



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

**DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS**

**Speaker: Honourable Keith Bain**

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**First Session**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2021**

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House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2021**

**Sixty-fourth General Assembly**

**First Session**

**1:00 P.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Keith Bain

**DEPUTY SPEAKERS**

Angela Simmonds, Lisa Lachance

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

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

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

**Bill No. 27 - Collection and Debt Management Agencies Act (amended).**

**Bill No. 30 - Residential Tenancies Act (amended).**

**Bill No. 32 - Municipal Government Act (amended) and Halifax Regional Municipality Charter (amended).**

**Bill No. 37 - Fair Registration Practices Act (amended).**

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

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. BRAD JOHNS: Thank you again, Speaker. As Chair of the Committee on Law Amendments I am directed to report that the committee has met and considered the following bill:

**Bill No. 24 - Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act (amended).**

and the committee recommends this bill to the favourable consideration of the House, with certain amendments. I so submit.

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

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Public Works.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a document. During Question Period in the past weeks, I stated in a response to a question from the member for Bedford South that I would table documents outlining future RIM projects that would be going to tender. I'd like to table this for the member's review today.

THE SPEAKER: The documents are tabled.

As Speaker of the House of Assembly and pursuant to Section 163 of the Elections Act, I am pleased to table the Annual Report of the Chief Electoral Officer for 2020-21.

The report is tabled.

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS****GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Environment and Climate Change.



**RESOLUTION NO. 26**

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

Whereas Nova Scotians want to know that measures are being taken at our provincial borders to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and keep them healthy and safe while not inconveniencing the necessary travel that Nova Scotians depend on; and

Whereas staff from the Inspection, Compliance and Enforcement division, Policy division, and Sustainability and Applied Science division from the Department of Environment and Climate Change have been part of the provincial team working day and night to help protect Nova Scotians from COVID-19 through enforcement of the health protection order while also continuing their regular operational duties; and

Whereas the department's conservation officers, Public Health officers, and environment inspectors have been working at our provincial borders and points of entry since March 2020, while the department's border liaison officers have been staffing the land border, airports, and ferries since January 2021, and all are ensuring that travellers know about the state of emergency and have completed their Nova Scotia Safe Check-in requirements;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature join me in thanking staff from the Department of Environment and Climate Change and those who support them for their public service, their dedication, and their work to help keep our province safe from the pandemic. The pandemic has many heroes and these staff are among them.

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. 27**

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

Whereas Valentine Nkengbeza is a valued member of the Legislative Television team, described by his colleagues as a calming influence in what can be a hectic and stressful workplace, and a person whose professionalism and skills are second only to his character; and

Whereas Valentine, having begun his career in broadcasting as a state journalist with Cameroon's communication ministry in 2010, immigrated to Canada, where he became a community leader within the Cameroonian diaspora and the greater African diaspora; and

Whereas Valentine became a Canadian citizen in a virtual ceremony on October 21, 2021;

Therefore be it resolved that the House of Assembly congratulate Valentine on receiving his Canadian citizenship and thank him for his contributions to Legislative Television and to our community.

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.

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Advanced Education.

**RESOLUTION NO. 28**

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

Whereas Fall convocations have begun for students graduating from the Nova Scotia Community College and universities; and

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. That is a notice of motion, correct? Not a bill?

With the unanimous consent of the House, we'll revert to back to Government Notices of Motion.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

### **GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Advanced Education.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 28**

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

Whereas Fall convocations have begun for students graduating from the Nova Scotia Community College and universities; and

Whereas students have worked hard and committed countless hours to complete their courses and to achieve the requirements to graduate; and

Whereas students are crucial to our economy and to our communities as the workforce and the leaders of tomorrow;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature congratulate all our Fall graduates for their achievements and wish them well on their future endeavours.

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.

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 51 - Entitled an Act to Reduce the Penalty for Late Entry into the Seniors' Pharmacare Program. (Hon. Derek Mombourquette)**

**Bill No. 52 - Entitled an Act Respecting Green Jobs. (Gary Burrill)**

**Bill No. 53 - Entitled an Act to Reduce Childhood Poverty. (Hon. Brendan Maguire)**

**Bill No. 54 - Entitled an Act to Support the Creative Economy. (Susan Leblanc)**

**Bill No. 55 - Entitled an Act to Establish a Nova Scotia Office of Consumer Protection. (Fred Tilley)**

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

**NOTICES OF MOTION****STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**SIMON, MARY: CANADA'S FIRST INDIG. GOV. GEN. - CONGRATS.**

HON. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and acknowledge Mary Simon, who made history on July 26<sup>th</sup> of this year when she was sworn in as Canada's first Indigenous Governor General.

Growing up in a small village in an Inuit community, Mary has lived across the country, but currently resides with her husband in Caribou River, Pictou County.

She has held many prestigious titles during her career, such as Canada's first Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs, lead negotiator for the creation for the Arctic Council, senior Inuit negotiator during the repatriation of the Canadian Constitution from 1982 to 1992, and co-director and secretary to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

I applaud Mary on this momentous event and wish her all the very best in her new role. I also warmly welcome her and her husband to beautiful Pictou County.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

[1:15 p.m.]

**FRASER, SEAN: NAMED TO FEDERAL CABINET - CONGRATS.**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Today I rise to recognize a good friend and a strong advocate for Nova Scotia in Ottawa. Sean Fraser has fought on behalf of his Central Nova constituents for six years, and I'm confident he'll bring that same level of energy and enthusiasm to the federal Cabinet Table as Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

Sean is one of the most talented MPs I've had the chance to meet. I'm looking forward to watching him succeed in his new portfolio. On behalf of the Liberal caucus in Nova Scotia, I'd like to congratulate Sean and wish him and his family all the best.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre-Whitney Pier.

**ROYAL CDN. LEG. BR. 128: CANDLELIGHT SERV. TO HONOUR  
CDN. FORCES IN WWII - THANKS**

KENDRA COOMBES: On Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, I had the distinct honour of attending and speaking at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 128 in Whitney Pier at the Whitney Pier's candlelight service to honour those who served and gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

The candlelight service started in the Netherlands to pay respect, show thanks, and to honour Canadian forces who liberated the country and its people from German occupation in the Second World War.

I thank Branch 128 and its members for including me in their beautiful and truly humbling ceremony. Lest we forget.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Eastern Shore.

**DEANERY PROJECT:  
CONTRIBS. TO COM. AND DED. TO ENV. - RECOG.**

KENT SMITH: I rise today to bring recognition to the Deanery Project, located on the beautiful Eastern Shore. The Deanery Project, a not-for-profit organization with a focus on the environment, the arts, youth and community, natural building, and permaculture, recently celebrated their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The Deanery Project offers dynamic educational programs related to energy, forests, health, active transportation, and rural living. The facility is located on 25 acres of

oceanfront property that includes meeting spaces, accommodations, and hiking and biking trails.

I ask all members of the House to join me in recognizing the Deanery Project, their volunteers, and executive director Kim Thompson for their valuable contributions to the community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford Basin.

**D'ENTREMONT, SIMON: NEW NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY CALENDAR  
LAUNCHED - CONGRATS.**

HON. KELLY REGAN: I'd like to congratulate a Bedford photographer who has turned his hobby into a retirement gig.

The name Simon d'Entremont will be familiar to many in this Chamber. Simon is a former deputy minister here in Nova Scotia, and Simon is an absolutely fantastic nature photographer. He gets stunning shots of animals, but more often of birds, and he doesn't stop there.

Online, Simon shares the shot, along with the name of the bird, its French name, and then some thoughtful commentary, often details about the bird's habits or habitat, or how he managed to get that particular shot. With every photo, he's educating his followers.

Earlier this year, his work was featured in a CBC national program that highlighted some of the country's best photographers, and now Simon has launched a beautiful calendar for 2022, which is available on his website, [imagesbysimoncalendar.com](http://imagesbysimoncalendar.com). I urge my colleagues to check out his product, and I want to congratulate Simon on his achievement. I think he's going to have a very interesting retirement.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**INDIVIDUALS WHO PROTECTED THOSE EVICTED FROM  
MOBILE OUTREACH HUTS - RECOG.**

SUZY HANSEN: I rise today to recognize some of the individuals who came out to protect those who were evicted forcefully from the huts built by Mobile Outreach on August 18, 2021.

These individuals and more bravely stood against police, some of whom had no badges and used pepper spray and riot gear to push back against those who attended this peaceful protest. I'd like to recognize Emilie Black, Amanda Rekunyk, Tess Durham, Brody Weaver, Brady Patterson, Carmel Nassim Farahbakhsh, Kate Macdonald, Roy

Singer-Shay, Wren Tian, Jeffrey Brooks, Tanisha Wilson, Natasha Danais, Scott MacNeil, Vienna Pouliot, and Everette Fournier.

I ask that all members join me in recognizing those who stood up in solidarity for those who are unhoused and showed up to do the right thing.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glace Bay-Dominion.

### **FIRST RESPONDERS: COM. SERV. - THANKS**

JOHN WHITE: Mr. Speaker, since October is Fire Prevention Month, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank the approximately 8,000 first responders who continue to answer the calls all across Nova Scotia.

These are the folks we call on the worst day of our lives - everything from an unexpected serious injury to a water rescue, a motor vehicle collision to a cardiac arrest, a brush fire to a fully involved structure fire, and even to rescue a beloved cat stuck in a tree. Without hesitation, these folks drop what they are doing and answer the call, day after day.

Due to many hours of training and responding to emergencies, countless dinners have gone cold at the dinner table and there are many missed family celebrations. Not only are our first responders staying up late to work all night, but they show up at work the next day after sleepless nights.

I ask all members of the House to reach out and thank the first responders in their own communities.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney-Membertou.

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I apologize - I am looking for unanimous consent of the House to revert back to the order of business, Introduction of Bills.

THE SPEAKER: There is a request for the unanimous consent of the House to return back to the order of business, Introduction of Bills.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 56 - An Act Respecting Accountability for Affordable Child Care.**

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

### **STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney-Membertou.

### **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT CAPE BRETON UNIV. - WELCOME**

DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place to welcome the thousands of international students that are attending Cape Breton University. It has really been such an amazing story for our community. I remember my time in university when there were 80 international students on campus and now to have over 4,000 shows the hard work and of everybody at Cape Breton University to really welcome the world.

It has been such an amazing story in our community and I absolutely love the conversations that we all have with students who are so excited to call Cape Breton home.

I rise in my place to welcome all of our newcomers who are studying at Cape Breton University. I wish them all the very best in their academic studies and thank them for choosing Cape Breton as their home.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island.

### **KOVACS, DR. GEORGE - HEMLOCK CONSERVATION N.S.: PROT. OF OLD GROWTH FORESTS - RECOG.**

LISA LACHANCE: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a Halifax Citadel-Sable Island constituent and the hard work they do to protect our environment. Dr. George Kovacs is an emergency physician and professor of emergency medicine at Dalhousie, a long-time community advocate, and a co-lead of Hemlock Conservation Nova Scotia.

This organization travels around the province, sometimes by days by canoe to quantify and analyze the health of our beloved old-growth hemlock trees. In co-operation with the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables and the Department of Environment and Climate Change, Dr. Kovacs and his organization actually vaccinate trees against destruction by insects by hand, one by one.

I ask all members to join me in recognizing Dr. George Kovacs and the Hemlock Conservation Nova Scotia association for all they do to protect Nova Scotia's old-growth forests from degradation.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Uniacke.



**DUBE, ALECIA: NANA'S GLUTEN FREE TAKEOUT OPENING - THANKS**

HON. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the owner of Nana's Gluten Free Take-out, Alecia Dube. With about 1 per cent of Canada's population suffering from celiac disease, which has no treatment aside from maintaining a strict gluten-free diet, hot dogs and hamburgers are often out of the question for sufferers.

Alecia opened Nana's Gluten Free Take-out in the Spring of 2020 when COVID-19 was at its worst, but her business has been booming. Being the first 100 per cent gluten-free food truck operating in Nova Scotia, Alecia offers an option of everyday food for people with gluten allergies. Alecia's food truck, which is located in Mount Uniacke, has had customers as far away as Truro and Bridgewater come just so they can eat totally gluten-free food.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Alecia for her service to Nova Scotians who suffer from gluten allergies, allowing them to have a meal out with family and friends without having to worry about gluten in their meal.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

**NICKERSON, GARY/TAGGART, QUINN:  
OUTSIDE MY WINDOW PODCAST - CONGRATS.**

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, Outside My Window is a podcast hosted by Yarmouth residents Gary Nickerson and Quinn Taggart featuring conversations with people in our community. This podcast has been a great opportunity to discuss local events and interests and has been the source of many engaging, meaningful, and enjoyable conversations.

Gary and Quinn both have rich backgrounds in local radio and television, and they have a wonderful way of both connecting with the listeners and bringing out the best in their interviewees. They are complete professionals, engaging conversationalists, and respectful listeners.

The Outside My Window Facebook Group has over 2,000 followers and their podcasts are very popular and consistently are met with large audiences. I ask this House to join me in congratulating Gary Nickerson and Quinn Taggart on the success of this podcast Outside My Window, and of course the success they've had in other aspects of their careers. It has certainly struck a chord in our community and I wish them many more years of success.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**METALLIC, NAIOMI: RECIP. OF UNIV. OF ALBERTA IWK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP - CONGRATS.**

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Indigenous lawyer and scholar and Dartmouth North resident Naiomi Metallic, who was recently awarded the University of Alberta's prestigious Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Scholarship. A member of the Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation, Professor Metallic was just one of two Ph.D. students to receive the 2020-2021 award. Her thesis focuses on the implementation of Indigenous law in Canada.

Professor Metallic practised Indigenous law here for nearly a decade before joining Dalhousie University's Schulich School of Law as a professor and inaugural Chancellor's Chair in Aboriginal Law and Policy in 2016. She is now entering her second term as the Chancellor's Chair.

In her own words, Professor Metallic is interested in how the law can be harnessed to promote the well-being and self determination of Indigenous people. I ask all members of this House to join me in expressing gratitude for her work and congratulating her on receiving the Killam scholarship.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Shelburne.

**VOLUNS. - SHELBURNE GUILD HALL MKT.:  
COMPLETION OF SUCCESSFUL 1<sup>st</sup> SEASON - THANKS**

NOLAN YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the volunteers of the New Shelburne Guild Hall Market on beautiful Dock Street, who have just completed a very successful first season. This group of volunteers came together with new ideas, fresh signage and many new vendors, as well as a great barbeque and local musicians to entertain visitors. They successfully made Shelburne an amazing member of the market circuit in southwestern Nova Scotia and beyond. This group is an amazing example of what volunteers can do for their community.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank Alex Buchanan, Brendan Pippy, Lorin Hesse, Therese Cruz, Amanda Pedro, Mary Scott, Alison Chappell, Lynn Wilson, Susan Hoover, and Marcie Strong, as well as their sponsors, TLC Pharmasave, Belliveau Veinotte and the Shelburne County Arts Council.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**LEAHEY, STEPHEN: AUTHOR OF BOOK  
CHIGNECTO & REMSHEG PRIOR TO 1755 - THANKS**

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge author Stephen Leahey of Cumberland North. Mr. Leahey recently authored a book entitled *Chignecto & Remsheg Prior to 1755 (Mi'kmaq, Acadians, French)*. The book tells the untold story of Chignecto, or Cumberland County. The story recorded begins with the Mi'kmaq, who populated the province for thousands of years before the coming of fishers from Europe and even those who perhaps came a couple of hundred years before the French arrived at Port Royale in 1605.

Despite periods of civil war and attacks by New Englanders and the British, the Acadians developed a comprehensive and strong culture, centring on their close ties with the Mi'kmaq and their marshland agriculture.

With the fall of Port Royale in 1710, the leadership of the French Forces moved to the Isthmus of Chignecto and that is our home today. Today I stand to thank Stephen Leahey for his efforts to research and collaborate to share this unique history of the people of Cumberland North, Chignecto to Remsheg - now known as Cumberland and Wallace areas.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

**KANE, FLOYD: EDNA AND VELMA THOMAS KANE WRITERS AWARD  
ESTABLISHED - RECOG.**

ANGELA SIMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to recognize Mr. Floyd Kane for his amazing career. He is from East Preston, graduate of the Indigenous Blacks & Mi'kmaq Initiative and the Schulich School of Law. He is also the creator and executive producer of a new successful show, *Diggstown*, which has been filmed in this beautiful city and, in particular, East Preston and North Preston.

Mr. Kane recently established a scholarship at Saint Mary's University named after his mom and his aunt who supported his dream, the Edna and Velma Thomas Kane Writers Award. It has three main goals: to mitigate the burden of financial debt and insecurity for undergraduate students of African Nova Scotian descent, to support them in further post-secondary studies or training; and to advance their aspirations for careers in writing. The award recipients will receive \$30,000 in support for these goals.

I would ask the members of the House of Assembly to join me in recognizing Mr. Floyd Kane for his incredible accomplishments and giving back to community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre-Whitney Pier.

[1:30 p.m.]

**TIMMONS, STEPHEN “NESS”: 25<sup>th</sup> SEASON WITH C.B. CAPERS  
WOMEN’S SOCCER TEAM - CONGRATS.**

KENDRA COOMBES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Stephen “Ness” Timmons of New Waterford on his 25<sup>th</sup> season with the Cape Breton University’s CAPERS women’s soccer team. He has been a fixture in both Atlantic University Sport and U Sports.

Ness is known for building the women’s soccer program at CBU from the ground up since 1996. Ness is one of the most successful soccer coaches in Atlantic Canada over the past 25 years. He has received many accolades including Coach of the Year awards, national medals, and conference championships.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House in joining me on congratulating Ness Timmons on his 25<sup>th</sup> year. Go Capers Go.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

**FILLMORE, JEFF: WALK ACROSS CANADA  
FOR MENTAL HEALTH - CONGRATS.**

HON. BECKY DRUHAN: I stand to recognize Jeff Fillmore, who set out 15 months ago on June 27, 2020 to walk from Maple Ridge, British Columbia to Bridgewater, Nova Scotia. He accomplished this feat last week, reaching his hometown on October 17, 2021.

Taking this step for his mental health, Mr. Fillmore travelled with only a cart and a Nova Scotia flag. He was supported by people delivering warm meals, providing financial support along the way, and especially by messages of encouragement he received from friends and well-wishers.

Mr. Fillmore serves as an inspiration to us all, and an example of strength, courage, and accomplishment. Mr. Speaker, I ask members and Nova Scotians to join me in congratulating Mr. Fillmore and in saying “Welcome home.”

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cole Harbour.

**NORTH BREWING: LAUNCH OF DIVERSITY INCLUSION  
SCHOLARSHIP FUND - THANKS**

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the launch of a diversity and inclusion scholarship fund by North Brewing Company.

At North Brewing, they recognize the need for better representation, diversity, and inclusion within the craft beer and restaurant communities. They recognize that there are deep-seated systems and practices within the industry that result in the lack of representation and opportunity for so many.

With the help of their friend Ren Navarro, the founder of Beer Diversity, North Brewing is very excited to announce the launch of an annual North Brewing Co. Diversity & Inclusion Scholarship. This annual scholarship will be awarded to local candidates entering into the following programs in university or college within HRM: hospitality, sciences, engineering, design, fabrication, entrepreneurship, and any other field that could be related to the brewing industry.

The scholarship will consist of \$1,500 each year of the school year attended, up to four years, plus a guaranteed Summer employment for the duration of their education. They would want to provide work opportunities and funding education for individuals who are under-represented in the industry.

Thank you to North Brewing for all that they are doing.

THE SPEAKER: Once again, I would ask that the members please confine their member's statements to one minute, not two, if you wouldn't mind, please.

The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**MUTBAZI, SIMONE: WORK FOR POP-UP BIKE HUB - CONGRATS.**

SUZY HANSEN: I rise today in recognition of Simone Mutbazi, who is the community cycling activation coordinator with the Ecology Action Centre. This Summer and Fall seasons, Simone travelled with the Pop-Up Bike Hub and visited 26 communities across the province, including a collaboration with eight mainland Mi'kmaw communities and five Unama'ki - or Cape Breton - Mi'kmaw communities.

The Pop-up Bike Hub provides access to bike tools, repairs, and safe cycling education programming for youth and adults to underserved communities across Nova Scotia. Part of the programming included running weekly mini-Pop-Ups at St. Andrew's Community Centre and at Mulgrave Park, where they ran into myself, who was campaigning. The Pop-Up Bike Hub is a great example that cycling is also in high demand in rural communities. The benefits of being able to access active transportation isn't just for urban areas.

Through her strong leadership and tireless work, Simone is a change-maker to keep an eye on. I ask that all of you join me in congratulating Simone Mutbazi for her accomplishments to date and for her future endeavors.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

**YREACH PORT HAWKESBURY:  
HOSTING OF WELCOME TO NEIGHBOURHOOD EVENT - CONGRATS.**

TREVOR BOURDREAU: Mr. Speaker, YReach Port Hawkesbury, led by Immigration Settlement Officer Trina Hall-Samson, works with local partners in the Strait Richmond region to create welcoming communities for new Canadians. They provide information, orientation, and settlement support to immigrants, refugees, and their families who are new to the area.

On September 15<sup>th</sup>, YReach and their partners hosted a Welcome to the Neighbourhood event at the community playground in Port Hawkesbury. This event was well attended by both new Canadians and lifelong community members from across the region. New friendships and contacts were made, and the event was a huge success.

I ask all members of the House to join me in congratulating YReach and their partners for continuing to support new Canadians in our communities.

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

**ROBERTS, TERRI: RECIP. OF MSVU DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION  
ALUMNI LEGACY AWARD - RECOG.**

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Fairview-Clayton Park constituent Terri Roberts, who was recently honoured by the MSVU alumni community as the recipient of the first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Legacy Award.

Terri is a full-time fitness instructor and has gained much praise for leading the structuring and programming of the Nova Scotia Fitness Association as executive director. She is also a part-time student at the Mount pursuing her Master's in Women and Gender Studies.

Her thesis, *The Pink Dumbbell Problem*, is structured around gender and agnotology in the fitness industry and the inspiration behind her YouTube channel of the same name. Agnotology, for those wondering, is the willful act of spreading misinformation.

Her goal is to bring her philosophical feminist voice to the fitness community and to knock down barriers in the fitness industry that keep women and members of the 2SLGBTQ community from accessing fitness programs.

Diversity and inclusion are paramount issues in our society and leaders like Terri bring the voice of reason and guidance in search of solutions to societal problems. I commend her work and celebrate her receiving this award.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Citadel-Sable Island.

**SPORT NOVA SCOTIA:  
PROMOTION OF PERS. DEVT. AND ACHIEVEMENT - THANKS**

LISA LACHANCE: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize Sport Nova Scotia. My constituency office on Spring Garden Road has found a home in their building and it's wonderful to have a non-profit organization as a landlord.

Sport Nova Scotia is the voice for amateur sport in this province. It promotes the benefits of personal development and achievement of all participants. Their mission is to see that every single Nova Scotian has lifelong opportunities to experience the positive benefits of sport.

They are also the driving force behind getting communities to embrace sport and recreation. Member organizations focus on specific sports such as basketball, sailing, and others. Through Parasport Nova Scotia, they ensure that Nova Scotians with disabilities are offered equal opportunities to partake in the same activities.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join me in thanking Sport Nova Scotia for providing all Nova Scotians with the ability to play sport and for constantly advocating for sport and its positive benefits in our community.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens.

**LIVERPOOL CHAMPIONSHIP HOST SOCIETY:  
CURLING OLYMPIC PRE-TRIALS - CONGRATS.**

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, games have started at Queens Place Emera Centre in Liverpool as it hosts its third major curling event.

From October 25<sup>th</sup> through the 31<sup>st</sup>, many of Canada's top curlers are participating in the 2021 Home Hardware Curling Olympic Pre-Trials. Over these seven days, fans will be treated to incredible curling as players and coaches strive to make their Olympic dreams come true.

I would like to congratulate and thank the Liverpool Championship Host Society for securing the opportunity to host these games. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the dedicated and enthusiastic team of volunteers who have made this event possible.

Mr. Speaker, I have absolutely no doubt that our visitors will experience a warm Queens County welcome and the amazing hospitality that all Nova Scotians are famous for. Please join me in wishing an exciting and successful week of curling to all involved.

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

**TANTALLON PUBLIC LIBRARY: 20<sup>th</sup> ANNIV. - RECOG.**

HON. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to recognize one of the community hubs in Hammonds Plains-Lucasville that celebrated a 20-year anniversary this weekend. The Tantallon Public Library is a place for community members to convene to access books and other resources, computers, and the internet.

It's a place where community groups can come to convene. They host programs, anything from puppet shows to health and wellness programs. They have also stepped up to provide a space to support the local Public Health efforts with pop-up testing clinics and vaccine clinics as well.

I would note that they also, over the course of the last few years, have initiated a time of day specific for people with autism to come and browse and use that space safely and comfortably.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members in the House join me in wishing the Tantallon Public Library a very happy 20<sup>th</sup> birthday.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**ORGANIZERS AND PARTICIPANTS:  
ARTHUR WESTON CANOE RACE - CONGRATS.**

SUSAN LEBLANC: On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Arthur Weston Canoe Race marked its centennial year, making it the longest-known-running canoe challenge in the country.

The challenge is named for Colonel Weston, the founder of Banook Canoe Club. Participants start in Lake Banook, continue through Lake Micmac, portage through Shubie Park, paddle to the other end of Lake Charles, and then turn a buoy and return to Lake Banook. The trophy is awarded to the tandem crew finishing the 16-kilometre course first.

This year's event was won by two Dartmouth paddlers, Mark James and Peter Lombardi, who have been paddling together at Senobe Aquatic Club in Dartmouth South for over 10 years.

I ask the House to extend congratulations to all of those who organized and participated in this year's historic race.



THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**CUMB. HEALTH CARE FDN./N. CUMB. COM. HLTH. FDN.:  
SUPP OF HEALTH CARE IN COMS. - THANKS**

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Today I rise to recognize the Cumberland Health Care Foundation as well as the North Cumberland Community Health Foundation.

Cumberland Health Care Foundation is chaired by Lisa Emery and an incredible board of directors. It's also staffed by Gwen Kerr and Diana Bacon. The North Cumberland Community Health Foundation's President is Brian Gordon. Both groups are vital supports to many of the health care projects in Cumberland North, as well as offering supports to patients needing assistance.

These groups are made up of people who care about their community, and they want to ensure their people are cared for with the highest quality. Today, join me in thanking both foundations for their work and support of great health care in our communities.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**MASON, CATHY:  
INDUCTION INTO N.S. SPORTS HALL OF FAME - CONGRATS.**

HON. PAT DUNN: I am pleased to recognize Stellarton's Cathy Mason, who will be inducted into the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame in November.

Mason's long list of Special Olympic leadership roles at provincial, national, and international events, as well as prestigious honours and awards, could fill a book. This very impressive list of accolades from 29 years of volunteering has earned Cathy this provincial honour and recognition. Like most people who become involved with the Special Olympics, Mason became thrilled with the athletes' determination and pleasure during competing events.

I would like all members of this Legislature to please join me in congratulating Cathy Mason on her well-deserved recognition.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

**YOUTH: SAFE AND HAPPY HALLOWEEN - BEST WISHES**

HON. BRENDAN MAGUIRE: The spookiest day of the year is just a few days away - All Hallows' Eve. It is truly one of my favourite days of the year as our communities fill with ghouls, goblins, ninjas, princesses, and so much more.

It has been a particularly difficult year for our youth, especially our children. I look forward to our neighbourhood being filled with laughter and fun. I want to take a moment to wish all the youth a safe and happy Halloween, and to Oliver, Rufina, and Isla, know that your daddy will be dipping into your treat bag. Happy Halloween, Nova Scotia.

THE SPEAKER: I could comment on the spookiest day of the year, but we'll leave it alone for now.

The honourable member for Lunenburg.

**HUNT, STEPHANIE & HER GR. 5 CLASS:  
ART INSTALL. FOR NTL. DAY OF TRUTH AND RECON. - THANKS**

HON. SUSAN CORKUM-GREEK: I rise today to bring recognition to Stephanie Hunt and her Grade 5 class at Bluenose Academy for their thoughtful and meaningful outdoor art installation in acknowledgement of the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation.

After learning about residential schools, these students painted feathers and installed them on light poles on streets in the Town of Lunenburg to pay tribute to missing and murdered Indigenous children, their families, and communities.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in thanking Mrs. Hunt - also my kid sister - and her Grade 5 class for their commitment to teaching and learning about this tragic and painful history as a vital component of the reconciliation process.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

**L'ACADIE VINEYARDS: RECIP. OF LT. GOV. AWARD FOR EXCELL.  
IN N.S. WINES - CONGRATS.**

HON. KEITH IRVING: Each year, an independent panel of experts participates in a blind tasting of the wines submitted for consideration in the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Excellence in Nova Scotia Wines.

In the Annapolis Valley, we are proud of the growth in our wine industry, the exceptional quality of wines being produced, and the international recognition our winemakers have received. It's with great pride that I acknowledge that one of the recipients of the 2021 Lieutenant Governor's Medal Award of Excellence is again from Kings South. L'Acadie Vineyards has won the gold medal for their 2014 Prestige Brut Estate.

Although we cannot stand here and offer a toast of congratulations, I do ask all members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Bruce Ewart

and Pauline Scott of L'Acadie Vineyards for their most recent award and thank them for their continued drive towards excellence in the Nova Scotia wine industry.

[1:45 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Eastern Passage.

**HENMAN, LUKE:  
SIGNING TO SEATTLE KRAKEN OF NHL - CONGRATS.**

HON. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring recognition to Luke Henman for signing with the National Hockey League's Seattle Kraken of the Pacific Division in the Western Conference.

On May 12, 2021, our very own Eastern Passage community member Luke made history when he became the first-ever player to sign with the Kraken. Luke's hard work and dedication to his sport were also evident in 2016 when he was drafted by the Cape Breton Screaming Eagles of the QMJHL before he moved to the Blainville-Boisbriand Armada.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in recognizing and congratulating Luke Henman for his outstanding dedication to the sport of hockey. We wish him tremendous success and hope he continues to make history in the NHL.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Dartmouth.

**BEAZLEY, CANON & FAMILY:  
HOUSE OF DOOM CANCER FUNDRAISER - RECOG.**

LORELEI NICOLL: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize 11-year-old Canon Beazley, a true IWK warrior.

In March this year, sadly Canon, an elite hockey player, was diagnosed with stage 1 cancer. In the months that followed, Canon underwent two surgeries followed by a 24-week chemotherapy regime. He has been through his surgeries, hospital stays, tests, needle pokes, and chemotherapy side effects.

His most favourite time of year is Halloween and as he approaches his last cycles of treatment, Canon and his family decided to combine their gratitude for the IWK with their annual House of Doom, a haunted house tour at their home in Dartmouth. The Beazleys, determined to give back, stated that through the most difficult days of their lives, the team at the IWK showed them so much incredible support, as did their beautiful community of family and friends.

Canon asks that those courageous souls who dare to enter his House of Doom consider a donation to the IWK.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**LAWLOR, AMANDA:  
ADVOCACY WORK FOR DAUGHTER WITH CP - RECOG.**

HON. TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Amanda Lawlor, a resident, community activist, and mother in Dartmouth East.

There are many quotes that share the sentiment that a mother's love is the most powerful force on Earth, or the fiercest love that anyone can know. Amanda Lawlor is the perfect example of those quotes. Her daughter, Mairin, was very excited to start Grade 7 at Caledonia Junior High School this past September. The ageing school grounds, however, presented dangerous conditions for Mairin, who has cerebral palsy. Thanks to Amanda's advocacy efforts, the Caledonia Junior High School parking lot was repaved and is now safe for Mairin and other students.

I ask that all members of the House join me in recognizing Amanda Lawlor's advocacy work, and her love for her daughter, Mairin.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

**JANTZEN, ANDREW: ADVOCACY FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS - CONGRATS.**

ALI DUALE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to celebrate Andrew Jantzen, a member of our community who has gone above and beyond to help those with mobility challenges.

Andrew has been involved in advocating for disability rights for several years, which has been influenced by his own path around disability. He coordinates the activities in Atlantic Canada for the Tetra Society of North America, a volunteering organization that designs and builds custom assistive devices for those living with disabilities. His background in physics and electronic engineering serve to inform his design.

In 2018, Andrew initiated the first disability challenge related to projects at NSCC applied research. Mr. Speaker, I want to celebrate Andrew today and all the work he has done to improve the lives of our community members.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton East.

**LEBLANC, REBECCA:  
1<sup>st</sup> YR. WITH ACADIA AXEWOMEN SOCCER TEAM - BEST WISHES**

BRIAN COMER: I rise today to wish Rebecca LeBlanc of Coxheath the best of luck this season with the Acadia Axewomen soccer team.

This will be Rebecca's first year with the team after transferring from the Ottawa Gee-Gees last year. Rebecca was an avid soccer player throughout her high school years and was unsure of her future in soccer after sustaining a knee injury while playing in the semi-final game for Nova Scotia at the Canada Games in Winnipeg in 2017. After surgery and extensive rehab, she persevered and went on to play at the university level.

I stand here today, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate Rebecca on her continued success and wish her and her teammates all the best this season.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

**BAYERS LAKE SUPERSTORE/HOPE BLOOMS:  
HOPE BLOOMS SOCIAL ENT. & SCHOL. PGM. - RECOG.**

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an incredible partnership between Bayers Lake Superstore and Hope Blooms. Through the Hope Blooms Social Enterprise & Scholarship Program, youth learn to create, build, and sustain a business while earning scholarships for post-secondary education. One of those business products is Hope Blooms Fresh Herbs Dressings. All the herbs are grown in their greenhouse and five flavours of dressings are made and bottled by hand.

The generosity and the support of Superstore have helped provide 46 scholarships to youth through Hope Blooms while contributing to their mentorship program.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the outstanding partnership between Bayers Lake Superstore and Hope Blooms as they continue to make an impact on the lives of youth in our communities.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

**LONGUE-MACDONALD, CAROL:  
QUILTS OF VALOUR PRESENTATION CEREMONY - THANKS**

HON. STEVE CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Carol Longue-MacDonald of Lower Sackville. Carol is a long-time member, volunteer, and public relations officer for the Royal Canadian Legion Calais Branch 162 in Lower Sackville.

Carol, in conjunction with volunteers from Quilts of Valour, organized and hosted a presentation ceremony at the Legion in September. Quilts of Valour is a volunteer-driven national society that provides handmade quilts to veterans to thank them for their services and sacrifice. On each quilt, there is a label that reads “Handmade with love, respect and gratitude for your sacrifice to Canada. May the hugs stitched into this quilt give you comfort, strength and love.”

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask that all members of the House of Assembly join me in thanking Carol Longue-MacDonald for reminding our veterans how much we do appreciate them.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare.

**BOUCHER, ANNAH:  
NEW GEN. MGR. OF CLARE GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB - WELCOME**

RONNIE LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, like all golf courses across the province, our golf course is currently winding down its operations after a successful season. This course, the Clare Golf & Country Club, was founded more than 50 years ago and is considered fun and challenging by all of its members and visitors.

Last April, the club welcomed its new general manager, Annah Boucher. With a background in tourism and her 20 years in the position of director of operations at the golf course at the Digby Pines, Ms. Boucher brings to her new position years of experience that will surely benefit the golf course. She also knows our area well, having grown up in Annapolis Royal and having lived in Clare for the last 11 years.

Though a little belated, I want to welcome Ms. Boucher to our golf course and wish her well in her second season.

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

**BAKER, EARL: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

DANIELLE BARKHOUSE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a local resident of Big Tancook Island, Earl Baker.

Earl sadly passed away at the age of 84 on September 25, 2021. Born on Big Tancook Island, Earl was a lobster fisherman for many years and didn't fully retire from fishing until he was 79. As a younger man, he worked at the Island boat shop building boats, and he helped to build many of the houses on Big Tancook.

He was often sought out for information regarding Island history or for his gardening tips. In fact, Earl very generously shared produce with many Island residents and staff at businesses on the mainland that he frequented.

Earl will be remembered as a feisty man who was very firm in his beliefs. His family has said that all who knew him were aware that it was almost impossible to win an argument with him, but he was loved just the same.

Mr. Speaker, we send our condolences to the family and friends of Earl Baker.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

### **PURCHASE, BRIAN: COM. SERV. - THANKS**

FRED TILLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize a local businessperson from Cape Breton: Brian Purchase. Brian was born and raised in Northside-Westmount and continues to live in the constituency. Many people will recognize Brian for his amazing business skills and contribution to the Cape Breton and Nova Scotia economy.

Today I would like to recognize Brian for all the work that he does to make our community a better place to live. Even though Brian is one of the busiest guys I know, he always has the time to help out in his community, from chairing the Canadian Little League championships, to sitting on many volunteer boards and committees, and for his commitment to kids, with his Schwartz coat program, for which he was just recognized by the Cape Breton Chamber of Commerce.

Most recently, Brian participated in the Cape Breton Regional Hospital Foundation Radio Day and raised over \$50,000 for the hospital, which is an amazing feat.

Members, please join me in thanking and recognizing Brian for his commitment to Cape Breton.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle.

### **MUNICIPALITY OF ARGYLE: NEW NET-ZERO ENERGY ADMIN. BLDG. - CONGRATS.**

HON. COLTON LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Municipality of Argyle on its new administration building, which opened its doors to the public on June 29<sup>th</sup>.

The new building, which has 8,300 square feet of usable space, is the first net-zero energy administration building in Canada, a great achievement that demonstrates Argyle's

leadership on environmental concerns. Once fully operational, the south-facing solar garden should produce about 10 to 15 per cent more energy than the building will consume. That translates to \$27,000 in annual energy cost savings.

Besides offices and council space, there's a kitchen that residents can use for small events and a boardroom available for public meetings.

I ask all members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating the Municipality of Argyle on its leadership on renewable energy and the opening of its new administration building.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford South.

**SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAMS/VOLUNTS.:  
HELP IN FINDING PATRICIA - CONGRATS.**

BRAEDON CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for all of the search and rescue teams and volunteers who recently helped find one of my constituents, Patricia Levy, an 82-year-old woman who lives at the Northwood care facility in Bedford South. Ms. Levy was found safe this month, nearly 24 hours after leaving the home and spending the night in the woods.

So many people dropped everything and responded quickly, gave tips, and showed up with flashlights, blankets, hot drinks, and food, among many other things. The search and rescue teams combed through the woods overnight and crews from across the province arrived to assist with the ground search, including a provincial helicopter.

I'd ask all members of the House to congratulate everybody who came out to help Ms. Levy and ensured she returned home safe and sound.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

**SANFORD, WYATT: ACHIEVEMENTS IN BOXING - CONGRATS.**

JOHN A. MACDONALD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Wyatt Sanford of Kennetcook. He is a four-time Canadian youth national champion in boxing. Last year, Wyatt participated in the 2020 Olympics - which actually happened this year - in the 69 kg welterweight division. Actually, due to COVID-19, he went up a level and the gentleman whom he fought actually came down, so he fought two levels above, and he placed 17<sup>th</sup>.

At age 10, Wyatt began boxing and had his first bout at about 11. He's now 22 and, with a combination of talent, dedication, and determination, has a number of achievements to his credit, including making it to the round of 16 at the 2019 AIBA World Championship.



Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Wyatt on his achievements to date and wish him the best with his future endeavours.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Annapolis.

**DOWELL, JAYMEE-LYNNE: RECIPIENT OF COMMUNITY LEADER FOR BETTERMENT AWARD - CONGRATS.**

CARMAN KERR: Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, Jaymee-lynn Dowell was selected as the Community Leader for Betterment at the 2021 Annapolis Valley Women of Excellence Awards. This award recognizes an exceptional woman who is dedicated to social change and improving the Annapolis Valley community, who is a champion for philanthropy and volunteerism. This certainly applies to Jaymee-lynn.

[2:00 p.m.]

Jaymee-lynn is the founder and executive director of the Inclusive Opportunities Association, a non-profit with a mission to empower the development of skills for persons labelled with a disability and to build an inclusive community full of meaningful opportunity and connections. She also serves as the advisor to the Annapolis chapter of People First, a self-advocacy group for individuals labelled with a disability.

Her deep commitment to building a more inclusive society is clearly evidenced in her tireless advocacy efforts and the significant personal sacrifices she has made to improve the lives of people in her community.

I ask all members of the House of Assembly . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The time for Statements by Members has expired.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS**

THE SPEAKER: The time is now 2:00 p.m. We will finish at 2:50 p.m.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

**PREM. - LONG-TERM CARE: BOOSTER SHOTS - UPDATE**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Last week, the government announced booster shots for residents of long-term care, Mr. Speaker. This is positive and welcome news, for sure. I want to ask the Premier: How many residents in long-term care have received their first dose, either by number or a percentage? If not, when will they start receiving them?

HON. TIM HOUSTON (The Premier): This is obviously a critical initiative to get boosters in the arms, particularly of our seniors in long-term care but also in the immunocompromised. It's a project of Public Health and something Dr. Strang's team is very focused on.

I don't have a number for the Premier today (Laughter) and I don't have one for the Leader of the Official Opposition, either. (Laughter) I want to ensure my honourable colleague and all Nova Scotians that we are very, very focused on making sure we get boosters in arms and also increase our overall vaccination rates.

IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the answer. Nova Scotians are very eager to see long-term care residents get their third dose of vaccine.

Part of the success of our program early on was getting not only the first dose but second doses into arms of those residents. As the NACI recommendations came out, they are recommending that after six months we get a third dose in the arm.

Because we have seniors who are living out in the community who are eligible for long-term care, octogenarians and other aged Nova Scotians, my question is: Since we have provinces now offering these residents who are over 80 in Saskatchewan, over 75 in Alberta - I'll table that - and so on down the line, when do Nova Scotians who are outside long-term care, our senior population, start to receive their booster shot?

THE PREMIER: What I would say is, like the honourable member before me and Premier McNeil before him, we have a lot of faith in Dr. Strang and his team at Public Health. I think that team has steered us very well. They've gotten us to a place where our vaccination rate is, through some challenges. There are always challenges - first dose, second dose, and now a third dose - no doubt there'll be challenges.

The process is under way. The province and the people of the province are all committed to making sure Nova Scotians get their vaccinations on the appropriate timeline. We'll continue to be guided by Dr. Strang on this very important process.

IAIN RANKIN: We, of course, have confidence in Dr. Strang and the Public Health team, but we very much want to see the booster shots offered as they are in other provinces, Mr. Speaker. We'd also like to see equity ensured in our vaccine rollout for these booster shots.

I'd like to ask the Premier: Will he ensure that Mi'kmaw communities and African Nova Scotian communities have priority as they did with the first and second doses? Again, other provinces are offering third doses in Elder Lodges and Indigenous communities today, so I'd like to ask the Premier if he would commit to that.

THE PREMIER: Of course, the answer is yes. These are incredibly important points that the member is raising in the House today. Yes, we want to make sure that the process is efficient, effective, equitable, and fair - so 100 per cent yes.

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

**PREM.: EMISSION-REDUCTION TARGET - CONFIRM**

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, on August 9<sup>th</sup> the IPCC issued its climate report. The UN said of it that it was a “code red for humanity.”

The thrust of the report is pretty simple - that we’re already at 1.2 degrees and that holding global heating below 1.5 is going to require a renewed commitment and a renewed effort. Yet the government which was elected here just eight days after the release of the report ran on a platform that did not include a greenhouse gas emission reduction target, and the mandate letter from the Premier to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change doesn’t include any mention of that subject either.

Will the Premier tell this House if his government intends to set an emissions-reduction target?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Of course, we ran a campaign that most Nova Scotians know was very focused on health care, but no question. I think Nova Scotians know that there are many more issues facing the province than just health care, including housing, including the environment, including education.

What I would say to the honourable member is that, although I didn’t read that report when it came out on August 9<sup>th</sup> - I was a little preoccupied at that particular time - that should not give any indication that this government is anything less than committed to making sure that we live in a place where we’re doing everything we can to preserve our planet for future generations. We are committed to that.

It would be unfair to say that we didn’t speak to targets at all in our platform, but despite that misunderstanding, I want to be very clear with the member that we are very focused on doing the best we can as a province to preserve our planet for future generations.

GARY BURRILL: I’m not speaking about targets in general. I’m speaking about, in particular, GHG reduction targets. This week, this is going to be the focus of a great deal of international attention as COP26, the Glasgow conference, convenes beginning on Sunday. The attention of the world is going to be on this subject: the adequacy of greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets, nation by nation by nation, subnationality by subnationality.

I want to ask the Premier: Is he committed to establishing a greenhouse gas emissions regime in Nova Scotia that will align us with the world's goal of 1.5 degrees?

THE PREMIER: What I would say to the member is that what the members of this House and all Nova Scotians can expect from this government is the same as it's always received from PC governments. We set the targets. This is the government that established the EGSPA legislation, that set the targets across the spectrum, that led this province through successive governments - including a short spell with an NDP government, including a time with Liberal governments - that set the road map to move this province to where it is now.

We're very proud of the EGSPA legislation, and it's not just us. Even former Premier McNeil referred to it as having led the province on the path.

What I would say to the member is yes, the member can expect to see targets from our government, just like it always has in the past.

GARY BURRILL: The question is not simply targets, but targets that are consistent with 1.5 degrees. We have in front of us in Nova Scotia what is required in order to do that. Three years ago, a broad coalition of organizations and citizens came together to produce the 2030 Declaration. The declaration comes down to the formula that what we need is a 50 per cent reduction of GHGs below 1990 levels by 2030.

It is a question of specifics when we're talking at this important moment. On the eve of COP26, will the Premier commit to lead us on a path in Nova Scotia that will get us to a place 50 per cent below 1990 levels by 2030?

THE PREMIER: What I'll commit to the member today is that yes, this government will lead this province on the path. The only certainty that I can give this House today is that whatever target we pick, there will be debate over. Whatever target we pick will probably be wrong in the eyes of the Opposition. We've seen that with fixed election dates.

What I will say to . . . (Interruption) Because we know how Opposition works. You've got to find something to talk about. What I'll promise to the member . . . (Interruption)

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

THE PREMIER: The commitment that I will make today to the honourable member is that we will establish a target, and we will do it knowing full well that the Opposition will complain about it.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

**PREM. - HOMELESS/WOMEN SHELTERS: VACCINES - COMMIT**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Under the previous government's vaccine rollout, we made a special priority to look at congregate settings. That's something that I asked for especially with our homeless shelters and women's shelters, and Winter is coming. Again, back to the vaccine topic, this is very important for people to get these third doses, and in some of these instances, maybe some people haven't gotten their first or second dose.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier if he will consider putting a priority to ensure that our shelters are receiving vaccines in the next round.

THE PREMIER: I don't want to leave any confusion. I don't want to leave any room for misunderstanding. Getting vaccinations into the arms of Nova Scotians, getting Nova Scotians vaccinated is a priority of this government. Just like it was of the two previous governments, it is our priority.

The member raises important groups, for sure. I want to assure the member that we are aware of those groups. We feel the urgency. Those groups are important, and we will do everything we can to get those vaccines in arms. We'll learn the lessons from the prior rollouts, but for the most part the rollout plan will be as it was left to us by the prior government.

IAIN RANKIN: It's great that he likes the plan now. It certainly wasn't the case when we were in government.

I do want answers to the specifics because the age-based approach certainly worked to protect those most vulnerable, and in these congregate settings it's really important. These settings also have employees and volunteers working at the shelter and I would like to get the Premier on record to make sure. The question is: Will he make sure that the employees and volunteers of these shelters are also prioritized?

THE PREMIER: What I will make sure of is that we are guided by Dr. Strang and his team at Public Health. Dr. Strang's team will bring forward recommendations on how to most vaccinate the population of this province efficiently and effectively. We will be there beside Dr. Strang supporting him and his team in every possible way and encouraging more and more Nova Scotians to get vaccinated.

The member is right - there are still Nova Scotians who haven't received the first dose or a second dose. We will continue to share information to encourage those Nova Scotians to get vaccinated. We will do everything we possibly can to make sure Nova Scotians are kept safe from COVID-19.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition on a new question.

**PREM. - GOV'T. EMP. VACCINES: UNPAID LEAVE - LENGTH**

HON. IAIN RANKIN: I'll take the Premier at his word. I certainly believe that he wants vaccines out in the community as soon as possible. The point, though, is that he should have all these recommendations already from Dr. Strang and should have the answers on when Nova Scotians will get them, especially those most vulnerable. He has a drop-dead date as November 30<sup>th</sup> for the mandated vaccine for education and health care workers.

I would like to ask the Premier: How long will employees be placed on unpaid leave if they don't have their vaccines by November 30<sup>th</sup>?

THE PREMIER: Just a point of clarity, Mr. Speaker, are you talking about government employees?

IAIN RANKIN: Yes.

THE PREMIER: The mandate, the policy that has been well-known to health care workers, people working in education, and people working in the Public Service, that they need to be fully vaccinated by November 30<sup>th</sup> or they won't be working. That is the position of this government, and that remains the position of this government going forward. Get vaccinated if you want to work in those industries.

IAIN RANKIN: In health care and education sectors, that's a good first step to have this mandate in place. In the Department of Labour and Advanced Education business plan accountability report, there were other high-risk areas, industries, that have COVID-19 as a concern in their 2020-21 accountability report, such as farming, construction, and fishing sectors. Does the Premier have any plans to expand this vaccine mandate beyond the current sectors today?

THE PREMIER: No, but, Mr. Speaker, we're continuing to work. We'll push education out, offer education, continue to encourage Nova Scotians to get vaccinated. We have seen many private companies establish their own vaccination policies, and that's just fine by us. We like that and encourage that as well. There are a number of high-risk industries, and we'll continue to work with those industries and give them all the information that they ask for, provide them with additional information, and work on the education process.

The number-one goal - and this is actually the main point that the member is raising, which I do agree with - is that we all have an obligation to keep each other safe. We will do everything we can as a government to keep Nova Scotians safe.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney-Membertou.

**EECD - VACCINATION: AGES 5-11 - EXPLAIN**

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. We know that the best place for our children is in the classroom, and the school vaccine program keeps our kids in class and gives them equal access to the vaccine.

Last week the medical lead for Manitoba's Vaccine Implementation Task Force stated that plans are in development now for a school-based vaccine rollout for children aged 5 to 11. I would like to ask the minister: If Manitoba can do it, why can't we?

HON. BECKY DRUHAN: Thank you to the member for the question. As the Premier has said, getting vaccines in arms is a high priority for us. We are working with and following the lead of Public Health on the accessibility and availability of vaccinations and we will continue to take direction from them on the most appropriate way to roll that out and the support that we can give for that.

DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, I actually have something to table from my last question too, so I apologize. It is the article.

Again, my question is to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. The minister - and also the Minister of Health and Wellness - has said the reasoning behind not offering vaccines to children aged 5 to 11 is because it would not be in their best interests to get vaccinated without their parents present.

In Manitoba these instances have been addressed by opening vaccine clinics to beyond school hours to accommodate those children who wish to be accompanied by a parent. Will the minister consider this as an option, to open vaccine clinics in our schools?

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: Again, we continue to work with Public Health. As you know, we have some finite health care resources that we also need to consider. Currently, we have been advised that the best option for us, given our resources and given the plan to move forward, is that we will offer them in community-based clinics.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**DOJ: POLICING REVIEW - FINDINGS**

CLAUDIA CHENDER: My question is for the Minister of Justice. Last week, when I asked the minister to table the preliminary analysis on policing services that was conducted by the previous government, the minister said there is no review of policing. I will table that.

A briefing note from January 2021, which we received in our caucus in response to a freedom of information request, includes the recommendation that the committee be established as an initial step to examine options to pursue a comprehensive review of policing in Nova Scotia and to present those findings by February of 2021. I will table that.

Will the minister now acknowledge that a review of policing was under way in the department and will he table the findings?

HON. BRAD JOHNS: If you table that document I will look at it and I do appreciate that. As I said previously in the House, there has been no review of policing that I've seen or am aware of and I have asked numerous staff.

If the member has something that is different than that, I certainly look forward to seeing it.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I do hope this conversation continues because included in that Freedom of Information package is a letter sent from the former Minister of Justice to the Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police Association and this letter states, "Please be advised that the Department of Justice has struck an internal committee to carry out a preliminary analysis of policing service delivery across Nova Scotia."

It goes on: "This work is being carried out as a matter of prudent fiscal responsibility as well as sustainability and effectiveness . . .," and I will table that. Last week when I asked the minister to commit to an immediate review of the RCMP contract, he said no.

Given the fact that an analysis was already under way in the department as a matter of prudent fiscal responsibility, will the minister now commit to a transparent and accountable review of the RCMP contract?

BRAD JOHNS: Once again, my stance is where it was last week. I still don't see that as happening at this time, particularly, as I've said previously, until we see what comes back from the Mass Casualty Commission in the report from them. I will look at what the member tabled.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

### **DHW: MANDATORY VACCINE ROLLOUT - UPDATE**

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: When asked how many health care workers may still not be vaccinated, the minister indicated that she might have a better understanding of that this week.



I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness: Can we have an update on the mandatory vaccination rollout for our health care workers? What has the uptake been? Are we seeing any real hesitancy among the rest of the workers? Is there a percentage that she can apply to that? That would be greatly appreciated.

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: For those four questions (Laughter), I would like to say that yes, we are working with our continuing care partners and the Nova Scotia Health Authority to better understand the folks who are vaccinated. We do have an education program that will be available to folks of vaccine hesitancy. We are monitoring the situation very carefully.

We do feel that there has been an uptick in vaccinations for health care workers. We're just under 78 per cent of total population vaccinated, so we are pleased with the efforts so far.

ZACH CHURCHILL: I think it's very important that we are tracking the exact numbers on this. We are hearing anecdotal information that the mandatory vaccine rollout is impacting the labour situation in the health care system.

Of course, unlike the Premier, who is going to judge his success in health care based on what a random person says in Yarmouth, we in this House don't think anecdotes are the best way to assess the situation. This House does need to see some numbers. Do they know what the percentage of uptake has been? Are there vacancies being created as a result of this?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: Now I have to find a question after the first four. (Laughter)

What I would say is, of course we are working with Nova Scotia Health Authority. We do have a bit of time left. We have folks who have their first vaccine and are waiting for their second vaccine. Those numbers will become clearer. We do expect to be in touch with them around November 1<sup>st</sup>, which gives us some time for planning.

It's not lost on me. We are aware of it and are working closely with our care providers to ensure that we have a good understanding of the situation.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

### **DHW: CAPITAL PROJECT LIST - COMMIT**

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, when asked last week if the minister would support all the major capital investments that were promised to communities across this province for health, the minister indicated that she was committed to continuing those

expansions, but did want to see a list of those projects. I'll table her comments from last week in Question Period.

I would like to ask the minister a week later if she's had the time to review the capital projects and if communities across the province can be assured that those capital projects will be moving forward.

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: Certainly. We had the discussion in the department today. You can expect that that information will be available to you this week.

ZACH CHURCHILL: We do hope that the minister does tell the House which exact projects will be moving forward, and which ones might not be. Again, it would take a decision of Cabinet to adjust that list. That list is embedded in our budget. Those projects are committed.

I know that when we came in from the NDP in 2013, we did keep all the capital commitments that were previously committed, so I would like the minister to answer today if she's committed to ensuring that these communities do benefit from these projects and aren't sidelined.

MICHELLE THOMPSON: Those items were approved through the budgetary process, and we've said all along that we have no intentions of going backwards. We want to make things better for Nova Scotians and improve the health care system.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cole Harbour.

### **DHW: BIPOC WORKER MISTREATMENT - COMMENT**

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, we take pride in recruiting and welcoming internationally trained health care workers. We have heard that Black, Indigenous, and racialized workers have reported abuses, mistreatment, and distrust from patients. This racism and unconscious bias have driven a number of our professionals to leave our province.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness is: With the goal of increasing the number of doctors and allied health care workers in our province, is there a review under way to better understand the role that racism plays in the doctor retentions in this province?

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: Certainly the work of the diversity, inclusion, and equity office in the Department of Health and Wellness continues, and understanding the experience of racialized health care workers is also a key component of that with the Nova Scotia Health Authority.

I did have a brief meeting with Black Physicians of Canada very recently. That was one of the issues that they raised, and I have committed to work with them to better understand how we can address any of those concerns.

TONY INCE: Thank you for that answer. My other question to the minister would be: With taking those steps, what other steps are you taking to make sure that the workers in the health care system are able to deal with issues of racism?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, we continue to work through the diversity, inclusion, and equity office to understand the experience of racialized health care workers and ask them what their experiences are. We are looking at exit interviews and we are also looking at policy and how we can embed anti-racist policies and equity and diversity and inclusion principles into our policies.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre-Whitney Pier.

#### **NRR: NSP COAL TRANSITION PLANS - PROTECT WORKERS**

KENDRA COOMBES: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables. As Nova Scotia builds its capacity for renewables and decommissions coal-fired generating plants, workers and their communities are concerned. Nova Scotia Power has said they want a smooth transition for employees, but we have heard that instead of retraining workers, Nova Scotia Power has been contracting out some services like windmill maintenance. Can the minister tell the House what this government is doing to ensure that Nova Scotia Power is doing everything possible to ensure that power workers do not lose their jobs as coal is decommissioned?

HON. TORY RUSHTON: Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of the fact that the Premier challenged myself and my department staff to achieve that 80 per cent of renewables by 2030. That is something our government is very proud of. It is something I know the previous government and the Opposition parties were committed to, to doing what is needed by 2030.

To answer your question about what Nova Scotia Power is doing, I can't honestly give you a straight answer here today. I have had constant contact with Nova Scotia Power as we moved to implement those changes to coal. I'll certainly reach out again and get an answer.

I can tell you that I've had certain workers reach out from those coal-fired plants, if you will. They have been very positive about the change that Nova Scotia Power is making to move forward to a greener-energy province.

KENDRA COOMBES: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that answer. This June, a poll conducted by *The Atlantic Quarterly* found that overwhelmingly Nova Scotians

want to see us getting off fossil fuels quickly but in a way that supports workers. I will table that.

This government needs to catch up with the public. We see nothing in the Progressive Conservative platform or mandate letters that conveys any urgency around this transition for workers, their families, or their communities. Transitioning away from fossil fuels should be an opportunity for more well-paying unionized jobs, not fewer.

Will the Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables commit to providing job guarantees for power workers as part of our transition away from fossil fuels?

TORY RUSHTON: I think Nova Scotians spoke very loudly in August, as you can see on this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, we are committed to the 80 per cent renewables. We're committed . . . (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables has the floor.

TORY RUSHTON: I'll deal with that member later. (Laughter) In all honesty, Mr. Speaker, we're committed as a government, and I don't think this is a political issue come the campaign. Every party that was running in that election - in the Summer, I may remind you - we were all committed to getting off coal by 2030. If that happens sooner, I can guarantee the member opposite there are going to be jobs in that green economy. I can guarantee you that.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford South.

#### **DHW - RAPID TESTING: PRIVATE SCHOOL COST - COMMENT**

BRAEDON CLARK: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Over the weekend, I heard from a parent who has two children attending the Halifax Independent School. That's a private school here in the city. As you might imagine, both of these children are under 12. The parent wants to see rapid tests available at the school, has asked, and has been told through Public Health that free tests are not available to private schools - they must be purchased through the manufacturer.

My question to the minister is: Does she think this is a good policy?

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: I'm actually not familiar with that policy or that incident, so it would be something I have to follow up with the member after.

[2:30 p.m.]

BRAEDON CLARK: I appreciate the minister's response. I do want to note that the government, through the Workplace Screening Program, is giving out thousands and thousands of free tests to businesses and organizations, which is a good thing. However, I am confused as to why. We know those businesses and organizations have employees that are overwhelmingly vaccinated . . . (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. The member for Bedford South has the floor.

BRAEDON CLARK: My question to the minister is: Does it make sense to give free tests to businesses and organizations but make schools, where many of those children are unvaccinated, pay for the tests?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: The testing that the honourable member is talking about is the asymptomatic testing that we're doing as part of surveillance across the province. It has been in place since Wave 1 and Wave 2. That is a separate program. Again, I'm not familiar with the policy that you're referring to, so I can't speak to it.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

### **DOJ: RCMP CONTRACT PLANS - DISCUSS**

ANGELA SIMMONDS: Last week, the Minister of Justice previously admitted that he had not dug in and done his homework yet to understand what was initiated by his predecessor. Thankfully, because of the member for Dartmouth South, we got a little bit of an update.

We know things can change. Is the minister considering options if the RCMP end up pulling out of their contract?

HON. BRAD JOHNS: With all due respect to the member, that's speculative, and we would have to see what happens if that unfortunately happened.

ANGELA SIMMONDS: I'm safe to assume, then, there's a plan that's going to come forward.

The Minister of Justice has indicated that he has not received any requests from the municipalities to review the contracts, but did he indicate that his colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has been in conversations with municipalities of some concerns regarding the RCMP contracts which have been discussed?

My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: How many municipalities have raised concerns about the increasing costs and service delivery of the RCMP, and how many have requested a review?

HON. JOHN LOHR: What I can say is that we are aware of the conversation about policing. I can say that actually none have reached out specifically to address that topic with me. It's just a conversation that's going on, that we are aware of policing issues. That is actually the answer.

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

### **OMHA: CROSS-DEPT. COLLABORATION - ENSURE**

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Mr. Speaker, I was heartbroken to read a CBC article last week about Ashleen d'Orsay, a Cape Breton woman who recently died after not getting the care she needed at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital. Ms. Dorsey was struggling with addictions, and the article describes the stigma that she faced in the emergency room as a result of her mental health struggles, and I can table that.

My question to the minister is: How is the Office of Mental Health and Addictions working with other departments to ensure that Nova Scotians experiencing addiction are getting the care they need when they walk into our hospitals?

HON. BRIAN COMER: It's a very heartbreaking situation, to be honest. It kind of gets me emotional just even talking about it. I think the stigmatizing issue was a big factor there. I met with groups in Cape Breton probably three or four weeks ago to discuss evidence-based harm reduction, which I think played a significant factor in that role.

She couldn't get the preventive treatment that she needed instead of being sent back and forth to the ER, which I think was a significant issue, and I think it's something I'll keep working on for sure.

PATRICIA ARAB: As the minister stated, the stigma that surrounds mental health issues and addictions prevent many of us from accessing the government resources that we need. To break down these barriers, Nova Scotians have to be sure that when they interact with any public servant, they will be treated with dignity and respect, not just in our hospitals - especially if they are struggling with mental health issues or addiction.

My question to the minister is: Will the minister commit to developing training for all public servants in this province in mental health first aid, as well as best practices when providing services to people experiencing addictions?

BRIAN COMER: I believe in that specific instance, there was some training with the emergency department staff that was not mandatory. That's something that kind of

worries me, to be honest. It's something I'm looking at with the department right now. The broader component to your question for public servants in general, it's definitely a discussion I would be willing to have and probably just discuss with you at a later date, if that's okay.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

### **NRR - SOLAR PROJ.: NSP - DELAYS**

CLAUDIA CHENDER: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables. Earlier this month, Solar Nova Scotia surveyed its members and found that there are unusual delays in Nova Scotia Power's processing of utility plan reviews and meter installs. The result for these solar companies is client dissatisfaction, severe impacts to cash flow, and postponed jobs - and I'll table that.

Solar Nova Scotia believes that these delays from Nova Scotia Power are affecting the growth of solar in the province. Can the minister explain to this House why Nova Scotia Power is holding up solar projects?

HON. TORY RUSHTON: What I can say is I agree, I've heard the exact same thing. I've spoken to people on the ground who have applied for these projects. There is a holdup. These are one of the conversations I'm having with Nova Scotia Power and staff in the energy side of my department.

It's an issue, because people do want the solar. It's a buy-in program. It's a program that has seen a lot of success currently under the previous government, and I know everybody in this House supports that program. These are conversations that are taking place to streamline and fast-pace these programs and get some response back for what is taking place behind the scenes on that. I will commit to the member opposite right now that we are looking into that to get answers for this.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: With a single publicly owned corporation that controls our power and the grid, I think those conversations are really important and we really hope that they bear fruit, because the climate science is clear - we must shift from fossil fuels to renewables as quickly as possible.

A 2019 report from the Ecology Action Centre on the costs and benefits of Nova Scotia's environmental goals legislation found that with the right targets and investments, the renewable energy industry could support 3,100 jobs per year over 12 years. This is an exciting opportunity for Nova Scotia if we nurture our local renewable energy industries.

My question is this: We've heard that this government commits to an 80 per cent target for renewables by 2030. We're assured that targets are coming. Will the minister

also commit to creating a specific set-aside target for local renewable industries such as solar so we can ensure that this problem doesn't replicate itself?

TORY RUSHTON: What I can say is credit where credit is due. The previous government did start some of that process, and we're certainly going to ensure that that - yes, credit where credit is due. As the new government coming in, that 80 per cent target is achievable. We've said that as a government. Nova Scotians spoke that they want to see that. We know that, we hear that, and the local aspect is certainly going to be a part of that.

To give the ratio in the House today, I certainly don't feel comfortable to put what that ratio is, those conversations are happening, and we're committed to the solar, the wind, the battery, and the loop that's going to interconnect all of the Atlantic Provinces that all these Parties that are sitting in this House support today.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

**PREM. - BLUE MTN. BIRCH COVE: PROTECTION - COMMIT**

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes is the largest urban ecologically significant area near downtown. It is actually five kilometres from here. As our city is developing, support for the park is even more imperative. It is currently being considered by the federal government for a national designation. This is huge to me.

My question to the Premier is: Will the Premier commit that this government will not undermine the protection of the Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area and will not allow development onto lands identified in the HRM plan as priority for a regional park?

THE PREMIER: I thank the member for the important question. There's no intention on our part - there are no discussions on anything like that. I think it's really important when we talk about solutions to the housing crisis that we be upfront and honest with each other that the solution to the housing crisis is more housing stock.

We are committed to making sure that there is more housing stock. I think there is probably agreement in this House on that. What I would hope does not happen is that there is no effort in this House or outside this Chamber to undermine that with fearmongering that the PC government is going to do something it has no intention of doing. (Interruption)

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

THE PREMIER: There's no discussion about that and never has been. I can confirm that to the member.



RAFAH DICOSTANZO: If I may, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make sure that the Premier understands the value and the legacy that this generation can leave for our kids and for many generations to come, to have a park like that in Halifax.

Mr. Speaker, in April of this year the Liberal government committed to expanding the protected area boundary for the Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area to include public lands located near Kearney Lake and Charles Lake. The public consultation for the park expansion is now complete, yet the government has not made an announcement that these lands are now protected.

My question to the Premier is: Will these public lands at Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes be officially protected?

HON. TORY RUSHTON: I thank the member opposite for the question and the concern on protecting lands.

The Premier was very clear in a mandate letter to myself and other colleagues in the House that we're committed to protecting lands, we're committed to working with lands, we're committed to our natural resources. We can have an economy and natural resources and protect the climate here in Nova Scotia.

As to referring to whether protected lands are coming, I know that the Opposition members understand that there is a process that that does go through. Before it makes it to the ministerial level, it would go through those directors and levels.

What I'll commit to the member opposite right now is I'll look into that, and I'll certainly get an answer back for the member opposite and update the whole House on what is taking place.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

### **ECC - MANDATE LETTER: NET ZERO BLDG. STRATEGY - TIMELINE**

HON. KEITH IRVING: My question concerns the mandate letter for the Environment and Climate Change Minister. The mandate letter notes that the minister has been tasked, and I quote, to "ensure that new provincial buildings are net-zero and that all major provincial building retrofits will be low-carbon . . . starting in 2030."

The minister has now been tasked with this important work, beginning nine years from now. The global climate crisis necessitates that governments be leaders in climate change initiatives and that Nova Scotians are asking their government to act with urgency.

My question to the minister is: Will the minister ask for a change to his mandate letter so that he can start work on this important work before 2030, and will the minister

commit to developing a net-zero building strategy for both public and private sector buildings that will produce results before 2030?

HON. TIM HALMAN: I want to thank my honourable colleague for the question. I'm committed to working with all my colleagues to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to work to make Nova Scotia climate resilient, to mitigate climate change, and to adapt to climate change.

The question that you've asked really gets to the heart of the fact that, Mr. Speaker, we acknowledge we are in a climate emergency and . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. I would ask that the Minister of Environment and Climate Change not address the speaker as "you."

[2:45 p.m.]

TIM HALMAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge that we are absolutely in a climate emergency, and we need to be working with all our partners across departments to ensure that we are working towards these goals that are set out, not only the goals set out in the mandate letter, but the goals that we'll be setting out in legislation very soon.

KEITH IRVING: I'm not sure I got an answer to my question, but I'll proceed along.

The minister's mandate letter also directs the minister "to encourage the private sector to follow the government's lead" - which I think is nine years from now - "by working with property developers to establish grants to reduce the increased cost that may be associated with building net-zero buildings."

I would encourage the minister to examine this proposal in greater detail. Studies have shown that increased capital costs to build net-zero buildings have a relatively short payback period because of their reduced operating costs. Government handouts to developers should not be needed.

Will the minister reconsider government grants and look at other policy tools such as loans to facilitate more private sector development in net-zero buildings?

TIM HALMAN: This is a time to be innovative. This is a time to work with multiple stakeholders to continue to clean and green our economy and our society.

We all know how urgent this issue is. That's why in the months and years ahead, I look forward to working with colleagues in this House and with all stakeholders to work towards what I believe will be bold and powerful targets that we'll be setting. Members of this House will be informed of those targets in the days ahead.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Annapolis.

**NRR - SILVIC. GUIDE: IMPLEMENTATION - TIMELINE**

CARMAN KERR: Mr. Speaker, in July the Liberal government released the Silvicultural Guide for the Ecological Matrix, responding to a key recommendation of the Lahey report to revise Nova Scotia's Forest Management Guide.

The guide has completed a third draft, as far as I'm aware. It's been approved by the minister's advisory committee. It's gone through a lengthy consultation process.

Could the minister please let the House know when the guide will be implemented?

HON. TORY RUSHTON: It has gone through some edits. The process right now is we are developing the training process to go through. I expect before Christmas that there's going to be progress on this file. As well, we know that the update of the Lahey report is due any day now. I look forward to sharing that with Nova Scotians as well.

CARMAN KERR: There's a large cut of 600-plus acres now happening in Digby County. I think it's around Rocky Point Lake.

My question to the Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables is: Does he know if this cut is in line with the proposed silviculture guide?

TORY RUSHTON: To be very honest, no, I do not know. What I can say to the member opposite is if the cut is happening right now, it would have been his government that approved that cut.

In all honesty, to get the answer for the member opposite: I'll look into that and I'll get the response back to him.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**PREM.: FILM TAX CREDIT - REINSTATE**

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier and I'm going to make it quick.

In the old days, he opposed the cutting of the film tax credit by the Liberal government and he said how terrible it was at the time. I'm wondering if the Premier will commit to reinstating the film tax credit.

THE PREMIER: What's old is new again. I'm a big, big fan of the film industry, the industry knows that. I'm a supporter of that industry for all of the reasons that many of

us in this House are supporters of the industry. It promotes Nova Scotia. It helps us grow our population and grows our tourism in markets that we can't reach in many other ways.

I'm a big fan of the film industry because it is about everything that is positive about Nova Scotia, just like this government. We are about everything positive for this province. We are very optimistic about the future of this province and very optimistic about the film industry.

I'd like to thank the honourable member for bringing that important issue . . .

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North. (Laughter)

SUSAN LEBLANC: But will the tax cut be reinstated, Mr. Speaker?

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

### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

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

### **PUBLIC BILLS FOR SECOND READING**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 43.

#### **Bill No. 43 - Amendments to the Motor Vehicle Act.**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Public Works.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 43 be read a second time.

It is a pleasure to speak to this legislation today. These proposed amendments will support active transportation on Nova Scotia roads and enhance road safety. The proposed amendments address concerns that have been raised by municipalities and their residents. They will also provide clarity around impaired driving provisions.

The key elements of Bill No. 43 include authorizing and enabling the use of traffic control signals for bicycles, authorizing municipalities to create bylaws for muffler noise,

and clarifying that officers have the authority to issue a 90-day suspension to anyone who fails or refused to comply with a demand to take a test related to impairment.

The bicycle traffic signals amendment will allow the province and municipalities to install bicycle traffic signals and outlines the rules of the road related to these signals. The signal will be added to the list of approved signs and signals that may be used on Nova Scotia roads. Those who violate these signs or signals are subject to fine.

The muffler noise amendment will enable municipalities to create bylaws to regulate muffler noise. This amendment will give municipalities the authority to address long-standing concerns about muffler noise.

These proposed amendments give municipalities the authority to make these changes, but do not require municipalities to implement them.

Our final amendment is about providing clarification with respect to the enforcement of impaired driving. This amendment clarifies that an officer can suspend a driver's licence for 90 days when a driver fails or refuses to comply with the demand for a test under the Criminal Code. This amendment removes references to the terms "breath" and "blood" and specifically identifies sections of the Criminal Code. The Criminal Code sections give the officer the authority to make a demand to a driver to comply with testing used to determine the presence of substance and possible impairment.

Referencing these sections will ensure that the 90-day suspension of a driver's licence for failing or refusing to comply with a demand is applied as originally intended. These proposed amendments give authority to municipalities to respond to their residents. They also demonstrate the government's commitment to, and support for, road safety and active transportation.

The department has done significant consultation over the past few years on the Traffic Safety Act and regulations. We have heard from stakeholders and Nova Scotians on these issues. In drafting these proposed amendments, department staff worked closely with the Traffic Safety Act team and these amendments will be incorporated into the TSA and its regulations, as required.

The proposed amendments align with our platform and my mandate by supporting active transportation and enabling municipalities to be responsive to their residents. I look forward to hearing from my colleagues across the aisle.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford South.

BRAEDON CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I will speak very quickly today on this bill. I just want to commend the minister for the introduction of the bill and the amendments. I spent some time in the department back when it was TIR, for a couple of years, and I know

that the Motor Vehicle Act and then the subsequent Traffic Safety Act, which is going through the regulatory process right now - I know those are big beasts of legislation. There is a whole lot of work that goes into making even what might seem like very small changes.

I think, in general, our caucus is supportive of these changes. The issue around impairment, obviously, is a significant one that you don't want to leave any grey area or any room for misinterpretation - either from police or from those who might be in the situation. That is not something we want, of course.

This issue around bike or cyclist signals is a great one as well. We know that the city, and the Province as well, should continue to partner on the issue of active transit, not just here in the city. I know there are bike lanes just outside the parking lot here at Province House, but we want to see active transit continue to be prioritized and improved across the province - rural areas, suburban areas, and urban centres as well.

I come from a constituency that's growing very, very quickly, certainly one of the fastest-growing parts of the province. All of these issues come up very often, knocking on doors during the campaign or just in the course of my work. Speed is an issue that I have heard really is an issue from many of my colleagues across all parties, especially in the areas that are growing very quickly. Speed, planning, all of these things need to be done in a holistic way with coordination and planning between the province and the municipality as well.

That's why, as I mentioned last week, I believe, I'm interested to see the work that the transportation working group will do to make sure that all of these decisions on the Motor Vehicle Act, on the Traffic Safety Act, on active transit - on all of these things - are done in a thoughtful manner that works for the people of Nova Scotia, no matter where they happen to live.

With those few comments, I want to thank the minister for putting this bill forward, and I'll take my seat.

**THE SPEAKER:** The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

**SUSAN LEBLANC:** I'm pleased to rise and speak to this bill. As I understand it, there are three discrete changes in the bill that the minister has just outlined. That is, allowing municipalities to install bicycle signals, clarifying municipalities' ability to create bylaws around excessive vehicle noise - which I hear a lot about in Dartmouth North, actually - and clarifying the powers of an officer at a roadside stop when impairment is suspected. I think all of these are important changes, obviously, but I also understand that the changes are being brought in because of the delays in the new Traffic Safety Act.

First of all, before I go on, I want to give huge props and shoutouts to the staff working on the Traffic Safety Bill. When that bill was brought in, however many years ago

now - two or three years ago - it was obviously a substantial piece of legislation which was widely debated. Since then, I have been really impressed by the department staff and their willingness to extend consultation to the public on the bill. It has been a very organized and, I think, useful and interesting process. But it's sad to know that it's still going to take three to four years before it can be implemented because of the IT changes that are necessary.

That being said, that is obviously a long time to wait for this big gigantic bill that is looking at the future of road management and the future of vehicle use and the future of active transportation. So I just want to say that if we are going to wait that long and the minister sees that it's important to make these changes because of the long wait, there are a number of other changes that possibly should be looked at.

I know that when we were passing the Traffic Safety Act, we heard at the Law Amendments Committee from the Halifax Cycling Coalition and Bicycle Nova Scotia about some very specific asks that would make cycling much safer in the province and in the city - all over but also in HRM. They were asking for things like crossrides to be legalized. They were asking for strong penalties for right hooks, when a cyclist or a vulnerable road user gets hit by a car on a right turn. There are a number of other asks that those two organizations made. I think the Ecology Action Centre was also asking for some of those changes.

As we're making these amendments to the Motor Vehicle Act, I encourage the minister and the department to take a look at those requests. I would be happy to talk to the minister or connect the minister with those organizations. If we're going to open it up, if we're going to pass amendments, why not make it even safer and encourage more active transportation in the province?

As we know, active transportation is part of a healthy province. We know that cycling to work can reduce heart disease and cancer by huge amounts. We want to encourage folks to be active in their transportation, in their commutes, both for our own health but also for the health of the planet in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

I really do look forward to hearing from stakeholders at the Law Amendments Committee. I hope that the minister will look at some of these other easy amendments that very possibly were going to be in the new Traffic Safety Act anyway, but it would be great if we could have them in place before three to four years. So, with those few words I will take my seat. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN:** First, I want to say how happy I am to see the minister in this position. I'm not sure if she's the first female Minister of Public Works or not but I know she'll do a great job.

[3:00 p.m.]

I just want to make a couple of comments to the amendments that have been tabled. I'm wondering if the impaired driving is for alcohol as well as cannabis and other drugs. Also, has the minister considered referring people in that situation also to addiction services, and looking at not just penalizing but also looking for ways to support persons who may be struggling with addictions in our communities.

The only other comment I'd like to make is with regards to the bicycle lanes. Certainly, that has been something that has been requested in Cumberland North that we'd like to see more of - the ability to use our bicycles. In rural Nova Scotia most of the roads are 80 or 90 kilometres per hour and there are not significant, I guess, roadsides that would be safe for people to bicycle on. We'd love to see more of the Blue Routes developed, especially along Highway 366, which is the Shore Road from Tindall Road all the way through Port Howe, Linden, and that area, as well as Trunk 6.

I also want to make note, one of the biggest complaints that I get in Cumberland North is the roadsides: the lack of bush cutting, the lack of cutting on the sides of the roads during the Summer. That is one of the biggest issues that people feel leads to unsafe road conditions, whether it's from animals jumping out and you are not able to see them, and other reasons.

If there is one thing I could ask the minister today to consider, in addition to focusing on bicycle lanes, it is looking at trying to find ways to improve the aesthetics - for lack of a better word - of our roadsides, and for safety, as well as for tourism. It's actually embarrassing to drive in certain areas in my constituency, just how grown up the ditches and the roadsides are. We want people to come to our province and we want to show off our beauty, but the roadsides are really deplorable.

When I speak with our area managers, who do a great job in Cumberland North, one of the biggest reasons they come back to me is that they have a lack of equipment. For example, there's one bush cutter in all of Cumberland that has to be shared and for a certain percentage of the time in the summer - and it is often broken down and they don't have the parts.

Looking at investing in more capital equipment for the important workers in our Department of Public Works would be a nice goal to achieve in the days ahead.

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

The honourable Minister of Public Works.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I'll just address very quickly some of the comments of my colleagues - and I appreciate the comments and the support of the bill.



There's quite a bit there, actually, in the short little conversation of agreeing to approve the bill.

One thing I will say to the member for Bedford South is that I am actually very excited about the regional transportation group. I think that any time you are collaborating and you are doing future planning, it equals success, so I am excited about that.

I am excited to have this group work with HRM and to continue to work with the great work they've been doing, so I'm very excited about that regional transportation group and certainly understand the importance of collaboration and going forward in advancing active transit. As a province, as a department, we are committed to active and sustainable transportation.

To the member for Cumberland North, I understand the importance of the Blue Route. I think that's very important. It promotes safety and encourages more people to get out there on their bikes. Certainly, we will be going forward with our Blue Routes.

Also, to the member for Cumberland North, she mentioned about the increased vegetation we have along the sides of our roads. I'm a rural MLA, so I certainly know all about the large amounts of vegetation coming out over many of our roads.

I was very pleased for one of my first announcements to be that we doubled the RIM budget, and that's pretty exciting.

I guess in closing, I too would like to thank everyone from the department who has been working on the Traffic Safety Act and who work every day to make sure that our roads are safe for Nova Scotians to travel.

To the member from Cumberland North, certainly I understand the importance also of active transit, to your comments, and willing to work and collaborate with stakeholders. I think actually there have been some conversations already, but you know what? We're all here for the right reason, and that's to make sure that Nova Scotians are safe on our roads and able to enjoy active transit - all sorts of transit.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move to close debate on Bill No. 43 and look forward to hearing from Nova Scotians in Law Amendments.

**THE SPEAKER:** The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 43. All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: It's a busy day for the Government House Leader. Could you please call the order of business, Private and Local Bills for Second Reading.

**PRIVATE AND LOCAL BILLS FOR SECOND READING**

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 50.

**Bill No. 50 - The Ardnamurchan Club Act (amended)**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of the Public Service Commission.

HON. COLTON LEBLANC: I move that Bill No. 50 be read for a second time.

The Ardnamurchan Club is a private family lodge located in Argyle, Nova Scotia. It was built and founded in 1909 by Mary Cox as a gathering place for generations of family and friends. The Ardnamurchan Club Act of 1997 serves as the most recent version of the club's charter, and that revision of the Act added the adopted children of the founder and their descendants of the club's membership.

The club recently discovered that John O. Platt, whom they had previously thought had been adopted by the founder, had in fact never been officially adopted. Therefore, at their last annual general meeting, the club's membership voted unanimously to amend the charter to include natural or legally adopted descendants of John O. Platt as members. The proposed changes to the Act reflect this request.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Inverness.

HON. ALLAN MACMASTER: I just feel the need to say I was once in the same place in Scotland, and it's pronounced "ar-na-MUR-hn."

THE SPEAKER: Maybe when the bill is being read, we might have the member for Inverness read it.

If I recognize the minister, it will be to close the debate.

The honourable Minister of the Public Service Commission.

HON. COLTON LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, I move to close debate on Bill No. 50, an Act to Amend Chapter 12 of the Acts of 1997, the Ardnamurchan Club Act.

THE SPEAKER: I am very fortunate to say that I do not have the title of the bill in the order paper today, so I have no other choice now but to read it.

The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 50. All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

I am sure the Clerk will do a much better job than I.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Private and Local Bills.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 48.

**Bill No. 48 - Town of Lunenburg School Annex Lands Act.**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

HON. SUSAN CORKUM-GREEK: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move second reading of Bill No. 48, an Act to Clarify the Title to Town of Lunenburg School Annex Lands on the Tannery Road.

Mr. Speaker, this is very much a housekeeping item, requested by the Town of Lunenburg to clarify title to a single parcel of lands whereupon sits a building that once housed the former - and might I say, in our town we prefer more simplistic names - the Old New Town School. Built in 1883, this building remains a remarkably intact example of the traditional one- and two-room schoolhouse.

With construction of the former Lunenburg Junior-Senior High School in the 1970s, the building became workshops for industrial arts and home economics training, where sadly, try as she did, Margaret Long was unable to teach this member how to cook.

In 2013 and 2014, Lunenburg Junior-Senior High School was demolished and replaced with a Primary to Grade 9 school known as Bluenose Academy. Since that time the building and lands have become surplus.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will enable the town to seek new usages for the property and explore new possibilities.

THE SPEAKER: If I recognize the honourable member for Lunenburg, it will be to move second reading of Bill No. 48. All those in favour . . . (Interruption) Oh, sorry, you didn't make the motion yet, did you?

The motion is for second reading of Bill No. 48. All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

Ordered that this bill be referred to the Committee on Private and Local Bills.

The honourable Government House Leader.

[3:15 p.m.]

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

### **PUBLIC BILLS FOR THIRD READING**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 13.

#### **Bill No. 13 - Police Act (amended).**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, before moving that Bill No. 13 be now read and passed, I'd like to make a few quick comments.

Nova Scotia recently reached an agreement in principle with New Brunswick that would allow Nova Scotia's Serious Incident Response Team, or the SiRT, to act as an oversight body for both provinces.

These changes to the Police Act provide more clarity around any partnership agreements that the province may choose to enter into with other provinces or territories. Specifically, the changes recognize the Governor in Council's authority to authorize an agreement for SiRT to act as an oversight body in another province or territory on an ongoing basis.

They also make it clear that current provisions within the Act that allow the SiRT director to make recommendations to the minister for SiRT to enter into agreements are intended for specific investigations.

These amendments are in the best interest of Nova Scotians and will support continued collaboration between our province and territorial partners. Most importantly, they will help to promote public safety throughout the region and help ensure citizens have

the confidence they need that serious incidents involving police are thoroughly and effectively investigated.

I would so move that Bill No. 13, the Police Act, now be read a third time and do pass.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

SUZY HANSEN: As introduced by the Minister of Justice, this Act amends the Police Act to enable SiRT to enter into agreements to operate in other regions. It follows the agreement with New Brunswick to have SiRT operate as a police oversight for both regions, which is great. The partnership is expected to begin in 2022.

The department did not comment on consultations with communities about other known concerns with SiRT broadly. I want to say that this legislation formalizes the agreement that Nova Scotia's Serious Incident Response Team has with New Brunswick to conduct investigations in that province.

We were reminded after the killings of Chantal Moore and Rodney Levi how critical oversight is and how we badly need police oversight that is sensitive to the ways that Black people, Indigenous people, and people of colour are at fatal risk of overpolicing, along with deep and systemic change in our justice system.

Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to say these words about these changes. I'm sure it is a good thing to honour our agreement with New Brunswick. Certainly, effective police oversight should be strived for in that province just as we strive for it here. It was disappointing to learn that there was no community consultation in the development of the bill. This is why we have to do better. There are many community concerns about SiRT that have not been addressed by this bill.

Communities have spoken out on numerous occasions about having retired officers overseeing their peers investigating in cases. Black people in Nova Scotia are overpoliced. Black people are overrepresented in the corrections system. Both of these are examples of systemic racism in Nova Scotia. These facts breed well-founded distrust of police and the police oversight mechanisms among African Nova Scotian communities in this province.

The case of Santana Rao is one notable recent example. Ms. Rao, a Black woman, was arrested by police while shopping with her children. The altercation was hard to watch. The use of excessive force was unnecessary, which caused Ms. Rao a fractured wrist and several other injuries.

She has spoken out about the belief that her arrest was rooted in racial profiling. Charges against her were eventually dropped. A SiRT investigation resulted in no charges to police officers. A community liaison appointed to advise the SiRT investigation in the

case, Mr. Tony Smith, explained that from his perspective the review was flawed and his voice was not listened to.

The report was completed without a culturally competent lens and was only looking at Rao's behaviour and not the officers' behaviour. This distrust remains along with a lack of progress, along with the perception that police police themselves, and that the true justice is fleeting for Black, Indigenous, and people of colour interacting with police.

This is one example of community voices not being listened to in a policing process and illustrates how much work we have to do to, number one, end systemic racism and, two, reform the justice system. Street checks are another example of where mistrust is bred between Black, Indigenous, communities of colour, and justice system processes. We have been told that there was a ban on the practice, only to learn that a loophole had been created by the minister and we are back to the beginning of this problematic process.

People are still being stopped, which is why I am extremely glad to hear from the Premier that street checks are illegal. These are the kinds of challenges that I would have hoped this government would have been grappling with if we were to open up the Police Act.

I thank you again, Mr. Speaker, for listening.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

ANGELA SIMMONDS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague, the member for Halifax Needham. I am going to echo a lot of similar things and I spoke about this earlier in regard to this bill. One of the things that I would say and would encourage government to think about is the consultation with African Nova Scotians that is relatively important.

We understand the idea that sometimes there is expertise that goes into other provinces, but the reality of that is that this organization is not expert because it is still flawed, and we know it's flawed by many of the circumstances that have been brought forward.

We know this when Senator Wanda Bernard spoke about this, which I tabled earlier: the lack of transparency when this investigation happens. In particular, one of the things that is problematic is this idea that the review board also made up of civilian members who are ex-RCMP officers, so that is problematic in and of itself.

If this government is committed to being transparent and equity and inclusion and diversity and balancing the Indigenous folks and African Nova Scotian folks, then we would be committed to actually looking and re-evaluating all of our polices and organizations whether within government or arm's length of government. I would

encourage further that not only do we think about all of the policies and practices here but think about who it impacts the most - it impacts African Nova Scotians the most.

The other area that we don't often talk about is the cost - what this is costing the public. It is costing the public well over \$60,000 to fund this and so if we are going to be asking people and, in particular, our public about paying taxpayers' dollars for a service that is actually not working for everyone, then we really need to evaluate who this is for.

As I spoke in my earlier message, this is not some people's House, but everyone's House. I would just encourage that we think about even before going into other provinces we fix what is wrong here and fill in the gaps and then work on working with other provinces.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues - the member for Halifax Needham and the member for Preston - for their insightful comments on this and I will add to them as our caucus's Justice critic, but I am not sure there is anything entirely new.

I do want to highlight, especially in light of the conversation the last few days in the House, where we see a real resistance on the part of government to examine anything to do with policing, I think that is why we are hearing more debate on this bill than we might otherwise hear: because we know that there are issues and we are not seeing any willingness to examine those issues, and SiRT is a place where we know that there are these issues, where we have so many examples that have already been brought up.

As my colleagues have spoken about, there is a very real perception that SiRT is not as independent as it could be. The four investigators on SiRT are all either current or retired police officers. Sometimes that makes sense, but in some part we would want community representation to be taking into account these very serious issues that get taken before SiRT. I have to point out that as of July of last year, all four of those investigators were male and all four of them were white and that certainly doesn't match the makeup of all the folks who are necessarily coming before SiRT or the folks who are engaged by the issues that come before SiRT.

There have been calls to hire civilian investigators and to find other ways to incorporate those civilian and diverse voices, but today we haven't heard a response to that so I am hopeful that maybe the minister will address that in his comments to close debate.

Members of this House know - and it bears repeating but it has been said many times now - about the legacy of systemic racism in our province. Black people, Indigenous people, people of colour face significant barriers in access to housing, education, health care, employment, and access to justice. We know that those folks are more likely to be

stopped by police and when people are stopped by police and things go sideways, that's when SiRT is involved. We know that Black, Indigenous, people of colour by definition will have a specific perspective and a valuable insight to offer into investigations undertaken by SiRT.

So again, I rise to encourage the minister and the department to consider, particularly as we expand, the incorporation of those voices. We heard SiRT commit to establishing a community liaison committee - we would love to hear an update about that. We would love to hear that that is happening and if so, how it's happening. We know that that kind of committee could be an important step towards including systemically marginalized voices and perspectives in the justice system.

Extending SiRT's jurisdiction to other regions, which essentially is what this bill does - I understand there will be mirror legislation that would come into place in New Brunswick to allow that as well. That kind of intensifies the stopwatch, if you will, on the need for those improvements.

We're not speaking against the bill, but we're saying we know all of these improvements need to be made to SiRT. We have advocated for them in the past. Particularly if we are exporting, as it were, this process, it's imperative that the process is a good one.

Nova Scotia exports - we talked a lot about that in this House - we want to export the best. If we're offering help to another province, we want that to be the best help possible. We want that to be the best system possible. These suggestions are made in that light.

These are some of the improvements. We know this is very much connected in a bigger way to the need that we have been pushing for to re-examine policing generally in Nova Scotia and those contracts. This is a first step, and one that we believe needs to happen before we export SiRT, as it were.

Our caucus will continue to look for those improvements. I look forward to the comments of the minister. With that, I'll take my seat.

**THE SPEAKER:** The honourable member for Cumberland North.

**ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN:** I would like to recognize the comments made here by the Opposition members and just acknowledge the importance of all the comments that were shared today.

I want to stand just make one additional comment: that is, how pleased I am to see the minister working collaboratively with our neighbouring province. I look forward to



seeing more legislation that will have the same spirit of co-operation with our fellow Maritime provinces.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I do sincerely want to thank all members of the House for their comments here today regarding this. I have heard from numerous people, and they all seem to reiterate the same thing, which is that Nova Scotia's SiRT seems to be highly regarded in what they do. They certainly have the experience and the independence to be able to conduct investigations.

This bill that's before us today should actually have the opportunity of addressing some of the issues that were raised here by some of the members as well, because it will be a collaboration and combining with New Brunswick. We should be able to address some of the issues that were raised here today as well.

With that, I would now like to close the debate on Bill No. 13.

[3:30 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 13.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, could you please call Bill No. 11.

**Bill No. 11 - Protecting Access to Health Services Act.**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 11, the Protecting Access to Health Services Act, be read a third time and do pass.

Everyone has the right to peaceful protest, but protesters do not have a right to intimidate or obstruct the right of others to have access to important health services. Let's

not forget thousands of health service providers who work tirelessly to keep us safe. They do not deserve to be harassed as they enter their workplace and deliver health services to Nova Scotians.

The legislation protects patients, health service providers, and others, and also respects the right to assemble and protest. It strikes the appropriate balance between the right to freedom of assembly and freedom of speech and the right of patients and health service providers to go to the hospital or other health care facilities without fear.

The Protecting Access to Health Services Act will prohibit protests and other harmful activities affecting patients who receive health services in their homes. The legislation establishes a 50-metre safe access bubble zone around health care facilities. That includes hospitals, facilities that provide mental health services, home care services, long-term care services, clinics, doctors' offices, and pharmacies.

Bill No. 11 also recognizes and respects the right of labour organizations to picket as part of their legal action. This bill will not interfere with those rights. This bill is aimed specifically at protesters and other activities that discourage Nova Scotians from accessing or delivering health care services. No one in this Chamber wants anyone who needs care, provides care, or is visiting a sick relative to have to push past protesters and fear for their own safety. The actions we are taking with this bill represent an appropriate response to the public protests we have seen throughout this pandemic.

With those few words, I will take my seat.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford Basin.

HON. KELLY REGAN: I was actually waiting to hear Bedford-Birch Cove, but that was, like, three ridings ago.

Mr. Speaker, I just did want to say that the Nova Scotia Liberal caucus will be voting for this particular bill. We will be voting for this bill because there were changes made to the bill to ensure that labour organizations will be able to protest appropriately enough.

I will note that this was actually a bill that former Premier Stephen McNeil indicated that he wanted to do at the time when we did the bubble zone law. That didn't happen then, and who knew that we would have a pandemic, and who knew that we would have people out there protesting about masks and vaccinations and things like that? I mean, if we could have been writing a movie script two years ago, we would never have assumed that this was going to happen, but in fact it did, so we feel that this is an appropriate response to the reality on the ground at this time.

We don't want to have people being deterred either from entering a workplace to perform necessary work, or from seeking treatment. Those are all important for Nova Scotians and we will be supporting this bill.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cape Breton Centre-Whitney Pier.

KENDRA COOMBES: Mr. Speaker, it is important that one feels free of intimidation when accessing health care services or when going to work in a health care facility. Our health care workers have given more than could ever be expected of them during the COVID-19 pandemic and they deserve to feel safe at work.

I appreciate the comments that were made. Before I start with that, I want to talk about the actual amendment that was made at the Law Amendments Committee. What the government brought forward to clarify the labour protests and the pickets would not be impacted by legislation.

It is very important that the right to strike is protected. That should have been carefully considered by this government before bringing forward the bill in its original form.

I appreciate the comments from CUPE president Nan McFadgen at the Law Amendments Committee, which encouraged the government to stop and think about their actions and their impact. When bringing forward legislation, it's critical that we consider, as the Legislature, the intended and unintended consequences a bill can have without the amendment that was brought just as this bill was arriving at the Law Amendments Committee. The bill may have been vulnerable to a Charter challenge, putting the Conservative government on the same path as the previous Liberal government when it comes to their relationship with labour in the province.

As CUPE President Nan McFadgen said in her presentation, limiting rights is no better than limiting wages. I commend Nan McFadgen for that. I think she's right. I certainly hope the government's willingness to acknowledge their mistake with this bill and to correct that mistake is a signal that it was simply an oversight and not an indication of the tone the government plans to take with the unions at the bargaining table.

With those few words, I will take my seat.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care.

HON. BARBARA ADAMS: I am pleased to say a few words on Bill No. 11. This bill is about respect and it's about psychological health in the workplace. For almost two years now, we have all struggled to cope with the impact of the pandemic, and it has been difficult for all of us, but probably most difficult for our frontline workers in health care.

I'm not just talking about the health care staff themselves: I'm talking about those who create the meals, who wash the floors, who take out the garbage - all indispensable people who keep our health care system running. As a health care professional myself, I want to offer my sincerest thanks to everyone who works in the health care system, who risk their own health and work very long hours to keep us safe, many of whom didn't get to take their vacation. They worked short-staffed. They're still working short-staffed. They were mandated to stay late.

The last thing anyone working in those conditions needs is to feel that they have to push past a group of people who are angry. Whether they're angry at them or not, it is not something we want our employees and our health care workers to have to go through. I can tell you the very first day I walked into Ocean View Continuing Care Centre, there was one positive COVID-19 case there, and I'll be honest with you, my children were worried. They said, why are you going in there when there's a risk to you? I said, because that's the least that I can do, because that's what everyone working in those buildings is doing every single day.

There are some people who work in nursing homes like Northwood, who work in the ICUs right now, who are putting their lives at risk every day. That is no small feat. They are heroes in my eyes, and when we saw on the news people protesting outside of Dr. Strang's house, that was the end for me. That was the height of disrespect.

Given all that our health care workers and all Nova Scotians have endured, I find it very concerning that anyone has to face protests at the front doors of their home or the hospitals where they are seeking care. This is a place where you are going when you are sick, when you are possibly dying, when you are going in there to find out news that you only have a few months to live. For those who were picketing outside of Dr. Strang's home, shame on you.

I fully understand that some individuals are opposed to the government's Public Health measures. I deeply respect your right to peaceful protest and self-expression, but the key is to be peaceful and respectful. No one has the right to intimidate, harass, or interfere with Nova Scotians accessing important health services. You're bringing your children in there. Can you imagine having to explain to them, you can't go to school, you can't visit your friends, you can't go to your sporting events, you have to wear a mask, and by the way, you've got to push through a bunch of people screaming at you while you're going in for cancer treatment, and you're five years old?

No one deserves that kind of treatment. It is harmful to our physical health and it is certainly harmful to our mental health.

The legislation that has been introduced today will protect patients and health care providers and their families. The families were watching those protests. They were worried

about the psychological health and safety of their family members, their children, the elderly.

It will also respect the right to assemble at a safe distance. What will not be allowed is interference with patient access to health care. These are reasonable limits that strike a balance between the right to freedom of speech and the rights of patients and health care staff to go to the hospital or other facilities unobstructed and without fear.

The Protecting Access to Health Services Act will establish a safe zone around facilities such as hospitals, mental health services, home care services, long-term care services, and more. Peaceful protest can occur outside of that perimeter.

This Legislature fully respects the right of labour organizations to picket as part of legal strike action. The intention of this bill is aimed at protesters who are being disrespectful and discourage Nova Scotians from accessing the health services they need. If you are receiving care or visiting a sick relative in Nova Scotia, you do not need the added burden of having to worry about protesters.

At its most basic level, this legislation is about decency and compassion - traits that Nova Scotians are famous for. It is respectful of the freedoms that we all hold dear as Nova Scotians, and it is reasonable and appropriate as we all try to navigate our way through this pandemic together.

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

The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Speaker, just before I move to close this bill, I again want to thank all members of the House who spoke on this today.

I do want to confirm for members that there was never an intention whatsoever to block organized labour's right to strike. It was to protect the well-being of health care workers and patients. As soon as government became aware that there was potential that it could be misinterpreted, we brought the amendment forward as quickly as we could to clarify that.

With that, I move to close debate on Bill No. 11.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 11. All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Bill No. 4.

**Bill No. 4 - Public Archives Act.**

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

[3:45 p.m.]

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, as we all know, Nova Scotia's shared culture and heritage is truly special. The new art gallery will be another venue that is not only reflective of the province's diversity but will help advance our collective growth and prosperity.

Excuse me for one minute, Mr. Speaker. I'll check my notes again.

I apologize for that. I had the wrong notes - just like making a lineup for the hockey team, putting the wrong guys out at the wrong time and trying to kill the penalty. (Laughter) I did that a few times and the results were disastrous, especially when we were playing against the Antigonish Bulldogs.

I'm pleased again to stand today to talk about the amendment to the Public Archives Act. The Nova Scotia Archives plays an important role in preserving our history by being a permanent record of the Government of Nova Scotia. It's very significant, provincially, for our records from the private sector. These records contain evidence of activities, decisions made, and people's reactions to events, all of which offer valuable information for researchers seeking a clear understanding of the past.

An example of the important work the Nova Scotia Archives has done would be the Royal Commission on the Donald Marshall, Jr. Prosecution. This work launched in October 2019 and was completed in collaboration with the Department of Justice and Treaty Education Nova Scotia. Once again, the resource contains the entire record of the Royal Commission, including audio testimony from Donald Marshall, Jr. in Mi'kmaq.

In February of 2020, the resource *Looking Back, Moving Forward: Documenting the Heritage of African Nova Scotians* brought together a substantial body of material in a digitized format on the Nova Scotia Archives website. It was expanded upon in August of this year to mark Emancipation Day and it continues to be a growing area of the website, contributing to the education pillar of the Count Us In report.

Currently on exhibit in the Chase Gallery at the Archives building is a partner exhibit with photographer Len Wagg. The exhibit pairs Mr. Wagg's photo documentation of Nova Scotia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The material is related to Nova Scotia's historic responses to other epidemics and pandemics.

These resources are just a few examples of the important work that the Nova Scotia Archives does. That's why we are making an amendment to the Public Archives Act. This amendment will provide the Nova Scotia Archives with legal status to enter into agreements, manage funds, and apply for federal funding. The amended Act simply better reflects the modern functioning of the Nova Scotia Archives and will allow the team to do more important work.

I will now take my place and listen to comments of my colleagues on this bill.

THE SPEAKER: I would ask that the minister move third reading of Bill No. 4.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill No. 4, the Public Archives Act.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, these amendments that my colleague for Pictou Centre just talked about are really just housekeeping as far as we understand.

The changes are to change it from a central agency to a body corporate. This will allow the Archives to apply for federal funding, so they will be in the same boat as the libraries and museums. We are very happy that they will be able to do that. It also will allow them to get funding for digitalizing their information.

All this is wonderful. The Liberal Party will be supporting this bill, and with those short remarks, I will take my seat.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

SUSAN LEBLANC: As I previously said, the NDP caucus will be supporting this bill. Public archives are essential in our communities. They're primarily the record of heritage and culture in this province, as the minister just pointed out a number of different examples of that.

It is hard to not point out the irony that one of the government's first actions is to support the record-keeping of culture and heritage, which is absolutely very important, but not the substance of the province's culture and heritage. We know that the cultural sector is hurting in this province, and the level of funding provided to it does not reflect its potential, both in what it deserves and how it could raise our GDP.

I wanted to quote the Premier in a debate from April 2015 where he said:

“Years ago I had a chance to sit down with a member of the Canadian Business Hall of Fame. I sat down with my good friend Donald Sobey, and he said to me at that time, ‘Tim,’ he said, ‘you can’t have a successful society without a thriving arts community.’ At the time I was in the middle of a business career working in venture capital and that statement struck me as very odd, but the more I thought about it, I realized he was right. I thought of places that I’d been, like in New York - Greenwich Village, and different places - and you think of the impact that the arts have on economies and on communities. You cannot have a successful, thriving economy without a thriving arts community. It’s an absolutely true statement. It probably took me a lot longer to comprehend that than Mr. Sobey would have liked, but it’s a true statement.”

I will table that from Hansard from 2015.

I agree with those comments, and I don’t see this epiphany reflected in anything that we’ve seen yet from this government, and I look forward to seeing what comes forward from this government. As I said already, I will be happy to support this bill, but as critic for Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage for the NDP, I anticipate and look forward to much more from this government.

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

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage.

HON. PAT DUNN: I move closing of the third reading of Bill No. 4.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is for third reading of Bill No. 4.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

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

The honourable Government House Leader.

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



**GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

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

The motion is carried.

[3:53 p.m. The House resolved itself into the CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Lisa Lachance in the Chair.]

[6:01 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened. The Speaker, Hon. Keith Bain, resumed the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and reports progress on Bill No. 1.

THE SPEAKER: Since we've reached the hour of adjournment, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow from 1:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

We stand adjourned.

[The House rose at 6:02 p.m.]