove it, they demonstrate it, they show there was no hyperbole, no shining light only on one difficult corner and not taking in the whole picture. The Fitch report shows conclusively that the picture of the EHS systemic dilemma that the paramedics' union has been providing through the Code Critical program is exactly the picture that needs to be addressed.

All this long time when paramedics in Nova Scotia have made the calibrations about truck availability in various regions of the province, then measured them alongside of calibrations about staff shortages and then produced more than daily the very regular report that showed that ambulance coverage in very significant parts of the province, on a startlingly regular basis, did not meet anywhere near the standards the public would want to expect. The Fitch report has said here, to all those who have put that energy behind the Code Critical program, what you said is absolutely right.

One of the facts that rings out from the report has to do with this whole question of the offloading issue, which is a central focus of the report's thinking. It speaks about how every day in Nova Scotia because of the systemic quantum inefficiency around offloading that the equivalent of 13.5 12-hour paramedic shifts are being in effect squandered at this level of a systemic problem that is taking place. So that is one - the ratification of the paramedics' voices.

The second thing I think that bears underlining out of the Fitch report - I think is important to bring to this debate is the Fitch report's repeated conclusion that their analysis indicates and points to a deeply integrated, interrelated and systemic problem. In other words, it is the problem of the health care system as a whole. This is not an isolated EHS, an isolated ambulance, an isolated paramedic problem, that what is being measured and studied in the report is in fact providing evidence of a deeply integrated health care systemic level of problem in crisis.

This is a very important thing to point out and I think it is an important thing for the government to understand, and the core object that is being described here is not difficult to understand. Why is it that all of these mega-hours are being spent with highly trained paramedics accompanying patients because they're not able to transfer responsibility of those patients to emergency room personnel.

[7:45 p.m.]

The reason for that is that the emergency room is over-crowded and over-burdened and itself in a crisis. So why is it that the emergency room is over-burdened, over-crowded, and itself in a crisis? Well, we understand from a host of reports that that's the significant part, because the emergency room is unable to discharge people who they have completed their ER responsibilities for into the general hospital population because there is no room available for those patients in the hospital.

So, we have to ask the question, well, why then is there no room available for those patients in the hospital? The answer to that is that around one-fifth of the hospital beds in the province are taken up by people who aren't hospital patients. Well, why would we have a fifth of our hospital beds taken up with people who are not hospital patients? Well, because those are ALC - alternate level of care - patients. Well, what do you mean by alternate level of care? Oh, those are people, actually who the continuing care personnel have designated that this is the time for them to be in a long-term care facility but there are no long-term care facilities.

Well, why aren't there any long-term care facilities? The answer to that is that in 2014 the Liberal government didn't open any, and in 2015 they didn't open any, and 2016 they didn't open any, in 2017 they didn't open any, in 2018 they didn't open any, and I don't mean any facilities, I mean any beds in the midst of the greatest graying tsunami in our history.

I think we should hold present to our minds the situation of those ALC patients for a moment. Those are patients who have made the difficult mental decision that now is the time that they need to go into a nursing home, but because there wasn't a place there available, they are having to wait in a hospital. That means they are in a place that is not geared up for what they need. They are in a place that doesn't have the kind of programming and community-creating atmosphere and staffing that a long-term care facility always has, staff to look after, and has to such an extent - well, they have to pay to have a television.

If it should happen to be that the alternate level of care patient doesn't have supports around them by means of which they are having clothes brought in, they can live the whole time they are ALC in hospital johnny shirt clothing. If people come to visit them, the question paramount on their mind is, how long? Have you heard the word? How much longer am I going to have to stay here?

It's a systemic problem, the Fitch and Associates report has said, and it is a systemic problem that is entirely amenable to solution. So we say, well, how many people do we have on the waiting list? Could we possibly deal with this? Well, around 1,500. Well, the last time we were building nursing homes and opening new beds, how many did you open? In the four years before this government came to power, right around a thousand.

In other words, had the program of new nursing home construction that had been in place with the NDP government prior to this Liberal government - and I will refer to comments made earlier today by the Leader of the Official Opposition who spoke about how these initiatives were rooted in Progressive Conservative governments, and that is also true. If the program that the Progressive Conservative government had begun and the NDP government had worked with had continued in any form, we wouldn't be in the situation where the ALC blocked up the hospital, which blocked up the ER, which blocked up the EHS system, which led to burn-out and chronic short-staffing. The report is right that there is this chronic, inter-related, systemic dimension of the problem that it describes.

We can go back to the precursor of the Fitch and Associates report. The last time that this problem of emergency services was studied in this scope was the Ross report of approximately a decade ago, from which comes the phrase that emergency services are the canary in the health care system's coal mine. That is exactly true. It points to exactly the systemic way to a whole range of inter-related problems. That is why when a government's health care efforts fail in emergency services, it is very, very significant and very, very important. I think it is important to note that in this debate this evening.

If we look at the record of the present government over the last eight years and think about emergency room out and out closures, every single year - 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 - that those reports have been given, as they are every year in the month of December, the amount of unscheduled emergency room closures has

increased, whereas in the years prior to the Liberal government coming into power in 2013, the trajectory was exactly in the opposite direction.

I think that the member for Kings West was right to root some of this discussion in much of the marvellous record in contributions of Dr. Ron Stewart. I remember very well when Dr. Stewart was working on the development of the EHS system. As Minister of Health in Nova Scotia, he went on an intense tour around the province speaking to people about how we could have improvements in this situation.

He had a phrase that he said over and over. He would describe some anachronism or some inefficiency in our health care system, particularly in ambulance and emergency services. He would always give kind of a rhetorical pause, and then he would say, we can do better than that. In his talk, often this would happen half a dozen or 10 times. He would give a description with all the medical detail that he was capable of bringing forward, and he would pause before the non-professionals that he was talking to, and then just say, we can do better than that.

We can do better than that, a Code Critical situation that is constant. We can do better than that, a system of ever-growing closures of emergency rooms. We can do better than response times that are increasingly untenable. It's very important that these subjects be brought forward and be discussed tonight because what Dr. Stewart said at that time is the case. The people do deserve better than that.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Lands and Forestry.

HON. CHUCK PORTER: I'm pleased to have a few minutes this evening to offer some comments on a very important debate. Over the couple of years that I have been in the Legislature, I have had an opportunity to speak on health care. I can't tell you how many times there have been debates, how much we have seen change - some may argue not change.

We have heard some different perspectives this evening, and we have heard people say, follow us and our idea. Yet we haven't really heard what those ideas or solutions are. There's nothing new in that, Mr. Speaker, common practice. That's the Legislature.

I have sat on all sides of this House, all sides. I have sat in a Third Party, I have sat in the Official Opposition, and I'll remind members that I have sat as an Independent, and I have sat in government. I am very pleased to be part of this government. A lot has been done.

We haven't heard any talk about the investments this evening around infrastructure, the money that we have been investing. But let's not forget some things. We are putting huge dollars in investments in infrastructure because we need to, both here in HRM and around the province and in industrial Cape Breton. Those are very important investments

that we have committed to. I know that they will get done, that they need to be done, and that they will be successful.

This debate has been very much centred around the paramedics, and I'm glad that it has been. We have heard a lot of discussion, and I'm going to start the few minutes that I do have by saying how proud I was to be one. I want to thank each and every one of them, although I won't know them today like I used to know them. I have been gone a while. The member for Argyle-Barrington is a little younger than me probably and a more recent-practising paramedic. Believe it or not, I have been gone for 15 years from that business.

I kind of reflected on the honourable member for Kings West, who was telling a bit of a story back when Dr. Ron Stewart, who was very much a member of the House, commissioned the reports, and we saw changes coming. I can tell you as an old paramedic in those days, starting in and around 1989, it was a different world. When we saw people like Dr. Ron Stewart and the government of the day introducing these ideas of how things could be in this province, we knew what they were in that day, and I can tell you what they were. They were not what they are today. We are very fortunate today, and even the Fitch and Associates report and so many others have mentioned it.

Not only was I fortunate to work in what I'll call the old world, and I was fortunate because there were some absolutely fabulous people who worked in that system. The turnover rate in those years was six years. Many never lasted. That was the average turnover of people, paramedics, in those days - six years. Not a long time. There were no support systems in place. When you had issues, you moved along generally.

There were other issues that were experienced, there were tough days there, but I can assure you there were also some fun days there. I know that the member for Argyle-Barrington who sits in this House, who was a paramedic, would also agree that colleagues are one thing - and we have fun with them and enjoy working with them every day - and the work that we do with the people that you meet every single day is somebody different.

The interesting piece of this is, you meet them in the most inopportune time many times. You could be talking about the 40 per cent of the patient transfers that are done in a day where our ambulances are tied up - you will hear stories from those people, important stories from old veterans maybe. A lot of them are now gone. In my day, they could tell you stories, very important stories. They would tell you about their families. They would have medical problems, that is why we were there. They may be going for a simple test, but they travelled by ambulance in those days and they still do.

We have some patient transfer units - I hear the minister talk about more patient transfer units. That is an important piece of business as we know it today - a very important piece. We need to see further accomplishments there - I will give you that. We have had such big changes over the years as I want to go back to for a moment when I used to listen

- and we would be working - so I want to describe a bit, the member for Kings West describe a bit about what the older system was like.

This is an important piece to me because it is about where we were, and we keep hearing such negativity, if you will, about how the system is operating today - and I want to be the first to say there are issues in this system. There have been, and I don't discredit that. There is work to be done. The minister even has said, others have said, there is still much work to be done and I am confident that we will work together, and we will move forward. I believe we have to do that.

I want to tell you a bit about those days and the change that we saw happen in this province. We took an ambulance system that was made of 52 operators who ran a low-rise Chev van with lights on it and bias-ply tires down the road, 90 and 100 miles an hour because we thought that is what that was about - the faster you can get there, the better. Thankfully, today you don't do that. You are driving incredible vehicles - I believe governed these days that you can only go so fast. Those are safety reasons.

My God, makes all the sense in the world. When we look back, it makes fabulous sense. That is how it should be. Today, we work 40 to 48 hours a week. It is a career today, and it should be a career today. When I started, I worked 168 hours in two weeks, that was before I worked overtime - 72-hour shifts. Not in your home, you went to work at a base for 72 hours, and if you were lucky you slept here and there. If you were lucky, you ate here and there. But we always managed. I worked in Windsor in the beginning. I was transferred to Sackville two years later where I worked the same operator home.

We were fortunate. We made \$6.50 an hour, and we were one of the highest paid in the province outside of HRM. Think about that, running down the road - and we were trained in defibrillation, incubation, IV therapy. We were providing drugs to people in those days under the leadership of a doctor who said, hey, we are going to work with you. That guy's name was Dr. Ed King, and in Windsor it was Dr. MacLaughlin. Most would not remember him, some would remember Dr. Ed King, a very key player in how the system was changed. He was our doctor who protected us, if you will. He was who we called when we had issues, who signed us off on training.

Things changed drastically. As the technology changed, so did the way the ambulance response system in this province change. The development of the ambulances changed, too. What you see today is a more square box sort of model, not the van I referred to earlier. So, you see a lot of those changes have occurred, and people can talk about the issues that we have - and we do have them. I am going to agree - we have issues that need to be rectified. We have more work to do.

[8:00 p.m.]

There were 52 operators. In those days, you filled out a form - an A form or an E form, depending on which you were transferring - and the provincial bill in those days was \$14 million. We know what it is today: many times more than that.

The system today now has a couple of helicopters, which the member for Kings West referred to. That is a fabulous system. The best trained, very well-trained, with the care they're providing on the side of the road is exceptional. The fact that they can fly and land on the top of a hospital and deliver you - whether it's the children's or the Halifax Infirmary here in town - is absolutely incredible. Those were dreams back in my day, in the early days, and you would see things on TV. Well, you know that guy Ron Stewart, that old show *Emergency*, he was part of the development of that great story and that great show but he brought that to reality here in this province.

The development of paramedics here in this province - we weren't called paramedics, by the way, in those days, either. We were EMAs, emergency medical attendants, when I first started. You had to have a Class 4 driver's licence, so if you could drive a taxi or you could drive a four-door car, you could get your licence. You had to take a first aid and CPR course. It usually took a week. That's all you needed and you were ready to be hired and work on the streets in this great province.

Today it is well above that. We go to school today, we're taught the science, the biology of getting through that. I came through a variety of training. We had the different levels. We went from the EMA to the EMP to the paramedic to the Level 1, the Level 2 and the Level 3. Level 2 in those days was intermediate - I don't believe there are any of the practising Level 2s left. There may be, they sort of phased them out from the primary paramedics to the advanced care paramedic.

When I retired from that business, I was an advanced care paramedic who studied sciences, which I could not take in high school like I wish I had, but working hard to get there, that's how you get there. But the experience on the street and working was just a part of that. The change we have seen and the quality and we see Fitch and we see others. We are internationally recognized as one of the very best you will find anywhere in North America. Not only on the street with the paramedics, one of the great parts of my career in the Emergency Health Services business was the latter part, where I worked as part of the team at the communications centre, the provincial ambulance communications centre, where I not only had a chance to interview people and hire them and train them, I got to measure their performance, and those people were what we referred to earlier.

The minister said he visited that call centre the other day. That is the place I worked in for a long time and had the chance to measure the performance. To deal with those folks over there was an incredible experience as well. The system, we talk about it being complex but you know it's pretty simple. You dial 911, they answer and a secondary piece after they

hand you off regardless of what your emergency is and you were looked after. You were looked after well. The people in the communications centre are extremely well-trained. They also follow a protocol. They were also recognized by way of an international accreditation, which I'm very proud to be part of and worked at and then completed twice before I left there.

That is the quality of people we are talking about and at no time did I ever hear anybody talk about the quality of people being a bad thing. It is all a good thing and I'm so appreciative to hear people reference paramedics in this province, as they should because of the work that they do and what they see on a daily basis. I talked about that job being fun. The people were fun and the job as a whole, I would argue, was one of the best jobs I ever had in my life because you got to meet people.

We know, and we have known - this is not the first debate, I'll guarantee you. I don't know how many more years I will be in this House but, I'll guarantee you, in the years ahead there will be many debates on health care in this House. Many. They will be here - I don't think there have been debates - regardless of who sat on the government bench because we're always looking to excel. We're always looking to do better. I honestly believe that we have done better on many fronts.

Will we ever have a system that we reflect back on and say that was perfect? This is not Utopia. It will not be perfect. The people will always be there. The people will be quality people who want to do what they're doing not because of what you're paying them, not because of what they are driving in, but because of who they are. I don't know today how many paramedics there are actually working full-time, part-time, et cetera. I know there are a thousand or more probably. I think I heard the honourable member for Argyle-Barrington mention maybe 1,200 total in the province who work part-time, casual and full-time. I don't know what the number is anymore. I've been away for a while.

I've not really been away. I still know a number of people who work in the business.

Now, I can tell you that there aren't a lot of people who were there when I was there who are still there. Some of them have retired. There are still a couple kicking around who would have been there with more seniority than me, had I still been there. I talked to a buddy of mine just a couple of weeks ago. He is finally going to retire in August. He's been in this business for 35 years or so. Imagine. That's a long time. That's dedication to Nova Scotians every day. No matter the situation, the labour issues that we will see, the contracts that will get negotiated, we will always want to have more. It is important that we always think about that and we do more.

I don't think that will change. I think the people are first and foremost. They are what make the system that we have. You can buy however many fancy-coloured vehicles and stretchers you want, you can have all the very best of equipment - and believe me, this system has the best of everything.

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The time for the emergency debate has expired. I want to thank all members for participating.

The House now stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m.

[The House rose at 8:06 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 17**

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 Donnie and Tracey Clarke of Timberlea became sick with the COVID-19 virus in mid-March 2020 and were among the first reported cases in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas Donnie is the first in the province to donate plasma to a clinical trial, with the hope his blood contains the antibodies required to fight this deadly virus; and

Whereas Donnie is a recovered patient from this illness and hopes his plasma donation will be transfused into patients who have severe symptoms of the virus as a treatment for those who are sickened with the disease;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Donnie for his generous participation to help to find a treatment for this deadly virus and potentially save lives.

RESOLUTION NO. 18

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston-Dartmouth)

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

Whereas Ms. Barbara (Fickes) Pate served with the Nova Scotia Terry Fox Foundation for 14 years, retiring as provincial director on June 26, 2020; and

Whereas she attended school at Annapolis West Education Centre from Grades P to 12 and continued her studies at Mount Allison University earning a degree in music; and

Whereas she continues her volunteer work as choir director of Hope United Church, Halifax, as well as fundraising for a hospice during her 10-year service with Rotary International;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Ms. Barbara (Fickes) Pate for her exemplary volunteer spirit and outstanding contribution to worthy community organizations in Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 19

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston-Dartmouth)

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

Whereas the East Preston Day Care Centre (EPDCC) is celebrating its 46th anniversary of providing loving care and professional service to hundreds of children and their families;w and

Whereas Dr. Joyce Ross, as the founding member of the EPDCC, saw the need for early childhood education and worked diligently to realize this dream, overcoming many challenges; and

Whereas the EPDCC became a model for early childhood education in Nova Scotia and has improved the foundation of the children's educational development in East Preston, now under the direction of Ms. Trina Brooks Fraser;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate the EPDCC for 46 years of dedicated service to the many children and families that have benefited in so many ways through this community-based organization.

RESOLUTION NO. 20

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston-Dartmouth)

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

Whereas Keonte Beals and his younger brother, Antonio, who is in Grade 5 at Nelson Whynder Elementary School in North Preston, recently co-authored a children's book entitled *I Am Perfectly Me*; and

Whereas both authors know that a real need exists for kids of African Nova Scotian descent to be able to open more books with a sense of pride when they see people that look like them; and

Whereas they are busy conducting virtual author visits and doing readings at schools throughout the province in the hope that the interest in their book will last long after African Heritage Month;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Keonte and Antonio Beals on the release of their important children's book and for their initiative in making a difference in the lives of all children.

RESOLUTION NO. 21

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston-Dartmouth)

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

Whereas Mr. Nevell Provo of North Preston is co-founder and CEO of Smooth Meal Prep along with his mother and co-founder, Karen Provo; and

Whereas he received some financial assistance from Blue Water Community Business Development Corporation and business plan guidance from the Black Business Initiative and then launched his successful business in 2018 with sales of \$250,000 in a year and a half; and

Whereas his hard work and entrepreneurial spirit are recognized in the business community, as witnessed by him placing 2nd in the 2019 Global Student Entrepreneur Awards Atlantic and the 2020 Family Business Association's Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award, to name a few;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Mr. Nevell Provo on his successful business and for making an important contribution to Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 22

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston-Dartmouth)

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

Whereas Ms. Nzingha Millar, formerly of Lake Loon and Cherry Brook, is a recipient of the Dr. Carrie Best Scholarship, holding degrees in International Development Studies and Journalism from Dalhousie University and the University of King's College respectively; and

Whereas she founded Courage Communication a sole proprietorship focused on meeting the public relations needs of business, organizations in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas she relies on her background in public relations to bridge the divide between people and institutions allowing her to help individuals, organizations and businesses to purposely connect with their audience;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Ms. Nzingha Millar on her successful business, Courage Communication, and for making an important contribution to Nova Scotia.

RESOLUTION NO. 23

By: Hon. Keith Colwell (Preston-Dartmouth)

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

Whereas Rod McDonald of Lake Echo, one of Canada's prominent type designers and educators, is a man on a mission - to preserve some of the history of Canadian type, as well as samples of the work, in an online resource called the Canadian Type Archive; and

Whereas his newest type inspired initiative is the Canadian Type Archives (CTA), which he hopes will become an online resource dedicated to the history of Canadian typography; and

Whereas Halifax was home to the first Printing Press in Canada, the first newspaper in Canada, and the Halifax Gazette was printed on that press;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize and congratulate Rod McDonald on his initiative and devotion to saving an important part of Canadian history, while filling a need in the community.

RESOLUTION NO. 24

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a baby is like the beginning of all things: wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on February 27th, parents Jamie Sawler and Krystal Mailman welcomed their son Mason Edward James Sawler into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jamie Sawler and Krystal Mailman on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

RESOLUTION NO. 25

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas marriages are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of two individuals united as one; and

Whereas it was once said that a marriage is the celebration of love, trust and partnership; and

Whereas on August 1st, 2020, a very special occasion took place when Chad Bourgeois and Julie Silmarie, of Liverpool, celebrated their wedding;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Chad and Julie on their marriage and wish them a lifetime of health and happiness.

RESOLUTION NO. 26

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the administration, teachers and staff of Dr. John C. Wickwire Academy continued to teach and work during the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020-2021; and

Whereas this public service was done willingly and at great personal risk to themselves and their families; and

Whereas the Covid-19 pandemic also caused significant extra work and time commitment on their part preparing both in person and online lesson plans, in extra cleaning, and in addressing health concerns;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking the administration, teachers and staff of Dr. John C. Wickwire Academy for their stepping up and being willing to serve our community above and beyond any previous expectation, at great personal risk and placing the needs of others before their own.

RESOLUTION NO. 27

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things—wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on April 25, 2020, parents Tiffany Whynot and Cody Frank welcomed their son Dallas Kevin Frank into the world; and

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tiffany Whynot and Cody Frank on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

RESOLUTION NO. 28

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the administration, teachers and staff of Greenfield Elementary School continued to teach and work during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21; and

Whereas this public service was done willingly and at great personal risk to themselves and their families; and

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic also caused significant extra work and time commitment on their part preparing both in person and online lesson plans, in extra cleaning, and in addressing health concerns;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking the administration, teachers and staff of Greenfield Elementary School for their stepping up and being willing to serve our community above and beyond any previous expectation, at great personal risk and placing the needs of others before their own.

RESOLUTION NO. 29

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the administration, teachers and staff of Hillcrest Academy continued to teach and work during the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020-21; and

Whereas this public service was done willingly and at great personal risk to themselves and their families; and

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic also caused significant extra work and time commitment on their part preparing both in person and online lesson plans, in extra cleaning and addressing health concerns;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking the administration, teachers and staff of Hillcrest Academy for their stepping up and being willing to serve our community above and beyond any previous expectation, at great personal risk and placing the needs of others before their own.

RESOLUTION NO. 30

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things—wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on May 26, 2020, Natasha Warner and Devin Whynot welcomed their son Jase William Matthew Whynot into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Natasha and Devin on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

RESOLUTION NO. 31

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas marriages are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of two individuals united as one; and

Whereas it was once said that a marriage is the celebration of love, trust and partnership; and

Whereas on October 10, 2020, a very special occasion took place when Lisa Kempton and Franklyn Mailman of Caledonia, celebrated their wedding;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Lisa and Franklyn on their marriage and wish them a lifetime of health and happiness.

RESOLUTION NO. 32

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the administration, teachers, and staff of Liverpool Regional High School continued to teach and work during COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021; and

Whereas this public service was done willingly and at great personal risk to themselves and their families; and

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic also caused significant extra work and time commitment on their part in preparing both in-person and online lesson plans, in extra cleaning, and in addressing health concerns;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking the administration, teachers, and staff of Liverpool Regional High School for their stepping up and being willing to serve our community above and beyond any previous expectation, at great personal risk, and placing the needs of others before their own.

RESOLUTION NO. 33

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the administration, teachers, and staff of Lockeport Elementary School continued to teach and work during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021; and

Whereas this public service was done willingly and at great personal risk to themselves and their families; and

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic also caused significant extra work and time commitment on their part in preparing both in-person and online lesson plans, in extra cleaning, and in addressing health concerns; and

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking the administration, teachers, and staff of Lockeport Elementary School for their stepping up and being willing to serve our community above and beyond any previous expectation, at great personal risk, and placing the needs of others before their own.

RESOLUTION NO. 34

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the administration, teachers, and staff of Lockeport Regional High School continued to teach and work during the COVID-19 pandemic 2020-2021; and

Whereas this public service was done willingly and at great personal risk to themselves and their families; and

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic also caused significant extra work and time commitment on their part in preparing both in-person and online lesson plans, in extra cleaning, and in addressing health concerns;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking the administration, teachers, and staff of Lockeport Regional High School for their stepping up and being willing to serve our community above and beyond any previous expectation, at great personal risk, and placing the needs of others before their own.

RESOLUTION NO. 35

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the administration, teachers, and staff of North Queens Community School continued to teach and work during COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021; and

Whereas this public service was done willingly and at great personal risk to themselves and their families; and

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic also caused significant extra work and time commitment on their part in preparing both in-person and online lesson plans, in extra cleaning, and in addressing health concerns;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking the administration, teachers, and staff of North Queens Community School for their stepping up and being willing to serve our community above and beyond any previous expectation, at great personal risk, and placing the needs of others before their own.

RESOLUTION NO. 36

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas “a new baby is like the beginning of all things - wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities,” author Eda J. Leshan wrote; and

Whereas on May 5th, 2020, parents Jason and Nicole Fancy welcomed their daughter Nyla into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Jason and Nicole on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

RESOLUTION NO. 37

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is a momentous event and marks the beginning of a very satisfying journey down a long road, where the rewards far outnumber the challenges; and

Whereas a new baby is like the beginning of all things—wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities, author Eda J. LeShan wrote; and

Whereas on February 15, 2021, parents Josh and Alyson Wamboldt welcomed their daughter Olivia Isabella Wamboldt into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Josh and Alyson on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them many more happy years as parents.

RESOLUTION NO. 38

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the administration, teachers, and staff of Shelburne Regional High School continued to teach and work during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21; and

Whereas this public service was done willingly and at great personal risk to themselves and their families; and

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic also caused significant extra work and time commitment on their part, in preparing both in-person and online lesson plans, in extra cleaning, and in addressing health concerns; and

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking the administration, teachers, and staff of Shelburne Regional High School for their stepping up and being willing to serve in our community above and beyond any previous expectation, at great personal risk and placing the needs of others before their own.

RESOLUTION NO. 39

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas the administration, teachers, and staff of South Queens Middle School continued to teach and work during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21; and

Whereas this public service was done willingly and at great personal risk to themselves and their families; and

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic also caused significant extra work and time commitment on their part, in preparing both in-person and online lesson plans, in extra cleaning, and in addressing health concerns; and

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking the administration, teachers, and staff of South Queens Middle School for their stepping up and being willing to serve our community above and beyond any previous expectation, at great personal risk and placing the needs of others before their own.

RESOLUTION NO. 40

By: Kim Masland (Queens-Shelburne)

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

Whereas marriages are an occasion for family and friends to gather together to celebrate the life of two individuals united as one; and

Whereas it was once said that a marriage is the celebration of love, trust, and partnership; and

Whereas on August 8, 2020, a very special occasion took place when Travis and Kayleigh Wolfe celebrated their wedding;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Travis and Kayleigh on their marriage and wish them a lifetime of health and happiness.

RESOLUTION NO. 41

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 Ann Marie Burke 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 Ann Marie Burke having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 42

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 Barbara (Elsie) MacLeod 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 Barbara (Elsie) MacLeod having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 43

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 Ingrid Boutilier 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 Ingrid Boutilier having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 44

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 Joseph Raymond Sampson 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 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 Joseph Raymond Sampson having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 45

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 Mary Leah Alvina Bond 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 Mary Leah Alvina Bond having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 46

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 Mary Sylvia Fillis of L'Ardoise 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 Mary Sylvia Fillis having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 47

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 Mary Francine Jollymore of 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 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 Mary Francine Jollymore having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 48

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 Estelle Marie Landry 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 Estelle Marie Landry having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 49

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 Alphie Daniel Martell 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 Alphie Daniel Martell having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 50

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 Albert Edwin James George 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 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 Albert Edwin James George having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 51

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 Ann Marie MacDougall of Port Hawkesbury, formerly of Poulamon, 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 Ann Marie MacDougall having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 52

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 Annie MacInnis of Hay Cove 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 Annie MacInnis having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 53

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 Angus John MacLeod of Grand River 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 Angus John MacLeod having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 54

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 Archie George MacLean 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 Archie George MacLean having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 55

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 Ada Barbara MacDonald (Chiavari) 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 Ada Barbara MacDonald (Chiavari) having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 56

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 Arthur Basil “Artie” MacInnis of Glace Bay, 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 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 Arthur Basil “Artie” MacInnis having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 57

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 Aubrey Kenneth “Kenny” John Kehoe 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 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 Aubrey Kenneth “Kenny” John Kehoe having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 58

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 Brady Joseph Doyle of Loch Lomond 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 Brady Joseph Doyle having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 59

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 Brian Wayne Mombourquette of St Peter's, formerly of Lower L'Ardoise, 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 Brian Wayne Mombourquette having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 60

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 Bruce Ross Windeler of Sydney, formerly 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 Bruce Ross Windeler having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 61

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 Marcus 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 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 Marcus Procure having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 62

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 Cathy MacDonald 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 Cathy MacDonald having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 63

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 (Sam) Victor Sampson 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 Charles (Sam) Victor Sampson having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 64

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 Robert "Charlie" Dixon, formerly of Point Tupper, 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 Robert "Charlie" Dixon having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 65

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 Cecil Roy Slater of Port Hawkesbury, 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 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 Cecil Roy Slater having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 66

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 Christina H. MacDonald of St. Peter's, formerly of Port Hawkesbury and 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 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 Christina H. MacDonald having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 67

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 Chester Bieron Harker of L'Ardoise 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 Chester Bieron Harker, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 68

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 Clement Patrick Bates 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 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 Clement Patrick Bates, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 69

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 Dale Allison Hicks of Grande Greve 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 Dale Allison Hicks, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 70

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 Ann Campbell of West Arichat, formerly of The Points, 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 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 Ann Campbell, having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO.71

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 Dave Hudson 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 Dave Hudson, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 72

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 D. Russell MacAskill 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 D. Russell MacAskill, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 73

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 David Austin Phillips 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 David Austin Phillips, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 74

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 Bernard 'Bernie' Hope 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 Bernard 'Bernie' Hope, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 75

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 David Joseph Samson 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 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 David Joseph Samson, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 76

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 David Roy Eager of Hureauville 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 David Roy Eager, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 77

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 Douglas Simpson Davis of French Cove 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 Douglas Simpson Davis, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 78

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 Edward 'Eddy' MacKay 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 Edward 'Eddy' MacKay, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 79

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 Joseph Richard 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 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 Joseph Richard, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 80

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 Karl McConaghy 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 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 Karl McConaghy, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 81

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 Allan 'Silver Donald' Cameron 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 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 Allan 'Silver Donald' Cameron, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 82

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 James William 'Jim' Fry 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 James William Jim' Fry, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 83

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 Jason Andrew James Keough 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 Jason Andrew James Keough, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 84

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 John Alexander Burke of Red Islands 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 John Alexander Burke, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 85

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 John Edward ‘Teddy’ MacNeil 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 John Edward ‘Teddy’ MacNeil, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 86

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 John Calver Langford of Sugar Camp, Richmond County, 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 John Calver Langford, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 87

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 John Harry Latimer of Port Hastings, 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 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 John Harry Latimer, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 88

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 Joseph Arthur 'Art' White 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 Joseph Arthur 'Art' White, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 89

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 Joseph 'Joey' Bernard MacMullin 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 Joseph 'Joey' Bernard MacMullin, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 90

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 John William 'Twilight' Sutherland 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 John William 'Twilight' Sutherland, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 91

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 John William MacInnis of Howie Centre, formerly of Big Pond, 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 John William MacInnis, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 92

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 Joseph John Marchand 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 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 Joseph John Marchand, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 93

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 Joseph Harold Martell of Arichat, formerly 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 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 Joseph Harold Martell, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 94

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 Kathy Frances (MacNeil) Bunyan 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 Kathy Frances (MacNeil) Bunyan, having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 95

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 Kevin Alexander MacKay 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 Kevin Alexander MacKay, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 96

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 Kevin James Mombourquette of Lower L'Ardoise 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 Kevin James Mombourquette, having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 97

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 Joseph Maurice Landry 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 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 Joseph Maurice Landry having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 98

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 Joseph Nicholas Boudreau of Alderney Point 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 Joseph Nicholas Boudreau having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 99

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 Laura Jane Thompson of Antigonish, formerly 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 Laura Jane Thompson having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 100

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 Leo Joseph Martin 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 Leo Joseph Martin having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 101

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 Larry Charles Burton of Port Hawkesbury, formerly of Auld's Cove, 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 Larry Charles Burton having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 102

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 Leona Mary MacDonald 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 Leona Mary MacDonald having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 103

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 Leo Patrick Samson 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 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 Leo Patrick Samson having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 104

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 Lester Vincent Martell of L'Ardoise 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 Lester Vincent Martell having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 105

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 Luke Lawrence Batdorf of Johnstown 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 Luke Lawrence Batdorf having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 106

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 Marie (Eileen) Morgan 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 Marie (Eileen) Morgan having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 107

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 Lorraine Marie Pottie 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 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 Lorraine Marie Pottie having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 108

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 Marie (Mary) Josephine Schrader 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 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 Marie (Mary) Josephine Schrader having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 109

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 Margaret Elizabeth Sampson of Port Hawkesbury, formerly of L'Ardoise, 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 Margaret Elizabeth Sampson having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 110

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 Marie Barbara Landry of St. Peter's, formerly 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 Marie Barbara Landry having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 111

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 Marie Margaret Boudreau 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 Marie Margaret Boudreau having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 112

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 Marjorie Eileen Roston 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 Marjorie Eileen Roston having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 113

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 Marie Elizabeth (MacDonald) Burke of Red Islands 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 Marie Elizabeth (MacDonald) Burke having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 114

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 Marie Sophie Richard 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 Marie Sophie Richard having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 115

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 Mark Clifford Mombourquette of Lower L'Ardoise 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 Mark Clifford Mombourquette having his name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

RESOLUTION NO. 116

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 Marion Frances Morton of Loch Lomond 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 Marion Frances Morton having her name forever written as historical record in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.