



DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Keith Bain

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First Session

THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022

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HALIFAX, THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022

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

TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION

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

RESOLUTION NO. 253

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

Whereas Elder Albert Marshall and his late wife Elder Murdena Marshall of Eskasoni developed the Guiding Principle of Two-Eyed Seeing or Etuaptmumk, and Two-Eyed Seeing is a foundational principle of the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act; and

Whereas Two-Eyed Seeing is a blending of the strengths of traditional Mi'kmaw thinking with western science promoting learning through seeing through another's perspective; and

Whereas Elder Marshall and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is now using the framework of Two-Eyed Seeing to help create a Grade 12 environmental studies course that will launch as a pilot program in September 2023, and be rolled out to all public schools in 2024;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in recognizing the contribution of Elders Albert and Murdena Marshall in bringing the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing and the traditional Mi'kmaw way of thinking to future generations of Nova Scotians.

I ask for waiver of notice and passage without debate.

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Public Works.

RESOLUTION NO. 254

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

Whereas with road construction season under way, we urge people to drive carefully in highway work zones; and

Whereas when travelling through work zones we need to be mindful of workers by slowing down, paying attention, and driving safely, because even the smallest mistake can be deadly; and

Whereas we strongly urge drivers to precisely obey speed reductions in these areas;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of the Legislature recognize that construction workers are someone's dad, mum, partner, or relative, and that everyone should please slow down and stay alert when driving through work zones.

I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

[1:15 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie.

RESOLUTION NO. 255

HON. COLTON LEBLANC: Monsieur le président, à une date ultérieure je demanderai l'adoption de la résolution suivante:

Attendu que l'Équipe d'alphabétisation Nouvelle-Écosse a été créé en 1992, pour répondre à un besoin des Acadiens et francophones dans notre province en ce qui concerne l'alphabétisation, l'éducation de base, et le rattrapage scolaire; et

Attendu que la variété des programmes offerts permet, par exemple, d'aider à la fois les familles d'étudiants dans les écoles francophones pour accompagner leurs enfants dans les premières années d'école ou de garderie, ou encore les aînés pour la formation numérique; et

Attendu que l'Équipe d'alphabétisation a reçu plusieurs prix au cours de son existence, et que l'Équipe continue de se grandir afin de répondre aux besoins dans toute la province;

Par conséquent, il est résolu que les députés de l'Assemblée législative se joignent à moi pour reconnaître et féliciter le travail et la qualité du soutien dont font preuve tous les membres du conseil, d'administration, et de l'Équipe d'alphabétisation depuis plus de trente ans. Je demande l'adoption de cette résolution sans préavis et sans débat.

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

Whereas the Équipe d'alphabétisation Nouvelle-Écosse was created in 1992 to meet the needs of Acadians and francophones in our province with regard to literacy, basic education, and remedial education; and

Whereas the variety of programs offered allows, for example, to help both the families of students in francophone schools to accompany their children in the first few years of school or daycare or to support elders with digital training; and

Whereas the Équipe d'alphabétisation has received several awards during its existence, and the team continues to grow to meet the needs across the province;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of the House of Assembly join me in recognizing and congratulating the work and quality of support shown by all members of the board of directors and the Équipe d'alphabétisation for more than 30 years.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

RESOLUTION NO. 256

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

Whereas the Fisheries and Aquaculture Student Bursary Program aims to help fill the labour gap for Nova Scotia seafood companies by introducing the aquaculture and seafood sector as a viable career option for students while assisting eligible students with their educational costs with bursaries of up to \$1,500 per year; and

Whereas 69 successful applicants from across the province were awarded bursaries in the amount of \$94,500 under last year's bursaries program, encompassing 14 different post-secondary institutions; and

Whereas commencing in Spring 2022, the Fisheries and Aquaculture Student Bursary Program will be administered by the Nova Scotia Fisheries Sector Council, which is positioned as the key fisheries human resources and training organization in the province, focusing on employee attraction and retention and industry capacity building and training;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature thank the many dedicated people who make up the fisheries and aquaculture industry for their ongoing promotion of this important initiative that encourages our youth to explore career opportunities in Nova Scotia's vibrant seafood sector.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Advanced Education.

RESOLUTION NO. 257

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

Whereas students from the Nova Scotia Community College and universities are completing their final exams and assignments; and

Whereas many of these hard-working students will be celebrated in Spring convocations and will move on into the workforce or wherever their journeys take them next; and

Whereas these students are the workforce, the leaders, and the solutionists of tomorrow;

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

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister for Acadian Affairs.

RESOLUTION NO. 258

HON. COLTON LEBLANC: Monsieur le président, à une date ultérieure, je demanderai l'adoption de la résolution suivante :

Attendu que les 8 et 9 mars derniers s'est tenu le Symposium Connexions Employeurs 2022, qui a eu pour thème « Défis et solutions face à la réticence des employeurs à recruter, embaucher, et intégrer les immigrants francophones » ; et

Attendu que lors de ce symposium le prix Connexion Employeurs a été remis à cinq employeurs au pays qui font preuve d'initiative et d'innovation en matière de recrutement facilitant l'intégration des immigrants francophones qualifiés, qui ont de bonnes pratiques en matière d'équité, de diversité, et d'inclusion en milieu de travail et qui contribuent au développement de l'économie francophone au sein de leur communauté; et

Attendu que le Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse a présenté le prix pour la Nouvelle-Écosse au Petit Voilier, un organisme à but non-lucratif qui fournit des services éducatifs axés sur le développement global de l'enfant et l'apprentissage du français, pour leur travail remarquable dans la municipalité régionale d'Halifax;

Par conséquent, il est résolu que les députés de l'Assemblée législative se joignent à moi pour reconnaître et féliciter l'excellence dont fait preuve Le Petit Voilier en innovation et en recrutement, notamment en ce qui concerne l'accueil et l'intégration de nouveaux arrivants francophones, grâce à une collaboration avec d'autres organismes de soutien économique. Les pratiques du Peter Voilier en ce qui concerne l'équité, la diversité et l'inclusion en milieu de travail sont exceptionnelles et cet employeur contribue

grandement au recrutement, à l'embauche, à l'intégration, et à la rétention de la main d'œuvre immigrante dans le domaine de la petite enfance. Je demande l'adoption de cette résolution sans préavis et sans débat.

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

Whereas on March 8th and 9th of 2022, the Employer Connection Symposium was held on the theme “Challenges and Solutions to the Reluctance of Employers to Recruit, Hire and Integrate Francophone Immigrants”; and

Whereas during the symposium, the Employer Connections Award was presented to five employers across the country who demonstrate initiative and innovation in recruitment that facilitates the integration of skilled francophone immigrants who have best practices relating to equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and who contribute to the development of the francophone economy within their community; and

Whereas the Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse presented the award for Nova Scotia to Le Petit Voilier, a not-for-profit organization that provides educational services focused on overall childhood development and French language learning for their outstanding work in the Halifax Regional Municipality;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House join me in recognizing and congratulating Le Petit Voilier's excellence in innovation and recruitment, particularly with regard to welcoming and integrating francophone newcomers through their collaboration with other economic support organizations. Le Petit Voilier's practices with respect to equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace are exceptional and this employer contributes greatly to the recruitment, hiring, integration, and retention of the immigrant workforce in the early childhood field.

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

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 176 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 18 of the Acts of 1998, the Municipal Government Act and Chapter 39 of the Acts of 2008, the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter. (Susan LeBlanc)

Bill No. 177 - Entitled an Act Respecting a Pilot Project for Seasonal Tourist Businesses. (Claudia Chender)

Bill No. 178 - Entitled an Act to Create a Rebate for the Purchase and Installation of Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles. (Carman Kerr)

Bill No. 179 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 197 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the Health Services and Insurance Act. (Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney-Membertou.

RESOLUTION NO. 259

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

Whereas the member for Timberlea-Prospect has announced that this will be his last session as Official Opposition Leader; and

Whereas as Premier, the member made historic changes and advanced important conversations on the environment, equity, and the economy; and

Whereas the member has been a steady leader, friend, and role model to each and every one of his caucus colleagues; and

Whereas, most importantly, the member welcomed his beautiful daughter, Freya Rose, alongside his wife Mary this year;

Therefore be it resolved that the members of this House join me in thanking the member for Timberlea-Prospect for his dedication to our province and for serving as Leader of the Official Opposition and as Premier.

I request waiver of notice and passage without debate.

[1:30 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for waiver.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried. (Standing Ovation.)

I'm sure we'll get a speech later on.

The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

RESOLUTION NO. 260

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

Whereas a political leader must be a person of integrity, intelligence, empathy, compassion, passion, humour, humility, stamina, and audacity; and

Whereas being the Leader of the New Democratic Party of Nova Scotia takes a particular type of strength and courage to stand in the Nova Scotia House of Assembly and be a voice for those whose voices don't always penetrate the walls of this Chamber; and

Whereas the member for Halifax Chebucto, as the Leader of the New Democratic Party, has fought for all Nova Scotians, and has centered the issues and lived experiences of women, marginalized people, workers, people living in poverty, people living with disabilities, and people who are sick or living with illness, and in doing so, has demonstrated to these people and to all Nova Scotians that we can work for a province where everyone has a share in the prosperity and richness of our home; and

Whereas the member for Halifax Chebucto has been a constant source of inspiration to the members of the NDP caucus and has enabled and encouraged the members to discover their strengths, hone their skills, and speak out for people in their communities; and

Whereas the member for Halifax Chebucto has decided in his own time and in his established practice of empowering those he leads to prepare for leadership renewal in the New Democratic Party and that this session will mark his last as Leader of the party;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House thank the member for Halifax Chebucto for his contributions to the democratic life of our province, his integrity, intelligence, empathy, compassion, patience, humour, humility, stamina, and audacity, and congratulate him on six years of leadership.

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. (Standing Ovation)

This is quite unbelievable when you compare it to about 13 hours ago. This is unreal. Let's keep it up.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

QUEEN ELIZABETH II: 96TH BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES

JOHN WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members of the House join me in wishing a wonderful day to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as she celebrates her 96th birthday.

As Queen of Canada, she sits at the core of our parliamentary democracy. Since 1952, she has performed her duties with grace, dignity, and good character. Her lifetime of service is instilled with a sense of civic duty that has been deeply felt and serves as an example for leaders around the world.

As we mark the Platinum Jubilee this year, we reflect on how Queen Elizabeth II has ruled with resilience through a multitude of major changes in Commonwealth countries around the globe.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of this House join me in wishing Her Majesty The Queen continued health and happiness on her special day. Long may she reign.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

FAMILY & LEG. STAFF: SUPP. FOR MEMBER - THANKS

FRED TILLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to recognize some people who have been so supportive of me as I've taken on this journey over the last number of months.

We all know that this is a wonderful occupation, but it's also sometimes isolating and nerve-racking. I would just like to thank my family at home, my parents, my wife, and my daughter, and all those who supported me.

I'd also like to thank my family here in Halifax. All of the members here in my caucus and all of the staff, both in our office here and the staff at the Legislature, have all been wonderful and made me feel so welcome. Thank you all for making this a wonderful experience.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

NDP LEADER: 6 YRS. OF LEADERSHIP - THANKS

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I can't possibly live up to the dramaturgical talent of my colleague for Dartmouth North, but I will try.

I rise to recognize the leadership of my colleague the Leader of the New Democratic Party. For the past six years, he has shared with our caucus and this House his clarity of purpose, his unique turns of phrase, and his indefatigable fight for what is right and what is just.

Six years ago, if you had mentioned affordability, housing, health care, and the environment as the core problems facing Nova Scotians, it would have been met with eye-rolling. It was met with eye-rolling, but, undeterred, the Leader of the NDP has been championing these issues and more since Day 1.

Although biblical analogies are not my forte, I think it would be appropriate to say that in his role as Leader, the member for Halifax Chebucto has the patience of Job, and for that I am truly grateful.

I ask all members of this House to join our caucus again in thanking the member for his six years as Leader of the NDP.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

MACLEOD, KIMBER: 1ST FEM. CVFD FIRE CHIEF - CONGRATS.

HON. PAT DUNN: I present this statement on behalf of the honourable member for Victoria-The Lakes:

It gives me great pleasure to rise in my place to recognize Kimber MacLeod of Cape North, Victoria County. Kimber has recently been named as the first female Fire Chief of Cabot Volunteer Fire Department in Cape North.

Kimber comes from a long family line of active firefighters in her community. Her grandfather Murdock MacLeod was one of the founding members of the fire department. Her father and her other grandfather, Jim Purdy, both served as deputy chief over the years, and her mother Wendy was actually the first female to join the department.

Turning 28 at the end of this month, firefighting and community service are most certainly in Kimber's blood. I ask all members of the House to join me in congratulating her on becoming the first female Fire Chief of Cabot Volunteer Fire Department and wishing her every success in the future.

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

ROBSON, DENISE: BOSTON MARATHON PERF. - CONGRATS.

LORELEI NICOLL: Today I stand to recognize an inspirational marathon runner, Denise Robson from Cole Harbour. Rest, pasta, rest, pasta, repeat - I know it sounds like the marathon in the Legislature, but it's what Denise lives by.

Monday, April 18, 2022, saw the 126th running of the Boston Marathon. It was Denise Robson's 11th time toeing the line in Boston. With two years since her last race, Robson says she was nervous but excited. "It's good to get back. I actually signed up for Boston just because I needed something to kind of motivate me and get me out there."

Motivate her it did. When the results were in, Canada saw 13 runners finish in the top 10 in their age categories, including eight who were in the top five. Nova Scotia's Denise Robson finished first in her age category, women 50-54, with a time of two hours, 57 minutes, and 39 seconds.

Congratulations, Denise. We applaud your tenacity and determination. Well done to this talented runner, amazing mom, thoughtful friend, and humble winner.

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

NDP LEADER: 6 YRS. OF LEADERSHIP - THANKS

KENDRA COOMBES: I rise today to recognize the Leader of the Nova Scotia NDP. I first met the now-Leader, and this should come as no surprise to anyone, at a rally protesting the Liberal government of the time. He introduced himself and we discussed the current political climate, and although he was seeking leadership, it would take four more

meetings before I learned this. This best describes the Leader's humbleness and unassuming nature, but when he speaks, watch out.

The Leader is truly kind and thoughtful. If you're going through a hard time, you can expect a call or a letter from him. You may also find him coming through your hospital room to welcome your newborn child into the world - true story.

The Leader of the Nova Scotia NDP leads in a gentle, respectful, and thoughtful manner. I want to thank our Leader for his encouragement, leadership, and friendship.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Richmond.

BABIN, LEO: RETIREMENT - BEST WISHES

TREVOR BOUDREAU: Today I rise to congratulate a constituent of Richmond on his upcoming retirement. Leo Babin is originally from Arichat and now resides in River Bourgeois. Leo is retiring from Walmart after 37 years of dedicated service.

He began working at the store when it was still known as Woolco and has been a fixture at the store for nearly four decades. Leo's face and name are well known by staff and shoppers, and he will be missed.

Leo has worked hard his whole life, including raising his daughter Sam as a single father, and MLAs on this side of the House would know Sam from the hard work she does in our caucus office. In 2011, Leo married his perfect match, Donna, and from what we hear has a very extensive "honey-do" list to complete after retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I ask members of this House to please join me in wishing Leo Babin a happy, healthy, and well-deserved retirement.

THE SPEAKER: He remembers \$1.44 Day, I'm sure.

The honourable member for Hammonds Plains-Lucasville.

TASA U18 DUCKS AA TEAM: GREAT SEASON - CONGRATS.

HON. BEN JESSOME: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Trevor Baillie, Gian Baillie Abidi, Tye Bentley, Connor Blanchard, Reese Carey, Nikolas Corkum, Andrew George, Ryan Gorman, Colby Harlow, Tyler Harlow, Cullen Hiltz, Nicholas Hui, Austin King, Rory Litt, Spencer Mansfield, Ryan Murphy, Liam MacGillivray, Jacob Oakley, Noah Schelleman, and Aiden Young, who make up the players on the Provincial Championship Team - the TASA U18 Ducks AA team.

I would also like to thank their coaches for leading the charge and giving them a great opportunity to come together: Coach Jason Blanchard, Assistant Coaches Kevin Baillie and Justin Blanchard, and also their team manager, Karen Carey. Congrats on a great season, folks.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

NDP LEADER: 6 YRS. OF LEADERSHIP - THANKS

SUZY HANSEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my friend, the member for Halifax Chebucto and the Leader of the NDP. I want to recognize the member's unwavering commitment to building a better world for many, not the few, and his leadership style of putting the needs of his team ahead of the needs of himself.

I think I speak not just for the members of my caucus but for all members of the House when I say that whenever the member speaks to this Chamber it is always done with the deepest consideration, the most careful respect, and with the sole intent of elevating political life in Nova Scotia.

Of course, the member isn't disappearing after this session and as fellow members, I look forward to all the days of struggle and triumph we will all have together building a better province for all. Thank you, member for Halifax Chebucto for your leadership.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens.

SMITH, ABIGAIL: JUDO CHALLENGE WINS - CONGRATS.

HON. KIM MASLAND: I rise today to acknowledge 14-year-old Queens County athlete Abigail Smith.

Abigail started in the sport of Judo at age four and a half. Training out of the Lunenburg County Judo Club and NUMA Judo Club in Halifax, she competes at provincial, Atlantic Canadian, and national tournaments.

On April 1st, she travelled to the U.S. to compete at the Pedro's Judo Challenge in Massachusetts, where she took gold in the U16 (under 63 kg) division and bronze in the age 21 and over (under 63 kg) division.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Abigail on this impressive performance and in wishing her much success as she strives to achieve her goals of representing Nova Scotia at the 2023 Canada Games and of one day competing at the Olympics.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West.

MACINTYRE, ALESHA: COM. LDRSHP. - RECOG.

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Alesha MacIntyre for her outstanding community leadership, especially with Birdland Rec. Birdland Rec is an organization that aims to bring families together and provide an outlet for young kids.

Having lived in a small town, Alesha's vision is to create the same tight-knit community in the city in Clayton Park West. From building and maintaining an ice rink to organizing movie night and egg hunts, Alesha ensures kids have a memorable and active childhood. Recently, the Birdland Rec Facebook group has hit 600 members and volunteers have tripled.

Alesha has changed the community for the better and she has even more aspirations for the future. I would ask that the House join me in recognizing and thanking Alesha for her incredible community commitment and wish her success in all her aspirations.

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

NDP LEADER: 6 YRS. OF LEADERSHIP - THANKS

LISA LACHANCE: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to recognize the passion, persistence, and politics of the Nova Scotia NDP Leader and the honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

The member is steadfast in his support for the well-being of people and persistent in the pursuit of justice, but he does this with a gentle heart. Whatever the situation, he remains empathetic in struggle and in grief, which I have greatly appreciated over the years as I have sought advice from him. He will literally meet people where they are at, like at the People's Park, where he goes in solidarity, or seek them out in their backyards and gardens when canvassing.

Mr. Speaker, the honourable member is not a quick canvasser, but an excellent role model in how to use that undertaking to better understand people and their communities, to identify problems, and start crafting solutions.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing the vision and passion that the Nova Scotia NDP Leader and the honourable member for Halifax Chebucto brings as an advocate for equity and justice for all peoples and communities.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

[1:45 p.m.]

EMBREE, CAROL: COM. SERV. - RECOG.

HON. TORY RUSHTON: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour and congratulate Carol Embree of Oxford, one of the kindest people that I have the honour of calling a friend. Carol is a recipient of this year's Distinguished Service Award from the Church of the Nazarene.

Carol is highly involved in her church and her community. She is a church board member, serving as secretary for many years - and I will not say how many - also a member of the food bank and a Kidney Foundation board member.

Beyond these roles, she also prepares and delivers homemade meals for many families throughout the year that were in difficulty or in need. Carol has made many deliveries of fudge and treats to businesses in the area, such as the bank, RCMP and, I will admit, to my office many times.

Carol organizes yard sales with all the proceeds going to the Kidney Foundation. She plays piano for the Oxford Men's Club to entertain nursing home residents each week. As a retired nurse, she puts in more hours now as a full-time volunteer in her community and in the surrounding areas.

I ask the members of this House to join me in recognizing Carol Embree for her outstanding service and volunteerism, and wish her all the best in the future.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

CLAYTON, L./TULK, M.: OFFICE WORK - THANKS

ANGELA SIMMONDS: This afternoon I want to acknowledge the wonderful staff who work in this office with me, Linda Clayton and Morgan Tulk, who are more than just staff but family. I say from starting off, Linda comes with great knowledge and experience, not only in community but in the office, and she is able to bring that throughout.

I also want to acknowledge Morgan, who is probably just a little over a month here and whom since I've been in the House have not spent much time with. I really want to acknowledge the work they do and tell them how special they are, and this really wouldn't be possible without them.

I look forward to many more memories made in this constituency and just want to thank them for all their hard work. This office would not be the same without them, so thank you so much. I ask the House to thank them with me.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

RENOVICTION BAN: REINSTATEMENT NEED - RECOG.

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, as we are all aware, the ban on renovictions, which prevented landlords from evicting tenants to renovate and often increase rent, was lifted with the state of emergency last month. No sooner had the ban been lifted than my constituency office started to hear from people in Dartmouth North who were facing renovation.

We've heard from two roommates living with disabilities who had surmounted so much to obtain stable, long-term housing only to be renovicted. We heard from a senior couple who were renovicted and the wife, who has health challenges, now must live in hospital waiting for long-term care while her husband couch-surfs. These are just two of many stories - two of too many stories.

Renovictions have very real and far-reaching consequences for individuals and our province as a whole. The mechanisms currently available to tenants are not sufficient and we owe it to these folks to do more. We could start with reinstating the ban.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Guysborough-Tracadie.

MEALS ON WHEELS PGM.: COM. SERV. - CONGRATS.

HON. GREG MORROW: I rose today, a few seconds ago, to recognize the Meals on Wheels program and its volunteers in Guysborough. This program started more than 20 years ago and is run by the kitchen at the Milford Haven Home for Special Care. Two of the gentlemen who helped launch the program, Curtis Decoste and Frank Lombardo, have since passed but they saw this vision for the community, and it continues today.

This program provides hot meals three days a week to 15 seniors in the Guysborough, Boylston and the Interval areas. Chefs Frankie Hall and Betty O'Connor and their team create healthy meals in their kitchen, and a volunteer team of about seven make sure that these residents receive their meals on time, come rain, snow, or shine.

Mr. Speaker, during times of isolation in the past two years, the face of a Meals on Wheels volunteer was certainly welcome at many doors. It saved trips to the grocery store when recipients knew a meal would be safely delivered to their home.

As well, during the Christmas season, gift cards are often given out for businesses and services in the community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the House join me in congratulating the Meals on Wheels program, Guysborough, and its volunteers for carrying out this much-used service, and for their continued kindness to seniors in our area.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare.

DEVEAU, LOUIS: LT. GOV.'S AWD. OF EXCEL. RECIP. - CONGRATS.

RONNIE LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, last October, Louis Deveau, entrepreneur and supporter of Acadian causes, was one of the first recipients of the Lieutenant Governor's Award of Excellence for l'Acadie and Francophonie.

Louis E. Deveau who grew up in Salmon River, opened Acadian Seaplants in the 1980s - a company that now exports to more than 80 countries.

To help others achieve their entrepreneurial dreams, he was instrumental in the opening of the Centre de l'entrepreneuriat Louis-E.-Deveau at l'Université Sainte-Anne, a centre that offers assistance and advice to small businesses through a network of mentors and professionals. Over the years, he has taken an active role in many of our institutions, including serving as Sainte-Anne's chancellor as well as supporting French language education and cultural activities.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Louis Deveau on receiving this award in recognition of his contribution to our community and our province.

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

MORRISON, FRED "JUNIOR": COM. SERV. - THANKS

KENDRA COOMBES: Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Fred "Junior" Morrison, president of the Gardiner Mines Senior Citizens & Pensioners Club. Speaking with another member, he was adamant that the club would not be able to function if not for the efforts of Junior, as he is affectionately known. The member of the club told our office that Junior single-handedly handled the operations of the club. There is a low membership but the patrons who use the hall or attend the many functions rave about the value the club has for the residents and community and that has a lot to do with Junior.

I ask the House to join me in thanking Fred "Junior" Morrison for all his hard work and dedication to Gardiner Mines.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

SACK. MIN. HOCK. ASSOC.: 50TH ANNIV. - CONGRATS.

HON. STEVE CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Sackville Minor Hockey Association. Since 1971, the Sackville Minor Hockey Association has been providing a fun and safe environment for over 800 players every year.

In March of this year, the association commemorated their 50th year. To pay tribute to past players, coaches and referees who grew up playing hockey in the Sackville Arena or the Sackville Sports Stadium, several awards are presented annually - such as the James Sheppard Flyer-of-the-Year Award, the Bernie Bishop Coach-of-the-Year Award, and the Gord Dwyer Award for Officials - honouring team members for their dedication to the sport.

I would ask that all members of the House of Assembly join me in congratulating the volunteer coaches, managers, trainers, and coordinators for their commitment to the community. Without them, the players would not have an opportunity to be part of such a wonderful, amazing hockey family.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

MUISE, SHAWN: BOSTON MARATHON PERF. - CONGRATS.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Yarmouth's Shawn Muise. Shawn took part in the 126th Boston Marathon, competing in the male 45 to 49 age division. He ran the race with a time of just over three hours and 45 minutes. I ask this House to join me in congratulating Yarmouth's Shawn Muise on this impressive achievement and wish him the best in the future. He certainly made his community proud.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

CLAYTON, KORDEENA: ARTISTIC SUCCESS - RECOG.

SUZY HANSEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kordeena Clayton, a proud African Nova Scotian queer visual artist who focuses on the importance of representation of Black and brown people. A resident of Halifax Needham her entire life - known for unapologetically queer and Black apparel, photography, graphic and clothing design, filmmaking and painting.

Kordeena is the owner of She Nubian Liberation Art & Apparel, founder of Takin' BLK Business Initiative Co-operative and co-founder of the Takin' BLK Gottingen and Markets, which showcases local Black products from hard-working entrepreneurs.

She currently has a short film called *Chasing GOD* being shown at the 12th annual Emerging Lens: Cultural Film Festival.

I'd like the House to please join me in recognizing and celebrating the success of Kordeena Clayton, whom I know as DeeDee, through her artistic expressions.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Eastern Shore.

PORTER, MICHELLE : SOULS HBR. RESC. MISSION WORK - RECOG.

KENT SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring recognition to Michelle Porter, CEO of Souls Harbour Rescue Mission.

Souls Harbour Rescue Mission recently acquired a home on the Eastern Shore, which has been converted into a much-needed women's shelter. Capable of housing up to 12 people, this shelter provides a safe, welcoming environment for women and mothers with children.

I ask all Members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in recognizing Michelle's efforts to change lives by offering secure housing for people in crisis.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Annapolis.

BARKER, GEORGE: 100TH BIRTHDAY - BEST WISHES

CARMAN KERR: George Barker of Wilmot turned 101 years old on February 24th, and I rise today to celebrate that amazing milestone. George came to Wilmot with his family when he was four years old and has lived in the area ever since.

In 1948, he and his wife Pauline bought the house that he still calls home. They raised six children together and enjoyed 65 years of marriage before Pauline passed in 2013. During his lifetime, George worked at a variety of different jobs, including farm labourer, snowplow operator, mechanic, and vocational school instructor. These days, George enjoys hanging out with his dog, Rollie, going for drives, watching the birds, and spending time with family and friends.

I invite all members of the House of Assembly join me in wishing George Barker a belated Happy 101st Birthday with continued happiness and good health.

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

YMCA YOUTH OUTREACH GRP.: SUPP. FOR IMMS. - THANKS

LISA LACHANCE: Mr. Speaker, recent world events have only reinforced the need for services in Nova Scotia to help those leaving their country and finding a new place to call home. Therefore, today I am recognizing the YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs' Youth Outreach group.

This group provides social activities, homework help, employment support, and countless other supports to 13- to 25-year-olds who are new to the HRM. The YMCA works tirelessly to ensure new Canadian youth have a safe space to simply be or to get expert advice on navigating their journey.

I ask that my colleagues in the House join me in recognizing the invaluable contribution of the YMCA's Youth Outreach group to new Nova Scotians.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

LEG. SITTINGS: DISAPPOINTMENT WITH GOV'T. - RECOG.

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Mr. Speaker, our main job as legislators is to bring the concerns of the people we represent and those of all Nova Scotians here to this Legislature to create change and produce new legislation. As an elected MLA, I want to publicly state how disappointed I am that our government does not want to work hard in this Legislature.

Our Legislative sessions are the fewest number of days in all the provinces of Canada. I have a strong work ethic, and I want the people I represent and all Nova Scotians to have the best Legislature in the country, not the weakest.

I also want to state - since no one else has - how disappointed I was to witness the unprofessionalism and disrespect shown to our Clerks and to the Chair last night by the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board and the Premier. The Clerks and the Chair and the member for Dartmouth North deserve an apology . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. I believe that your statement would be out of order because it sounds more like a political speech, and I think it would be ruled out of order. I apologize for that, but it is political and it's pointing fingers.

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Well I'm speaking on behalf of the people I represent in Cumberland North, and I do believe they deserve an apology.

THE SPEAKER: I recognize that, and I apologize that I ruled you out of order, but that's the way it has to be.

The honourable member for Shelburne.

SCOTT, PHIL: LOG ROLLING ACCOMPLS. - RECOG.

NOLAN YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Phil Scott of Barrington, a nine-time world champion log roller. At age 20, Phil won his first world championship at the world's largest lumberjack festival, dumping numerous pros into the water.

During his career, Phil travelled the world, the highlight being his trip to Japan, and following his competitive career as just log rolling, Phil spent the Winter months on the American Lumberjack circuit mesmerizing all who viewed his skillful log rolling act, consisting of a skipping rope and a ball, as well as removing his sneakers to be barefoot, and log rolling on roller skates.

In 1987, Phil was inducted into the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame, the only inductee currently listed for log rolling. I respectfully ask all members of the Legislature to join me in acknowledging Phil Scott for his amazing local talents at log rolling.

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

[2:00 p.m.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

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

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM.: HEALTH CARE CAPACITY - ADDRESS

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Mr. Speaker, it was just last week that Dr. Tam, the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, confirmed that Canada is in the sixth wave and her main concern is hospitalizations. She was critical of some provinces not requiring masks, and she's really concerned about hospitalizations.

More and more Canadians are ending up in hospital, especially in Nova Scotia, one of the few provinces that was pointed out. Last week we had 72 people admitted to the hospital because of COVID-19 - I'll table that. Yesterday, the NSHA said that their beds were at 99 per cent capacity, with acute care beds at 106 per cent capacity. That's overflowing.

I'd like to ask the Premier: What is being done to ensure that we have more capacity in our hospitals and acute care beds?

HON. TIM HOUSTON (The Premier): Obviously the concerns over access to health care are paramount on the minds of this government and on the minds of Nova Scotians, Mr. Speaker. People know that the state of health care has been deteriorating for quite some time. We've taken a number of actions. We'll also release our action for health care report over the next few days here.

What I would tell the member is that there is a lot of spending in this budget focused on health care. There is a lot being done to improve access to health care in this province. I encourage the member opposite to get behind this budget and to get behind Nova Scotians. Support the budget and let's get together on improving health care.

IAIN RANKIN: Despite that spending, Mr. Speaker, health care continues to get worse and worse, and this government has been in power for over half a year now. NSHA CEO Karen Oldfield says that a solution to ensure service delivery is improved is overstaffing. I'll table that. Like an airplane, she said.

I'd like to know where we're going to find all the staff to start overstaffing our hospitals. They promised in the last election campaign that they would hire over 2,000 nurses, and they can't even fill the vacancies that we have in the system today.

My question for the Premier: Is he confident that this strategy of overstaffing, in an airplane style, will be the solution to address the hospital capacity crisis that we have today?

THE PREMIER: What I've always said is that it's going to take a lot of money to fix health care. It is going to take time. What I am confident in is the determination of this government to fix health care. We'll be successful. We will improve health care.

We have a lot of work to do. We know how the prior government balanced the budget: They did it by allowing those vacancies, by allowing health care to deteriorate, by looking the other way from those Nova Scotians who needed health care.

We will not look the other way from Nova Scotians. We will continue to support Nova Scotians. That party will have a chance to get in line and support them too, and they can do that by supporting the budget.

IAIN RANKIN: The member likes to look backwards, but what didn't happen during our government during the whole pandemic is all the babies who are showing up right now at the IWK with the Omicron virus - record numbers.

Stephanie Norman, a young mom, said she had to wait in the ER for six hours alongside 10 other parents who had COVID-19-positive babies. This is unacceptable and could have been prevented if the Premier had acted on the advice of Public Health and the infectious disease specialists who have been calling to ensure that we're following medical advice, especially during respiratory season, which we're currently still in.

My question for the Premier is: How much worse does it have to get before he acts?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, it's obviously incredibly distressing to read those stories from all Nova Scotians, but certainly from parents of young infants. This is a

difficult thing for anyone to read. We certainly feel that as much or more than anyone as we work to improve health care.

It's stories like that that give us the determination to keep focusing through to make sure that we improve health care in this province. We are completely focused on improving health care in this province, and we will do everything possible to make sure that every Nova Scotian can access the health care they need when they need it and where they need it. We are determined and we are focused.

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

PREM.: RENOVICTIONS - INSENSITIVITY

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, Elly Archer is a pensioner who has rented an apartment in Dartmouth for 15 years. She pays \$676 a month. Ellie Archer was told she'd be evicted on the day the government lifted the renovictions ban.

She needs a place to live. When she hears this government's minister refer to \$1,700-a-month apartments as "affordable" and to speak about affordable housing as "not wanting to create a ghetto," I don't think it sounds very sensitive to her situation.

Will the Premier acknowledge that his government's sensitivity to the situation of people like Elly Archer has, to this point, left room for some improvement?

THE PREMIER: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, those stories have an impact on anyone that hears them, there's no question about that. What I would say to Elly Archer and all Nova Scotians is we are focused.

Nova Scotians see the effort that's going into fixing the housing crisis that we have, the investments that are being made in housing, \$15 million of affordable housing, and rent subsidies. There is a lot in this budget. Is there going to be more that can be done? Of course, Mr. Speaker, but we will continue to do that. Under the minister's leadership, more has happened to improve access to housing in the last six months than in the last six years and we'll continue going.

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, residents of a New Waterford apartment building were evicted in March when the fire inspector deemed that the property was unsafe. About 20 people were displaced. Many of them were clients of the Department of Community Services.

When asked about their situation and about what the department was going to do to ensure the safety of these clients, the government's minister said exactly: "We all know that having a home is really at this point in time a luxury."

Does the Premier agree that a more empathetic attitude on the government's part could possibly be called for?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, here's what I would say: On the one hand, the member opposite would say that you should never have renovictions, and on the other hand, he would say that the Fire Marshal evicted somebody from a building that was unsafe. Does he want that? Do you want people living in unsafe conditions or do you want a government that puts a process in place to make sure that people have safe, affordable housing? That's what we're focused on. That's what we're investing in.

The member opposite should know, and the colleagues in the House should know, that there is a process where people can report if it's a renoviction. There will be a hearing and we will make sure that everything is done in a compassionate way. That's what focuses our government.

GARY BURRILL: Mr. Speaker, Melaney White is a social worker who works in Antigonish. She recently spoke about families she knows who are resorting to camping now because they have no other housing options.

Earlier this year when talking about children and the return to school, the Premier said: For many Nova Scotians, school is a place where kids are safe. It's the place where kids are warm. It's even the place where they get their meals. That's a sad fact of our society, but we can't ignore it. It is what it is.

It is what it is. That is exactly what the Premier said. Does the Premier agree that "it is what it is" is not the attitude that people who are suffering from inadequate incomes are looking for from the Government of Nova Scotia?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, obviously, the intent of those words is that we have to accept the reality of where we're at before we can move forward. We will not look the other way from realities. We will be very frank about where things are.

You know what? We will then take action, as we have in this budget. I hope the member can find it in himself and his colleagues to support this budget and maybe even find one glimpse of something positive in \$13 billion worth of spending. We haven't heard it yet, but I assure you that this is a government that focuses on Nova Scotians just like the party that put that budget forward.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

PREM.: COVID MODELLING - UPDATE

HON. IAIN RANKIN: Last week, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health and Wellness confirmed she does not have modelling to know how many intensive care hospital beds will be needed in the weeks to come as cases continue to rise. I'll table that.

The minister said, "we want to make sure that we're on the right trajectory, and we need a little bit more information in order to release something that is accurate." Even the Minister of Health and Wellness is looking for more data when it comes to COVID-19.

My question for the Premier: Is this vital modelling ready so that our hospitals and emergency care system are better prepared?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I would never undermine the abilities of the people running our health care system. I would never undermine Public Health. I know the members opposite are very anxious to create division and undermine those who are trying to run health care. I support the people working on the front lines of health care. I would never stand in this Chamber and undermine their ability to manage the health care system. They have my complete and utter confidence.

IAIN RANKIN: That wasn't the question. We continue to hear from health care workers who want us to ask these questions because they're challenged with the overcrowded emergency rooms downtown. Omicron waves under this government have set new records with 100 cases per 100,000, about 10 times the national rate.

There has been an average of 1,000 cases per day, with a 102-per-cent increase over the past 14 days, and I'll table that.

We are also among the leading provinces for hospitalizations. We also know there are no new beds. The Nova Scotia Health Authority has shared that beds across the system are virtually full. My question for the Premier is: What is the plan to build bed capacity? We know the plan is coming out. Can he commit to ensure that we're growing bed capacity with his new health care plan?

THE PREMIER: There's no question that the Omicron variant is highly contagious, much more contagious than previous variants. There's going to be no question about that. Any objective viewer would see that. Not just in Nova Scotia, but certainly worldwide.

What I would tell the member is that making sure that Nova Scotians have access to health care in a timely manner, where they need it, when they need it, is the focus of this government. Although it's been a requirement of the government to release a full health care plan for quite some time, longer than I've been in this Chamber, it's never happened. This government will release a full plan for the first time, to Nova Scotians, in a generation. We're focused. We will get it done.

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

DHW: HOSP. STAFFING MODELLING - RELEASE

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: We also know the strains that waves of Omicron, under this government, have put on our hospital staffing. Not just our doctors and nurses, but ancillary services like medical technicians and laboratory support staff. Dr. Todd Hatchette, the head of Nova Scotia Health's Central Zone microbiology lab, said that modelling suggests the staffing impact will go on for weeks. I'll table that.

It looks like there has been some modelling completed. My question for the Premier is: If this government has completed staff modelling, why has this information not been released to Nova Scotians? Do they not have the right to know?

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: Certainly, Nova Scotia Health continues to monitor the staffing situation and they do modelling in terms of where folks are. We do expect that there will be a number of health care workers returning in the next number of days.

I think one of the things that Dr. Hatchette was also alluding to is the longstanding, chronic staffing vacancies that have existed in our health care system for a very long time. That's one of the things that we're going to need to tackle. There are pressures related to Omicron, but we certainly know that with the health care recruitment and retention plan that we'll be putting forward, these vacancies will begin to become addressed, and they have not been addressed for a very long time.

PATRICIA ARAB: If this government has any sort of information or modelling of how bad things might get or when things might get better, Nova Scotians deserve to know. In previous waves of COVID-19, the Department of Health and Wellness, alongside the NSHA and Public Health, had been completely transparent with Nova Scotians, updating them on the status of our health care system, and I'll table that for those who are chuckling.

This included staffing, ICU beds, capacity, wait times, and more. We have yet to see CEO Oldfield provide information to Nova Scotians. Information has been slim to none.

My question for the Premier is: Why is the CEO of NSHA hiding this information from Nova Scotians?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: Certainly, there's no attempt to hide any information at all from Nova Scotians. Certainly, Dr. Nicole Boutilier was one of the folks who was able to provide some information yesterday, directly from Nova Scotia Health, in regard to the situation, in regard to staffing and capacity in the hospital. There has been no attempt whatsoever to withhold information.

[2:15 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

DHW: SURGERY STAFFING - SHORTAGE

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, this Premier ran on a promise that he would reduce wait times for surgeries and meet national benchmarks within 18 months of coming into office. We are now nine months away from that deadline.

There are tens of thousands of Nova Scotians who are still waiting for their surgeries and an additional 2,512 surgeries were cancelled in January. We know, because of the current state of this pandemic and what I believe is this government's mismanagement of the pandemic, that number is most likely increasing as well. This means that folks are at home, in pain, waiting for surgeries that can provide them with relief and mobility.

My question to the minister is: Does this government's staffing model include the staff required to deliver the campaign promise of 24/7 operating surgery?

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: Again, as we release the Action for Health plan, we will be looking at a number of opportunities, the number of ways in which we can address that surgical wait time.

We know there are staffing pressures. This is a long-standing problem that has not been addressed. We know there are multiple ways that we have to address that problem - recruitment and retention, we need to look at immigration, we need to look at a number of different things. We need to think outside the box.

I have confidence that we will begin to chip away at that waiting list in a very timely fashion as we get through this recent wave of Omicron.

ZACH CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I know this government has developed a tendency to blame all the challenges in our health care system on previous governments, but let's just look at the last eight months. We went from being the safest place during this pandemic to the province that has the highest rate of spread in the whole country. This is overwhelming our health care system. This is directly related to this government's work, not the work of the previous government, which beat back these pandemic waves succinctly.

This government promised to have 24/7 surgeries available to Nova Scotians and that they would meet the national benchmarks within the first 18 months of being in office. My question to the Premier is: Will they meet this timeline and, if not, what's the new timeline people need to wait to get the 24/7 surgeries that they were promised?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: The difference with the current waves that we are experiencing is it's very easy in the earlier waves when mandates and restrictions were in place and Public Health will tell you that we are no longer in the acute phase of the pandemic. We are now in a place where we are transitioning and trying to learn to live with COVID-19 in our communities.

This is a very different variant - it is very contagious. It is not anything that we've seen before. I disagree that we are mismanaging this. We are working very hard; Nova Scotians are working very hard. Our immunization rates are the highest in the country. I do not accept that we are mismanaging this pandemic.

I support Public Health, as well as the health care workers who have been working very hard over the last number of months.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

DED: SPENDING GBA - COMMIT

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic Development. The federal government has been undertaking gender-based analysis on its programs and policies since the 1990s. Last week when I asked whether this government had undertaken gender-basis analysis of the budget, just as I've been asking for each budget of the last five years, the minister answered that the best possible way forward for Nova Scotians, including women, is to grow the economy.

This "rising tide lifts all boats" logic is precisely why we need gender-based analysis for programs like the Innovation Rebate and More Opportunity for Skilled Trades.

I'd be happy to discuss this with the minister, but in the meantime my question to the minister is: Will she commit to tabling a gender-based analysis of her department's spending?

HON. SUSAN CORKUM-GREEK: What I will say again is I reiterate my willingness to meet with you to discuss this and I will take it back to my department and figure out what that would engender to take that on.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing a positive response. In the meantime, I want to ask about the insistence that there is a plan. We've talked about this a lot in this Chamber.

Let me table some actual economic recovery plans: the StrongerBC Economic Plan; the Economic Recovery and Growth Action Plan, from New Brunswick; the Big Reset, from Newfoundland and Labrador; Alberta's Recovery Plan. These are plans ranging from seven pages to almost 400, but what do we get in Nova Scotia? Scattershot funding

announcements, some of which were good, some of which we celebrate, some of which we scratch our heads about, and an ad campaign telling people to “get back out there,” a campaign which has been grimly lampooned by a public who’s craving transparency.

Can the minister agree that it is not enough to simply repeat the notion that the government has a plan, and that, at some point, the minister should probably table one?

SUSAN CORKUM-GREEK: I find it curious that you would point to the Alberta Recovery Plan, which is so based on things at odds with the shared view, I believe, of this House in terms of our environmental stewardship of the planet.

What I will say is, nothing has been hidden. If you need documentation, look at our election platform. The plan is based on increasing population, on increasing consumption of locally produced goods, internet connectivity, growing green businesses and opportunities. You can ask for a study - we prefer action.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney-Membertou.

DHW: NEW PET-CT SCAN FOR CBRH - UPDATE

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: I asked this question in the last Session, and because it’s coming up again in the media - and this is around the new cancer centre in Cape Breton: Again on CBC, they were reporting that the cancer doctors on the ground are advocating for a new PET-CT Scan for the new cancer centre that’s being built. They’re still awaiting an announcement from the government - or a meeting from the government - and the commitment was made by the previous government that the families in Cape Breton would have this important equipment for the new cancer centre to support families at home.

My question to the Minister of Health and Wellness: Can she update the House on the conversations that she’s been having with medical professionals and the cancer doctors on the ground in Cape Breton about that new PET-CT Scan for the Cape Breton Regional Hospital?

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: I was able to meet with some folks from Cape Breton, probably about six or eight weeks ago. I’m sorry, I can’t remember the exact time. The foundation, for sure, and I do know that the talks are ongoing and that there is a review that’s undertaken, but I don’t have an update at this time.

DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: That’s what concerns me - when I hear the word “review.” There’s a lot of concern on the Island that there are folks within the health care system that don’t want to see that PET Scan for the Cape Breton Regional Hospital. Millions of dollars have been raised thus far by amazing community organizations and volunteers on the ground in Cape Breton.

40,000 families go through that cancer centre each year, and I'm happy to see that the current government is continuing on that path of the health care redevelopment. This is an important piece of equipment for home. Doctors are waiting for an answer. The community's waiting for an answer. They've raised millions of dollars to get to this point.

Will the minister today commit to Cape Breton and commit to the medical professionals on the ground a new PET-CT Scanner for the new cancer centre at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: Certainly, as we continue to move through getting our feet under us in this government and looking at health care, that review will be very important for us to understand the impacts of that piece of equipment. I am not able to commit to that today, but as I said, the review is under way, and certainly we will get back as soon as we're able.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

DHW: SURGICAL WAIT TIMES - ACTION

HON. KEITH IRVING: This government told Nova Scotians that they have been working on a plan for health care for over a year before the election. Now they've been working for eight months on that plan.

We need to talk about surgical wait times. Yesterday, the Fraser Institute released some interesting new numbers, and I'll table those. It turns out that we are leading Canada for surgical wait times. In fact, 10.76 per cent of the population of Nova Scotia is waiting for a surgical procedure, and we know - with the headlines and talking to our friends and neighbours - it's getting worse.

It seems clear now that the government's handling of COVID-19 has filled our hospitals. What has the Minister of Health and Wellness accomplished in the last eight months to reverse the troubling trend upward?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for the question. Certainly we are very focused on health care. We are looking at access and flow. We've created a command centre. There are a number of different reasons that contribute to wait times. The action for health care plan will address our solutions moving forward, and I am confident in the ability of Nova Scotia Health Authority and the Department of Health and Wellness to work together to address that wait time in a timely fashion.

KEITH IRVING: Mr. Speaker, we are constantly reminded of the consequences of COVID-19 but it's the consequences of the unreasonable wait times that are causing more and more stress on Nova Scotians. Our hospitals are full. People are living through more

physical pain, psychological distress, permanent disability, or worse, dying. I had a friend lost waiting for surgery.

My question for the Minister of Health and Wellness: For various cardiac procedures, wait times vary from eight to 23 days. I think Nova Scotians want to know when will things start to improve. When will they start to improve? We are hearing a lot on how it is going to get worse. Nova Scotians want to know when.

MICHELLE THOMPSON: My understanding is that there are still urgent and emergent surgeries that are happening, particularly around cardiovascular surgeries as an example. Those will continue on in an urgent and emergent capacity. We are looking at a variety of ways. We are looking at expanding OR capacity in Cape Breton as well as Dartmouth General Hospital.

I am very sorry to the member for losing his friend. I feel very badly about that. We continue to work within the system and there are a number of actions that are being undertaken in order to address the surgical wait-times.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford South.

DHW: DELAYED SURGERY IMPACTS - ADDRESS

BRAEDON CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in this Session we have been talking a lot about the cost of living crisis and the impact that a single missed or cancelled shift can have on a family's bottom line. According to a study by the Fraser Institute that was cited by the previous member, the average cost to the individual in lost wages and productivity due to surgical wait times in Nova Scotia is \$6,343, which is more than twice the Canadian average - and I will table that. That, of course, does not include the cost of care provided by family, or the mental anguish of waiting for weeks and weeks and months for surgery.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness: What is this government doing to ensure the health and financial impacts of delayed surgeries are dealt with in a timely fashion?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: There have been a number of things that we have undertaken in terms of addressing that surgical wait time and trying to get those wait times down.

We do have designated beds in Halifax - in Central Zone, as well as Cape Breton. We have been looking at contracts with Scotia Surgery and other private companies to expand our access when we've maximized Nova Scotia Health Authority's capacity, and we are looking at a central registry as well to streamline the process and make sure that people are not waiting unnecessarily and we have a very broad view of the health care system.

These are just a couple of examples of ways in which we are tackling the health care crisis and the ways that we are reducing surgical wait-times.

BRAEDON CLARK: I'm sure I am not alone in this Chamber in hearing from constituents all the time, many of whom have been waiting for months and, in some cases, years for critical surgeries. It's a very difficult thing for people to deal with.

We know that we are in a cost of living crisis. The cost of everything is increasing quickly. Inflation is now at nearly 7 per cent - 6.8 per cent in Nova Scotia. Nova Scotians waiting for surgery should not have to face severe financial burdens as a result of extensive delays due to backlog, staff out because of COVID-19, and the lack of action to keep our hospitals safe and prepared for this surge.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Wellness: What would she say to Nova Scotians who continue to wait for their surgeries and cannot work while they wait weeks, months, sometimes years for surgeries?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: I would assure Nova Scotians that we are very committed to fixing health care, that we are working very hard, that the Nova Scotia Health Authority and the health leadership team are working together to find innovative solutions, and we are leaving no stone unturned. That is what I would tell Nova Scotians. We are committed to improving surgical wait times.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

RTA: AFFORDABLE HOUSING - PROTECTION

SUZY HANSEN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The other day, I asked the minister about a mother in Lunenburg whose home was being demolished while she was still living there, even though she followed all the rules. I didn't get an answer and the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services says that protections are in place for renovictions, but they are clearly not working.

People are losing homes and we are losing vital, affordable housing. My question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is: What is the minister doing to protect existing affordable housing across the province?

HON. COLTON LEBLANC: What I will say is that the process is working. Again, I spoke a few times in this sitting regarding protections that we implemented last Fall. Mr. Speaker, we've been keeping a close eye in the department on the number of applications submitted by landlords. There have been 28 submitted to date.

What I can report to the House is that there have been five hearings with decisions. Four of those have been in favour of the tenants and one has resolved in a mediation between the tenant and the landlord, where both agreed to end the tenancy early.

SUZY HANSEN: Mr. Speaker, there are now people being evicted from their homes every day and the government solution is a marketing campaign about the renovation process. Whether the renovation process is done properly or not, the main issue is that people being evicted today have nowhere else to go. My question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is: Does the minister acknowledge that people who have been served eviction notices need a place to live right now more than an educational leaflet?

COLTON LEBLANC: I'm not sure where people are getting evicted every day, based on the data I presented in the House of the number of applications that have gone through the process and continue to go through the process. What we do not keep track of, at the department, is renovations that are mutually agreed upon by tenants and landlords.

Again, as I've stated, Mr. Speaker, this is a new process. If there are any questions regarding the process, the amazing staff at our contact centre at Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services would be more than happy to help answer the questions and inform Nova Scotians of their rights and responsibilities.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston.

DHW - COVID CASES: CRISIS POINT - ACTION

ANGELA SIMMONDS: Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the vice president of medicine for the Nova Scotia Health Authority, Dr. Nicole Boutilier, had this to say about surgeries:

“Right now, it's very dependent on our actual resources in the actual community where services are being delivered . . . So we're watching carefully every day and trying to do as many as we possibly can in every location that we can. And at times, places would need to slow down in order to make room for the acute care patients coming in.”

Our acute care beds are at 106 per cent capacity because of COVID-19 and we have weeks of transmissions still ahead of us. My question for the Premier is: What crisis point do we have to hit for this government to do the right thing and act when it comes to COVID-19?

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: There are a few things in there. We do continue to watch. The hospital system is doing an incredible job in terms of managing what's in front of them. As I've said before, the reason that we don't see broad system shutdown is

because we have to respond to what's in front of us at certain places. Three staff may not be as big an impact in a large facility, whereas in a smaller facility it could be very disruptive, so we continue to monitor that.

We are looking at spaces. We are looking at all the surge capacity that our health care workers are familiar with addressing. We have completed 90 per cent of surgeries, which was another part of that article, I believe - that 90 per cent of surgeries have continued throughout this wave of Omicron. It speaks to the resiliency we have in our health care workers and in the health care system.

ANGELA SIMMONDS: I thank the minister for the detailed answer and the information. Mr. Speaker, there over 325 Nova Scotians in hospital for COVID-19 and 165 who have died in this wave. Yet this government is telling people to get back out there. My question for the Premier is: This wave is pushing our health care system to its limits - what will it take for action?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: As we've said before, this is a very different point in the pandemic. We have gone through the acute phase and we're now in the transition phase. Public Health measures are still strongly recommended. We are asking people and recommending to people that not only do they wear their masks but they get their immunizations, that they watch their social circles and keep them small. All of these things provide a multi-layer approach in order for us to keep ourselves and our families and our loved ones safe.

We continue to do all the things that we did in the past. Omicron is very different. Immunization is essential, and we encourage people to get out, finish their primary series, and get their boosters when they're eligible.

THE SPEAKER: The member for Clayton Park West.

DHW - HOSP. BEDS: LTC NUMBERS - UPDATE

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: We know that far too many Nova Scotians are in hospital waiting to be admitted into long-term care. The seniors are prioritized for admission into care to free up beds and capacity in our hospitals, but this number is not tracked publicly on our government's wait-list time or on the website.

My question for the Minister of Health and Wellness: How many hospital beds are currently occupied by people waiting to be placed in long-term care? If she can give us that number, please.

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: I don't have that number in front of me today, but I certainly know that the investments that our government has made in long-term care

are significant in order for us to take people who are waiting in health care environments into long-term care, where they will get the absolute best care as a result of that move.

We are heavily investing in long-term care. We are heavily investing in a command centre in order for us to have access and flow, and we're committed to improving the issues that have been long-standing and needing to be addressed for a number of years.

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: I thank the minister, but the point here is the numbers and people knowing. It's the information that's not being shared. That is what we're trying to get here for Nova Scotians to hear from the minister, because I can tell her in 2021 there were 194 seniors waiting for admission. She can't give me a number today for some reason. We know there is limited capacity because of Omicron, that we have established.

My question for the Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care: What is being done today to get more seniors out of hospital beds and into their home in long-term care?

HON. BARBARA ADAMS: I am so grateful that you asked me this question, because one of the things that we have done is significantly expanded the direct benefits program. We had approximately 300 people in acute care waiting for long-term care beds, and we just moved 25 of them back home with additional supports - that's 8.3 per cent. We also reduced the wait time for home care by almost 400 seniors - down from 1,500 approximately to 1,100 - and that's just in the last eight months.

What I will tell the member is that we know exactly how many people were waiting for long-term care beds, except when the previous government was in place they stopped collecting that data in March so that they didn't report it online. We put it back. It is online, and you can have a look there.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford Basin.

SLTC - STAFF SHORTAGES: LATEST NUMBER - UPDATE

HON. KELLY REGAN: To follow up on the questions asked by my colleague from Clayton Park West, part of the problem is actually that there are beds but there's no one to staff them. This is what happens when you don't protect the health care system during a pandemic.

A Nova Scotian reached out to me deeply concerned. Her mother has just been placed in a long-term care facility. But in this facility she discovered that a third of the beds are not open to admission because they don't have the staff required to actually care for those residents.

My question for the Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care: How many vacancies are there today in long-term care, and how many workers are off sick?

HON. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for this question. I'm delighted to answer it.

The reason why we have allowed staffing beds to be empty is because we are not forcing our staff to be working constant overtime, constantly being mandated to stay late, more than they were before. The previous government ordered long-term care staff to not send people to emergency in order to deal with the emergency room wait time.

The answer to the question is that we have approximately 300 beds that are closed right now, out of the 7,926, and we happen to know that because we actually counted the number of single and double rooms.

KELLY REGAN: I am pleased to see that we have at least one minister who will actually get the numbers for us. Congratulations. (Applause)

A week ago, the minister admitted that there are actually 39 long-term care facilities in this province that are managing COVID-19 outbreaks - 39. Of those, more than a dozen are closed to new admissions because of staff shortages. We now know that the province is bringing in help from Ontario to fill in the gaps - and I'll table that. I don't recall seeing a press release or any information about this, Mr. Speaker.

My question for the minister is: Who from Ontario is being sent to Nova Scotia - how many, what are they doing, and how long are they staying here?

BARBARA ADAMS: As a health professional, I don't tend to need a press release to do good work.

The answer to that question is that the previous government was bringing - my staff was their staff. They were bringing in these workers. They can go ask their previous Ministers of Health and Wellness and ask them exactly how many are coming in.

During Estimates, I did discuss that. I don't have the exact numbers. But I can tell you that without those travelling nurses, we would be in more trouble than we are now, because the previous government didn't even count the number of CCAs they had. We will be able to tell you in June, and I can't wait to come back in the Fall to tell you exactly how many CCAs we have in the province of Nova Scotia.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

DHW: HEALTH CARE SHORTAGE - UPDATE

SUSAN LEBLANC: I really wish my question was for the Minister of Seniors and Long-term Care. Unfortunately, I'm going to have to change direction. My question is for the Premier.

The Nova Scotia Health Authority confirmed its acute-care bed occupancy rate as of Tuesday was running at 106 per cent. There are over 88,000 Nova Scotians on the Need a Family Practice Registry, and 27,000 people waiting for surgery. We've heard all about this today. Last week there were 577 health care workers across the system absent due to COVID-19, and Nova Scotia has one of the highest per-capita daily case counts. None of these metrics have improved since this government took office, despite the Premier's promise to fix health care.

Mr. Speaker, we've heard it before today, and I'm going to say it again. Can I ask the Premier: How much worse is it going to get?

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: I don't think that it's fair to say that things are getting worse when we are dealing with an Omicron wave. We have worked very hard. There have been a number of initiatives that have been put in place. We've been working in acute care; we've been working in long-term care; we've been working in addictions and mental health; and we've been working with Emergency Health Services.

We are facing an Omicron wave, similar to our counterparts across this country, and I am very proud of the work that the health care workers are doing. Things are going to get better.

SUSAN LEBLANC: Mr. Speaker, here's something the government has done on the health care file. They fired the Nova Scotia Health Authority board that used to meet publicly and replaced it with a leadership team of four people - Karen Oldfield, the interim CEO, served on the Premier's transition team and is on an indefinite contract; Janet Davidson is the top administrator; and Deputy Ministers Lagassé and Orrell both serve at the pleasure of the Premier.

No doubt these are all competent professionals, but if Nova Scotians have questions about the decisions being made by this very small team, there is no longer a public and transparent body to take them to. When will the Premier restore open, transparent decision-making at Nova Scotia Health?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: I agree, we need to have ways that we reach back into community and understand what the needs of those communities are. We are looking at our options moving forward - what is the best way for Nova Scotians to be able to give feedback about health care and have meaningful input.

The board at Nova Scotia Health was wonderful. We are very grateful for the work that they did. We are simply taking a more agile decision-making team that marries the Department of Health and Wellness and the Nova Scotia Health Authority together to get some things done. We will re-establish an opportunity for communities to have input into health care. I don't have a timeline for you right now.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford Basin.

SLTC: HOME CARE STAFFING SHORTAGE - INFORM

HON. KELLY REGAN: Mr. Speaker, another Nova Scotian who reached out to me recently - this time it was a daughter whose mother-in-law is nearing the end of her life. The mother was sent home and told she would receive daily care. The minister was just talking about that. But I have to tell you that that care has been spotty at best, barely receiving three days each week. This poor woman frequently waits all day for her help to show up. Her family are off at work and when they come to bring her an evening meal, they discover that no one has shown up, no one called.

This woman needs consistent care to spend her remaining days in dignity. My question is for the Minister of Seniors and Long-term Care, who just finished bragging about sending seniors home to get their home care: What is the current staffing shortage for home care and how many other appointments like hers have been cancelled due to staffing shortages?

HON. BARBARA ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for the question. The member is literally quoting what I've been saying for the past four years - that the shortages in home care were atrocious, and I couldn't agree more. I will say it and I've said it over and over again: the No.1 complaint I got in Opposition was home care being cancelled, home care not showing up when they were supposed to. I think I even raised it in this Legislature when the previous government was over on this side.

I had two constituents who fell on a Friday, had no home care on Saturday and Sunday, and they weren't found until Monday morning. That is the reality when you don't hire enough staff, when you don't train enough CCAs, when you don't give them a living wage. That is why we gave them a 23 per cent raise.

KELLY REGAN: Why are you standing in the House bragging that you sent people home if there isn't consistent staff there? Seniors living at home are among those who wait the longest for placement - 388 days if you're in Cape Breton, 248 if you're in Halifax, and roughly 100 everywhere else, and I'll table that.

That's why home care is so important, Mr. Speaker. It promises dignity to these seniors while they wait. My question for the Minister of Seniors and Long-term Care is: Since the government cannot guarantee its contracted home care workers will show up or even bother to call a senior waiting for care, would they at least reimburse families who are going to have to go out and hire people on their own to ensure that somebody shows up to take care of their parents?

BARBARA ADAMS: The excitement of having staff be able to support people to move home from hospital is part of the solution to getting the wait times for surgeries

down. That is a very good thing. The one thing I will tell you is that there was no strategic plan for continuing care since 2006. There will be one; you'll see it tomorrow. What I will say to the member is that there are a lot of options to support people in their homes. We have expanded the direct benefits program by almost \$13 million and there is much more to come.

THE SPEAKER: I just want to remind the members that when there are questions to and fro, you come through the Speaker and not speak specifically.

The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Dartmouth.

DHW: FERTILITY TREATMENT WAIT TIMES - INFORM

LORELEI NICOLL: Mr. Speaker, one of the big campaign promises of this government was the fertility tax credit, which I'm happy they did good on. But the credit is only good if you can find treatment. There's only one fertility clinic in Atlantic Canada, located here in Nova Scotia, and the wait-list is upwards of a year to get in the door and several more for a next appointment. When trying to conceive, every month matters. The clinic has only three reproductive endocrinologists and they asked the province to help hire another clinician. The answer? We don't fund private clinics, and I'll table that.

This statement is incorrect, as the clinic is a non-profit. Considering that this province is giving a tax credit for fertility treatments and doing nothing to build the capacity to deliver the service here in the province, my question for the Minister of Health and Wellness is: Is this policy only going to increase wait times for Nova Scotians?

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

We'll be taking a 10-minute break and then we'll resume.

[2:50 p.m. The House recessed.]

[3:04 p.m. The House reconvened.]

THE SPEAKER: Order, please.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Mr. Speaker, I move that the hour of adjournment today be not 6:00 p.m. but 11:59 p.m.

THE SPEAKER: The motion is to change the time tonight from 6:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

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 a Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

[3:06 p.m. The House resolved itself into a CWH on Bills with Kent Smith in the Chair.]

[11:23 p.m. CHW on Bills rose and the House reconvened with Deputy Speaker Lisa Lachance in the Chair.]

THE CHAIR: The Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on Bills reports:

THE CLERK: That the Committee of the Whole House on Bills has met and considered the following bills:

Bill No. 112 - Holy Heart Seminary Dissolution Act.

Bill No. 122 - Lunenburg Rod and Gun Club Replacement Act.

Bill No. 149 - Financial Measures (2022) Act.

without amendments. And the Chair has been instructed to recommend these bills to the favourable consideration of the House.

THE CHAIR: Ordered that these bills be read a third time on a future day. The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: I never thought we'd get here but here we are. That concludes government business for the day. I move that the House do now rise to meet again on Friday, April 22nd between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 11:59 p.m. Business will include Committee of the Whole on Supply to deal with Estimates and third reading of Bills No. 118, 120, 123, 124, 126, 129, 131, 134, 137, 138, 147, 148, 154, 155, 149, 112, and 122.

THE CHAIR: The motion is that the House rise to meet again on Friday, April 22nd between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 11:59 p.m.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

The House stands adjourned until Friday, April 22nd at 9:00 a.m.

[The House rose at 11:24 p.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 261**

By: Hon. Kim Masland (Queens)

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

Whereas on February 23rd, Athletics Nova Scotia handed out its 2021 awards in a virtual presentation; and

Whereas Queens County's Ben Theriau was named the province's Special Olympics Male Athlete of the Year; and

Whereas Ben has been part of the Lunenburg/Queens Special Olympics Program for over eight years, and has won over several provincial and national awards during competitions; and

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in applauding Ben on receiving this well-deserved award - all of Queens County is proud of you, Ben.

RESOLUTION NO. 262

By: Hon. Kim Masland (Queens)

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

Whereas Queens County entrepreneurs Chassity Allison and Blake Theriau own and operate three businesses in Liverpool: DVL Publishing Inc., Signs at Exit 19 Trophy and Sign Shop, and Route 3 Cellar Taproom and Grill; and

Whereas these businesses contribute to the local economy, provide jobs for local workers, and offer valuable services to our communities; and

Whereas Chassity and Blake are to be commended for their tireless commitment to strengthening the business community and economy of Queens, and for their ongoing community-minded approach;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in thanking Chassity and Blake for all they have done and continue to do for the Region of Queens, and wish them continued success in their ventures.

RESOLUTION NO. 263

By: Hon. Kim Masland (Queens)

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

Whereas the Western Cougars U13AAA players and coaching staff were named the host team for the provincial hockey championships; and

Whereas the tournament took place over the Easter weekend at Queens Place Emera Centre and the LCLC in Bridgewater, the tournament featured the Cougars and the top seven teams in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas fans were treated to high calibre play as the top 11 and 12 year old players from across the province faced off and competed for the provincial banner; and

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Liverpool-based host team Western Cougars for a very successful and enjoyable tournament.