



House of Assembly
Nova Scotia

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

Speaker: Honourable Karla MacFarlane

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First Session

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2023

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HALIFAX, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2023

Sixty-fourth General Assembly

First Session

1:00 P.M.

SPEAKER

Hon. Karla MacFarlane

DEPUTY SPEAKERS

Lisa Lachance, Danielle Barkhouse, Nolan Young

THE SPEAKER: Order. We will now begin the daily routine.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Unfortunately, today I must rise on a point of privilege. Pursuant to Rule 29(2), I provided you sufficient notice of my intention to raise this issue today. I do so at the earliest convenience.

The impartiality of the Speaker is one of the Office's most important features. It's an attribute that has developed in parliamentary democracies over the last three centuries. Last night, during debate of Bill No. 340, the member for Yarmouth repeatedly broke with that tradition and disrespected the Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on Bills by questioning his impartiality. His words and actions were a clear and serious departure from the well-established parliamentary tradition.

For clarity, here are excerpts from the member for Yarmouth's speech on the bill:

“As expected, the hometown hero there in Glace Bay can talk about his teachers and not being a career politician for 20 minutes in the House. I'm talking about the bill. I'm talking about the relationship with the MOU. I'm talking about the process that led to this moment. Yet I am called out of order on this (laughter) by the Leader of the Opposition. I've just got to clarify that . . . Thank you very much, Chair. I certainly hope all members, including those who serve in key positions in this House, respect the decorum and the rights of all members to speak to these bills and to treat all members fairly and with respect because that's the role of whomever is sitting in the Chair or in the Speaker's position.”

Later, when the Chair directed the member for Yarmouth to speak to Bill No. 340, he responded with: “Thank you, Chair. You're making it a little too obvious.” This is a clear implication of bias towards the Chair.

As you are aware, Speaker, Maingot, Page 253 clearly states that any suggestion of impartiality or bias on the part of a presiding officer, such as the Speaker, a Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, or a Chairman of a Standing or Special Committee, automatically shows disrespect and amounts to contempt. Other improper reflections on the Speaker are also subject to House action.

Further, Bosc and Gagnon say, “The actions of the Speaker may not be criticized in debate or by any means except by way of a substantive motion.” Later, they say, “Reflections on the character or actions of the Speaker (an allegation of bias, for example) could be taken by the House as breaches of privilege and punished accordingly.”

Upon reviewing the debate, you will find that the member for Yarmouth did not make a substantive motion on this subject, opting instead for thinly-veiled accusations against the Chair and disrespectful reflections on the Chair.

There can be no other interpretation of the words and the tone used by the member for Yarmouth except that he was accusing the Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on Bills of bias and being “a little too obvious” about it. For those reasons, I move that the House order the member for Yarmouth to retract and apologize for each instance where he questioned the impartiality of the Chair.

THE SPEAKER: Order. I will confirm that I did receive the timely notice from the honourable Government House Leader with regards to their question of privilege in advance of today's sitting. I appreciate that.

I will ask: Is there any debate on the matter?

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I certainly trust the role of the Speaker and the Chair, but I need to rise on a point of personal privilege. I need to point out the record on this, because I think the record is going to be very clear.

If you rule on this - and I'd like to know what your ruling is on the point of privilege before I move on any statement related to the House Leader's comments - I would like you and the Clerks to review what's happened in this Chamber. I'd like you to count how many times I, in particular, am called on a point of order when what I'm saying is obviously and demonstrably linked to debate related to the bill. I pointed out last night that the same level of decorum that's being demanded of me is not being applied adequately or equally across the Chamber.

THE SPEAKER: Order. I would ask the member to focus on the point of privilege and whether or not the member wants to continue on a debate about it or if the member will stand in their place now and retract and apologize. Then we will consider your point of privilege.

ZACH CHURCHILL: On the point of privilege, Speaker?

THE SPEAKER: No. I am recognizing you first on your response to what was put forward by the Government House Leader. I am asking if you are going to debate or if you are going to retract and apologize and then rise again on your own point of privilege.

ZACH CHURCHILL: Speaker, I would ask you on this issue that's been brought up - the point of order - to review the record on this, and not just with debate last night, but debates previously and come up with your own determination.

THE SPEAKER: Order. I have. I watched last night. I do every evening that I'm not, by law, able to be in that Chair. I go home and watch. I received this this morning. I read it, and I have gone over everything. I went back and actually viewed it again for - actually, three times. I have a ruling, if we are to proceed.

Once again, I am going to ask if the Leader of the Official Opposition would like to stand in their place to retract and apologize and then rise again on a point of privilege of your own.

ZACH CHURCHILL: I will retract and apologize, and I will stand right after this and express my point of privilege.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board on - Order. I'd like to remind everyone - that was my point: whether or not it was going to be debated by the Leader of the Official Opposition, or if they would retract and apologize. It

has now basically extinguished that point of privilege, because of the Leader's apology and retraction. I am open to other points of privilege or points of order as we proceed.

The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

HON. JOHN LOHR: I rise on a point of order.

Last night, in the debate during the Committee of the Whole House on Bills, the debate on Bill No. 340 - the MOU bill - the Leader of the Official Opposition suggested that I as a member was not worthy of the designation of "honourable". I just wanted to say that we can disagree about points or what's happening, we can disagree in this House on how we get the work done, but to cast aspersions on someone else's character in that way is . . . (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order. I need to remind the minister that, on a point of order with regard to the Committee of the Whole House on Bills last evening, anything that would need to be brought to my attention has to be within 24 hours. I certainly don't mind receiving something in writing. My apologies, it's not 24 hours, but it does have to be brought up to the Chair before sitting.

Order. Just some clarification here. If anyone is about to stand in their place on a point of order or a point of privilege, it was to be brought to the Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

If we want to move forward, we can, if there are any other points of order other than what took place last night. I think that this is a good opportunity for all of us in this Chamber to think about the words that we are using, and to think about having respect for one another. I know it's clichéd and we've all heard this before, but when we start slinging mud, you're losing ground.

I am really going to start taking better note and having to make rulings and decisions. I think that everyone realizes that we are not to act in a way that is disrespectful to one another in this Chamber. Again: Attack policies, attack regulations, attack the bills, but once you start attacking one another, I'm calling you out.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: During my point of order this afternoon that I just outlined, I listed three instances of the member for Yarmouth's comments last night. I don't want to keep going on this and rehash it, but I'm wondering if the member for Yarmouth can be explicit of those in his apologies on those three instances.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition heard the motion that was put forward to retract and apologize, and he heard the three different

incidents that occurred and did apologize and retract, so we are now going to move forward with the daily routine.

[1:15 p.m.]

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 Education and Early Childhood Development.

HON. BECKY DRUHAN: Before I begin, I beg leave to make an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Please do.

BECKY DRUHAN: In the Speaker's Gallery, I'm honoured to introduce several volunteer firefighters from Lunenburg West. As we all know, these are just a few of the thousands of first responders across our province who have gone above and beyond to assist Nova Scotians during the past two years of unprecedented natural disasters.

From the Bridgewater Fire Department, we have Fire Chief Michael Nauss, firefighter and junior committee co-chair Cynthia Isabelle, and junior firefighter Brooke Weagle; from Conquerall Bank Fire Department, we have Fire Chief Ryan Anthony and junior firefighters Nolan Anthony and Madison Gaul; from the Hebbville Fire Department, we have Fire Chief Doug Peveril, firefighter Jerry Read, and junior firefighter Trenton Baker; from the Italy Cross, Middlewood & District Fire Department, we have Fire Chief Nancy Llewellyn-Rafuse, Lieutenant Brandon Burgoyne - who started as a junior and is now a regular member and Lieutenant of Pumper No. 2 - and junior firefighter Callum Mosher; from the Tri-District Fire Department, we have Fire Chief Paul Hayes, firefighter Christa Rosevear, and junior firefighter Kendra Rosevear.

I would ask you to rise - they've risen - and accept the warm welcome of the House.
(Standing ovation)

THE SPEAKER: Welcome to the House. Thank you so very much for your service and for protecting your communities.

The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

RESOLUTION NO. 785

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

Whereas junior firefighters are youth committed to protecting their communities and earning a personal development high school credit through hands-on learning of firefighting, fire prevention, and safety skills from Nova Scotia's experienced firefighters; and

Whereas junior firefighters contribute meaningfully during emergencies alongside Nova Scotia's professional and volunteer firefighters, including during the recent wildfires, working tirelessly to safeguard local homes and businesses and families; and

Whereas young people in the junior firefighter program are tomorrow's community leaders, inspiring those around them and securing the future of firefighting in the province;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House join me in recognizing the courage and contributions of junior firefighters and the work of those who train them and thereby build a stronger, safer future for all people in Nova Scotia.

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 Seniors and Long-Term Care.

RESOLUTION NO. 786

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

Whereas older Nova Scotians have and continue to contribute significantly to our communities and the wonderful province we all enjoy; and

Whereas every year, between 20 and 30 per cent of seniors in Canada, including those in Nova Scotia, experience a fall, often resulting in emergency room visits, hospitalizations, disability, chronic pain, and loss of independence, and in the most serious cases, death; and

Whereas November is Fall Prevention Month in Canada, which is a time to encourage all Nova Scotians and Canadians to come together to do our part to prevent falls and fall-related injuries;

Therefore, be it resolved that all members of this Legislature recognize November as Fall Prevention Month in the province of Nova Scotia and that everyone has a role to play in preventing falls.

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 of the motion? Contrary minded? Thank you.

The motion is carried.

Are there any further Government Notices of Motion? Before we move on to Introduction of Bills, I just want to recognize two people in the Speaker's Gallery who are extremely important to me. First, I want to introduce to the Chamber my daughter, Chloe Hannah Marshall. If she would stand. Chloe is 25 and I'm really proud of her.

She hasn't been here for 10 years, when I was first elected, but I tell you what, she's been living a busy life, travelling and having fun. She now has settled down into the realities of a big person's job, and that job has brought her to Halifax this week on conference. I'm just extremely proud of you, sweetheart. You are everything I actually aspire to. Thank you for coming today. I really appreciate it.

After 10 years, I have never introduced to everyone my right-hand person, who is Michelle Livingston. If she would stand, please. I don't know where I would be without the help of Michelle. She has my back and I just want to say thank you for everything that you do - for me, for my family, for everything. Thank you.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 396 - An Act to Establish a Sickle Cell Awareness Day. (Hon. Tony Ince)

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford Basin.

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

Whereas the federal government changed Employment Insurance rules in December 2022 to allow persons who are suffering from illnesses to access Employment Insurance for up to 26 weeks; and

Whereas Nova Scotia labour law currently only guarantees employees working in provincially regulated industries a maximum of three days unpaid leave due to illness, which is insufficient for people with serious illnesses such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and MS; and

Whereas according to a Narrative Research poll conducted in August 2023, 86 per cent of Nova Scotians overwhelmingly support the extension of job-protected leave to 26 weeks, a move that would give employees the opportunity to access treatment and heal without worrying whether they will have a job to return to, or even income during the time they access treatment and/or heal;

Therefore be it resolved the Government of Nova Scotia immediately ensure Nova Scotians who are facing serious illnesses, and who are working in provincially regulated industries, have access to up to 26 weeks of job-protected unpaid leave, which would allow them to access the federal EI program during those weeks of leave without fear of job loss.

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

THE SPEAKER: Order. I would let the member know that the motion does not pertain to the Chamber, the provincial government - a limit on oral notices of motion. If you look at Page 31, "(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), on the order of the day NOTICES OF MOTION being read, not more than four notices of motion may be given for a resolution of the House orally in the House on a sitting day and then only with respect to business of the House or a committee of the House, nor may a member give orally in the House at any time a notice of motion for an order of the House."

So because it does not pertain to this House in particular or a committee, it would be ruled out. However, I will let the member know that you could ask for unanimous consent, and if received, then we could rule that. If you would like to put it to a motion and ask for unanimous consent, we could table it. If not, of course, that's your option.

The honourable member for Bedford Basin.

KELLY REGAN: Sorry, I'm not clear on why this is not the business of the House.

THE SPEAKER: Again, as I stated, it does not pertain to the House for regular business or to a committee that belongs to the House. Therefore, it's ruled out of order. Again, if you want it to be tabled, you could ask for unanimous consent. I'm not sure how that will go, but you may want to suggest and try that you could get unanimous consent for it to be tabled.

KELLY REGAN: Well, with that great suggestion, Speaker. (Interruption) What? It wasn't sarcasm at all. I meant it honestly . . . (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order. I'm sorry, but literally 5 or 10 minutes ago I suggested to this House to be nice to one another. We didn't get very far, did we? We're going to try this again.

The honourable member for Bedford Basin.

KELLY REGAN: I did honestly mean that was a great suggestion. With the suggestion of the Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent of the House that this be tabled.

THE SPEAKER: There is a request for unanimous consent.

All those in favour? Contrary minded? Thank you.

There are several nays. The motion is defeated.

Just for clarity, the motion is out of order.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Eastern Passage.

HON. BARBARA ADAMS: Speaker, I beg leave to make two introductions.

THE SPEAKER: Please do.

BARBARA ADAMS: My first introduction is to introduce my right hand: my constituency assistant, Lisa Rochon, who is also a dear friend of mine. I'll ask her to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

[1:30 p.m.]

Before I begin my member's statement, I would like to introduce, in the East Gallery, members of a wonderful family from Eastern Passage who just last week became new Canadian citizens. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: Welcome. It's a real pleasure to have you here at Nova Scotia's House of Assembly.

The honourable member for Eastern Passage.

BARBARA ADAMS: Speaker, I am honoured to introduce - and I will ask them to rise again as I introduce them to the Legislature: Tuson Nguyen, his wife Natalie Ha, their daughter Lam Nguyen, and their son Tom Nguyen, who has now arisen. I ask all of the members to rise to welcome those new Canadian members to our Nova Scotia Legislature. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Eastern Passage.

NGUYEN FAMILY: NEW CDN. CITIZENS - CONGRATS.

HON. BARBARA ADAMS: Speaker, I rise today to welcome and congratulate Tuson Nguyen, his daughter Lam Nguyen, and son Tom Nguyen on recently becoming new Canadian citizens. On October 25, 2023, all three family members graciously took Canada's Oath of Citizenship. We welcome you to Canada, Nova Scotia, and of course, Eastern Passage.

Tuson and his wife Natalie Ha started a local business as new residents from Vietnam in 2020. The business VN-CA Trade and Investment Promotion Inc. provides local grocery stores and markets with fresh, locally grown vegetables year-round.

I ask all members of the Nova Scotia Legislature to join me in congratulating Tuson Nguyen and his children on becoming Canadian citizens, and for providing local, sustainable produce to Nova Scotians. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

VOLS.: N.S. MUSIC WEEK - RECOG.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Today marks the beginning of Nova Scotia Music Week. From now through Sunday, talented musical artists from various genres will gather in Yarmouth to celebrate. We are so happy to be hosting Nova Scotia Music Week again in our home area.

The banner event will be the 2023 Music Nova Scotia Music and Industry Awards, where 21 awards will be presented across seven industry categories. This year a variety of programming will support and spotlight the Acadian and Francophone music community. Nova Scotia has a long history of great musical talent from all over the province, including artists from Yarmouth, like Wintersleep and Brian Borchardt. I am excited to see their lead singer Paul Murphy's new project, Postdata, this weekend, as well.

I would like to congratulate Music Nova Scotia and all the volunteers who put the hard work into making Nova Scotia Music Week happen, and thank them for supporting our local music scene. A special thank you to Allegra, the executive director who, I know, puts her heart and soul into everything that happens.

We certainly look forward to welcoming all those who are going to be involved in Nova Scotia Music Week in Yarmouth this weekend.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

PARTICS.: KIDICAL MASS BIKE RIDE - RECOG.

SUSAN LEBLANC: Speaker, this past Sunday the streets of Crichton Park in Dartmouth North were overtaken by ghosts and goblins, witches, superheroes and more as the Kidical Mass bike ride came through the community. Families with kids rode bikes, scooters, used strollers, and walked through Crichton Park, and took in all the scary and fun Halloween decorations at the same time.

Kidical Mass is an international movement for child and cycling-friendly cities. Rides are a celebration of cycling and a way to show that kids and families need safe spaces to ride in their communities. This year alone, Kidical Mass has hosted six rides in the HRM where families and kids ride together, have lots of fun, and then eat snacks and win prizes at the end of the ride, most importantly.

Kidical Mass rides are an opportunity for adults and children to ride together in an urban setting. My son Aimé and I had a great time at the ride on Sunday, and I am thankful to the organization for planning a ride in Dartmouth North.

I ask all members of the House to join me in thanking Kidical Mass for the important work that they are doing and encourage all members to get out for a bike ride this Fall.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg West.

LUN. WEST FIRE DEPTS.: EFFORTS - THANKS

HON. BECKY DRUHAN: I rise today to recognize the 14 fire departments in Lunenburg West, and as an example of the important work that they do, shine a spotlight on one of them.

The Hebbville Fire Department has 24 dedicated members. They are unique in North America as the operators of the only aerial ladder truck, which they engineered in collaboration with the manufacturer. It has a 55-foot working ladder and throws 500 gallons of water per minute. Last Spring, the 24-member team was the first of many of our local departments who provided aid in the fight against the massive wildfires in Shelburne County.

They worked tirelessly overnight, relieving and providing support to the local crews, and they returned 16 hours later with another team. While providing this support, the department also fought local brush fires and a wildfire in Conquerall Bank. During the July floods, they answered an unprecedented 29 calls and were also called out during post-tropical storm Lee.

In addition to the Hebbville Department, Lunenburg West is served by Bridgewater, Conquerall Bank, Hebb's Cross, Hemford & District, Italy Cross/Middlewood & District, LaHave, Lapland and District, Midville and District, Petite Riviere, Pleasantville and District, Tri-District, and United Communities Fire Department.

I ask the House to join me in thanking each of them for dedication, innovation and commitment to protecting our community, and helping others during a year of record-breaking wildfires and flooding.

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

ANNAP. VALLEY PRODUCE: FARM STAND - THANKS

HON. PATRICIA ARAB: Speaker, as the market season comes to a close in Nova Scotia, I want to take a moment to express my appreciation to Annapolis Valley Produce for their commitment to bring fresh Valley produce to Fairview-Clayton Park over the past 20 weeks.

This season posed numerous challenges with more rainy days than the previous three years combined. However, the residents of Fairview-Clayton Park showed up every day regardless of the weather. From their opening day in June, the farm's stand on Dutch Village Road is always busy, most days with lines of eager customers waiting to bring home everything from apples to zucchini and everything in between.

It is essential to recognize and appreciate the hard work and resilience of local businesses like Annapolis Valley Produce that contribute to our community's well-being. Thank you for coming to our community and providing us with fresh locally sourced food. We can't wait to see you again in June for the opening of strawberry season.

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

CARLTON THE CAT: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

LISA LACHANCE: Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a dearly departed, much-beloved and globally recognized local feline. Carlton the cat lived close to the Saint Mary's University campus since 2016. Students, staff and faculty loved Carlton so much that he became an unofficial mascot of sorts, attending lectures, walking students to and from class, and occasionally taking a nap on the stack of sweaters in the campus bookstore.

Carlton has his very own official SMU ID, and garnered national news attention in 2018 when he ran a campaign to be a member of the Board of Governors with the slogan "If I fits on the board, I sits on the board."

Upon hearing of his crossing over the rainbow bridge on Tuesday, the SMU community and much of Halifax have taken to social media to share their tributes, memories and gratitudes for care and companionship over the years.

I would like to express my condolences to Sophie and family, and my gratitude for this feline friend to all.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

FREDERICKS, KENNETH: 100TH BIRTHDAY - CONGRATS.

HON. JOHN LOHR: Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Kenneth Havelock Fredericks on the occasion of his 100th birthday on November 4, 2023. Mr. Fredericks was born in Middleton on November 4, 1923. He was a long-time resident of Kentville where he operated the Kent Lodge Hotel on Webster Street, and he later worked at Canada Post as a letter carrier for 20 years until his retirement. As a Royal Canadian Air Force veteran from World War II, Mr. Fredericks now resides in the Middleton Hospital Veterans Wing.

Please join me today to recognize and congratulate Kenneth Havelock Fredericks on his 100th birthday and thank him for his service to our community and our country.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford South.

LEBANESE HERITAGE MO.: CONTRIBS. - RECOG.

BRAEDON CLARK: Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lebanese Heritage Month here in Nova Scotia. The first Lebanese immigrants to Halifax arrived on our shores in 1884. Since that time, the Lebanese community has made invaluable contributions to the economic, social, and cultural life of our province. No matter where you go in Nova Scotia, you are certain to see and feel the impact of Lebanese Nova Scotians - at the restaurants where you eat, the buildings in which you live or work, for example. One of my very best friends is Lebanese, so growing up I often got a chance to experience the warmth and joy that is a Lebanese household.

In closing, I'd like to recognize the memory of two members of the Lebanese community whom we lost far too soon, Leo and Sabah Saba.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

SCHERZINGER, LINDA: AWD. RECIP. - CONGRATS.

GARY BURRILL: Congratulations are extended to Linda Scherzinger, recipient of the Honourable Mayann A. Francis Faith in Action Award for 2023. The Faith in Action Award is presented each year by the Atlantic School of Theology to honour exceptional individuals whose work and community outreach is driven by their faith commitment.

Linda is a minister of the United Church of Canada who, as the citation accompanying the award put it, “. . . bears witness to her Christian faith through her lifelong commitment and active involvement in working with others for a more just, compassionate, and peaceful world.”

A long-time environmentalist, Linda has worked with the Ecology Action Centre and the Sierra Club and has played a key role in organizing interfaith groups to speak out on climate change. She is an involved promoter in the fair trade movement for both Guatemala coffee farmers and Palestinian olive oil producers. Through the ecumenical coalition KAIROS, Linda continues to work towards collaboration among faith communities advocating for ecological and social justice. Her enduring Faith in Action, the AST citation reads, “inspires hope for a better future.”

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

SCOTIANAIRES CHORUS: INT'L COMPET. - BEST WISHES

HON. BRIAN WONG: I rise today to wish Elaine Blanchard and the ScotianAires Chorus the best of luck as they travel to Grand Rapids, Michigan to represent Nova Scotia at the Harmony, Incorporated international competition on November 8th.

The ScotianAires Chorus is an award-winning women's a cappella chorus with more than 50 singers of all ages from across the Halifax region. The group has been performing for more than 40 years, and this year was named the Area 1 championship chorus.

Speaker, please help me wish the ScotianAires Chorus the best of luck as they represent Nova Scotia at this prestigious competition.

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

ANDERSON, JEFF: CULINARY SUCCESS - CONGRATS.

LORELEI NICOLL: I rise today to recognize a former Cole Harbour resident and chef, Jeff Anderson. Jeff grew up in Colby Village, graduated from Auburn Drive High School, and then attended the Culinary Institute of Canada. Following his graduation, Mr. Anderson worked for the Hyatt Corporation in Colorado before returning home to work in the Halifax fine dining scene.

It was upon his return to the Culinary Institute for a two-year culinary operations course that led him to where he is today. He was hired by McDonald's Canada to work in their product development department. Now the question is: How long does it take to invent a new sandwich? Apparently, two years.

The new Chicken Big Mac was launched recently. Jeff states that it's not as easy as it might seem to deliver a new product. Between testing and consumer research, many hours of work were spent on this one product.

Speaker, I want to congratulate Jeff Anderson for following his path in the culinary world and wish him much success in the future. Thank you. I'm hungry, for some reason.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

PUGWASH: COM. SPIRIT AWD. RECIP. - CONGRATS.

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Village of Pugwash on being awarded a Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award that celebrates the power, strength, and diversity of vibrant communities like Pugwash.

His Honour Lieutenant Governor Arthur LeBlanc and Mrs. Patsy LeBlanc were in Pugwash on September 10th for the award ceremony. His Honour also presented the Community Pride in Action Awards on behalf of the Pugwash Communities in Bloom.

Maureen Lahey accepted the Community Spirit Award on behalf of the village, while the Communities in Bloom awards went to Michael Cunningham, Community Champion; Eleanor Conrad, Community Backbone; and Community Caretakers to Valerie Brown, Dean Hunter, Maurice Gallant, Charles Kennedy, Clara MacDonald, and Larry MacDonald for their tireless work on Cumberland trails.

I was raised in the Pugwash area, and I am proud to represent the residents here in this House. I can truly attest that the award is well-deserved. His Honour commented during the ceremony that the level of belonging evidenced in the Pugwash area is a rare gift and he was impressed with the spirit of giving that is evident.

Please join me in congratulating the individuals who received Communities in Bloom awards and the community of Pugwash on being the recipient of a 2023 Lieutenant Governor Community Spirit Award.

THE SPEAKER: I know that I've said it before, but we are really going well over your minute for member statements.

It's really hard to cut someone off, though, when it's very meaningful and you have individuals in the gallery you're talking about. I will ask everyone, before we finish this session, to maybe go back and look at your statements to see if you can read them within the minute. Some are actually running almost two minutes.

The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

ORGS.: OVARIAN CANCER WALK OF HOPE - RECOG.

SUZY HANSEN: On September 10th, I went on a walk for a cause along the waterfront with my colleague the member for Halifax Chebucto and my new pup Silas to support ovarian cancer. The Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope was designed to create awareness for this vital cause, as this is the most fatal women's cancer in Nova Scotia.

The statistics around ovarian cancer are alarming: One out of every two Canadians diagnosed won't live to see another five years. Survival rates have not significantly improved in decades.

Using our voices can help change that. The walk itself was on such a beautiful day. The drink stations kept us pumped up for the cause, and the sun was truly shining down on us as we walked for hope for all.

I'd like all members to join me in thanking the organizers of the event. I look forward to the Lady Ball in 2024.

[1:45 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Eastern Shore.

TWO TUNICS CLOTHING SHOP: COM. SERV. - THANKS

HON. KENT SMITH: Speaker, I rise today to bring recognition to Marianne Nash and the leadership team at Saint John of the Cross parish in East Chezzetcook. Marianne spearheaded a free clothing shop, Two Tunics, in the basement of St. Philip Neri Church in Musquodoboit Harbour.

The free clothing shop opened its doors in early November 2022, and through generous community donations, the church basement is filled with clothing, shoes, bedding, and winter jackets for infants, children, and adults. The Two Tunics shop is operated by 19 volunteers four days a week. Since its inception, over 1,500 residents have benefited from the clothing bank.

Thanks to the diligence of Marianne and volunteers, the shop recently received a \$5,000 Community Cares Grant through the East Coast Credit Union, in addition to \$5,000 received through the Department of Community Services and \$750 from the Eastern Shore Musquodoboit Community Health Board.

I ask all members of the Assembly to join me in thanking Marianne and all Two Tunics volunteers for their leadership, perseverance, and kindness to their fellow community members.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clayton Park West, who is joining us virtually.

ORGS.: SHEFFIELD FALL BLOCK PARTY - THANKS

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: Speaker, today I rise to inform the House about an exciting time that happened in Clayton Park West on September 30th. The Sheffield social committee hosted their first Sheffield fall block party and I was a proud supporter. The block party was a fun event for the whole family. There was a bouncy castle, a potluck barbecue, and bicycle decorating, followed by a group bicycle ride in Sheffield, which was a wonderful activity for the children.

The event was hosted by the residents of Canterbury Close and led by the hard work and dedication of Ryan and Jenna Stanley. The couple recently moved to Clayton Park

West from British Columbia, and we are very happy to welcome their ambitious team to our community.

Speaker, I ask the House to please join me in thanking the Stanleys and the Sheffield social committee for hosting this wonderful event. We are all looking forward to it again next year.

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

NIECE, LENNON MAE - BIRTHDAY WISHES

KENDRA COOMBES: Speaker, I rise to congratulate my sister-in-law Breagh Brown and Cory Allison on the birth of Lennon Mae. We welcomed Lennon Mae into our family on July 9, 2023. The Brown cousin crew, made up of Rory, Isla, and Lennon, are going to keep us busy in the month of July, with three birthday parties from July 9 to 13th. We are all overjoyed to have Lennon Mae in our lives, and we are excited to watch her grow and learn. We love you, Lennon, and I ask the House to join me in congratulating Breagh and Cory on welcoming Lennon into our family.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

BOUDREAU, TREVOR: COM. SERV. - RECOG.

HON. PAT DUNN: Trevor Boudreau is a passionate, reliable, and energetic volunteer from Pictou County. He is an integral part of the Pictou County Recreation & Athletics Society, Pioneer Coal Athletics Field, and Pictou County Athletics track and field club. His involvement has been instrumental in their development at both the coaching and operational capacities. An educator at New Glasgow Academy, Trevor is very involved in athletics in the school system, offering his experience and expertise at provincial, Atlantic, and School Sport Nova Scotia track and field events. Trevor's unwavering commitment to volunteerism has left a significant imprint throughout Pictou County.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

NORTH SYDNEY: VETERANS BANNERS - THANKS

FRED TILLEY: Speaker, once again this year, the North Sydney Historical Society, in partnership with the Royal Canadian Legion North Sydney Branch and the North Sydney Volunteer Fire Department, are displaying the veterans banners throughout the town of North Sydney. What started out two years ago with 15 banners has now blossomed into 75 banners. It's a great visual testament to past veterans of the town of North Sydney, and many families are able to honour their veterans in this way. I would like to give thanks to Chairman Joe Meaney and all those involved in this wonderful endeavour.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

STRENGTH & WELLNESS STUDIO: OPENING - CONGRATS.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Strength & Wellness Studio, the latest fitness centre to open in Dartmouth South. Co-owned and operated by sisters Laura and Kerry Albert, the Strength and Wellness Studio is quickly gaining a dedicated following of clients. Their mission is to be a truly inclusive space for every body, and the sisters have created a gym experience that has been called the antidote to the big-box gym which empowers clients who otherwise feel out of place in a traditional gym setting. Laura and Kerry also prioritize body positivity and mental health in the studio, leaving clients feeling empowered, refreshed, and excited to work on their strength and fitness. Please join me in welcoming the Strength & Wellness Studio to the business community in North Woodside and in congratulating Laura and Kerry on creating such a welcoming place for fitness and health in Dartmouth.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

STAFF & VOLS.: ELMSDALE COM. GARDEN - THANKS

JOHN A. MACDONALD: I would like to recognize all the hard-working staff and volunteers who have toiled for the last six years at the Elmsdale Community Garden. The garden has been able to ensure fresh produce was available for harvesting for the families of East Hants. The Elmsdale Community Garden also offers a wide range of supports for the community besides gardening, including a community freezer and school supplies. During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff and volunteers were able to adapt to ensure these valuable supports were continuously available. East Hants is fortunate to have people in our community willing to go beyond to enable residents of our community to live comfortably and healthily. Thank you to everyone who has been a vital part of supporting what this group has to offer.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare.

PHILIP LEBLANC DIESEL REP.: 50TH ANNIV. - CONGRATS.

RONNIE LEBLANC: In 1953, Philip LeBlanc left his village of Comeauville to learn diesel engine repair in Halifax. About 20 years later, he came back home to start his own diesel repair business, with a strong commitment to excellence and customer service. As their reputation in our community grew, so did the company, expanding into diesel engine sales. Philip LeBlanc Diesel Repairs became a true family business when Philip's son Danny - who is now the company's president - began working alongside his father. Today the business still thrives, with the same dedication to service and to their customers that Philip LeBlanc established 50 years ago. I invite all members to join me in

congratulating the team at Philip LeBlanc Diesel Repairs Limited as they celebrate 50 years in operation and in wishing them continued success.

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

DART. SPCA: PET ADOPTION - RECOG.

LISA LACHANCE: I rise today to honour the staff, volunteers, and board members of the Dartmouth Shelter. It takes a village to raise a kitten, a senior dog, a bunny, or a guinea pig. These are just some of the critters I saw this morning as I visited the SPCA shelter to pick up our latest foster kitten, Scoot. She is black and white, full of purrs, and will be looking for her forever home in about two weeks. It's the tail end - see what I did there? - of kitten season for 2023, but you can always find someone to love at the SPCA.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Guysborough-Tracadie.

CRAZY DAISY: OPENING - CONGRATS.

HON. GREG MORROW: I rise today to congratulate the business partners of the Crazy Daisy Floral Boutique on their recent purchase of the flower shop in Guysborough.

Following the retirement of the previous owner, Rose Fitzgerald - whom I recognized the other day in my member statement - new business partners and sisters Katherine Nickerson and Melanie Newell, along with Melanie's husband Neil Sullivan, purchased the former Rose's Garden of Gifts in May. They were looking for a new business venture and knew this was one that was well-utilized and loved in our area.

They took a few weeks to paint the walls, make some decorative changes, and put up a new sign. Then Crazy Daisy opened its doors on June 5th. That would have been their late father's 75th birthday. Just in time for prom, graduation, and wedding season, they have been busy ever since. Residents from Guysborough to Canso and all points in between are grateful that another local family is choosing to stay here and keep this important business open. It is a place for local crafters and artists to also sell their products and, of course, for residents to purchase their beautiful floral arrangements.

Speaker, I ask you to join me in congratulating the Crazy Daisy Floral Boutique and in wishing them many years of success ahead.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford Basin.

TURNER, LEW: 95TH BIRTHDAY - CONGRATS.

HON. KELLY REGAN: I would like to share some special, recent birthday wishes for a long-time Bedford resident. I'd like to congratulate Bedford historian, photographer,

and volunteer extraordinaire Lew Turner on turning 95 in September. Lew is a special Bedford resident who has been serving his community ever since he was a teenager and joined the Bedford Volunteer Fire Department.

Just this past week, he was up at the crack of dawn and sharing photographs of Bedford Basin at sunrise. Lew is a font of information on all things Bedford. After the July flooding, we met up at Fish Hatchery Park - where I was looking at some of the damage - and he noted that some of the floods had exposed some historical fish pans. Lou knew all about them and shared his knowledge with me. Lou remains a valuable resource about Bedford history, and I plan on sharing another birthday certificate with him next year.

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

LAHEY FAMILY: SON, CONNOR - BIRTH CONGRATS.

KENDRA COOMBES: I rise to congratulate Katie, Mick and Callum Lahey on the birth of Connor Alexander. On August 16th Connor came into the world to the delight of everyone. We are a close-knit group of friends; we consider each other family, and welcoming another member into our group this summer was exciting. Congratulations to Callum on becoming a big brother, and to Katie and Mick on the birth of Connor. I ask the House to join me in congratulating the Lahey family on becoming a family of four.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

JENNINGS, PRISCILLA & ERIC: 60TH ANNIV. - CONGRATS.

TOM TAGGART: I rise to congratulate Priscilla and Eric Jennings on their 60th wedding anniversary. I would also like to wish Eric a happy 84th birthday, which he celebrated on October 18th. This couple, who live and work together, are the original owners of Masstown Market. Back in 1969, Eric, who was a farmer, started a fruit and vegetable stand to make extra money for his family. This couple have spent five decades of their marriage building this business from a fruit stand to a thriving family business.

This business has grown into a complex which includes groceries, a Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation, boutique, giftware and a fully stocked garden centre. Over the years, Eric and his family have added a butcher shop, a Creamery Cafe, The Peg, and Masstown Lighthouse Wharf and Fish Boat, a Petro-Canada, a Tim Hortons and an office building in which I happen to house my constituency office.

Eric and Priscilla Jennings have built their reputation around great service and fresh local foods. Not only do they employ local residents, but they also promote local products. This business is a real asset to Masstown and the surrounding area.

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

[2:00 p.m.]

GUTHRO, BRUCE: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE

HON. BEN JESSOME: I'd like to pay tribute to the late great Bruce Guthro. He's a Cape Bretoner, born and raised, but moved to Hammonds Plains and raised his family in a subdivision called Highland Park. He later moved to Kingswood. I just want to express my condolences to his wife Kim and his son and daughter Dylan and Jodi, who are carrying on his tradition of Bruce Guthro Songwriter's Circle. He was recently named, very appropriately, an Order of Nova Scotia recipient. With the permission of the House, I beg leave for moment of silence in his honour.

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for a moment of silence. Please stand.

[A moment of silence was observed.]

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

SUSAN LEBLANC: Speaker, I just want to make a quick introduction, taking the time for my member statement. In the gallery opposite we have Riley Shannon. Riley Shannon is here to do training this weekend with the Nova Scotia New Democrats on how to defeat Progressive Conservatives, having just done so in the Manitoba election. Riley is visiting us from Manitoba. I'd like everyone in the House to give him a warm welcome, even if it's difficult for some people. Also with Riley is Dave Etherington, who is our trusted organizer in the NDP caucus office. Welcome to both of you.

THE SPEAKER: Welcome to the House.

Order. The time now is for Oral Questions put by Members to Ministers. The time is 2:00. We will finish at 2:50.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

DCS: NO. OF SHELTER BEDS - PROVIDE

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Speaker, we had below-zero temperatures last night. On the way to work today, I saw many tents that people were still living in. Yesterday, in the scrum on this issue, the Premier said that there were many shelter beds in Halifax. My question to the Premier is: How many shelter beds is he aware of that are currently available, and where are they located?

HON. TIM HOUSTON (The Premier): I'll ask the Minister of Community Services to respond.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. TREVOR BOUDREAU: There are 296 shelter beds located in Nova Scotia in total.

ZACH CHURCHILL: Speaker, the question is: With all of the homeless folks in Halifax right now who are still living in tents at below-freezing temperatures, how many shelter beds are available for those people who are currently on the streets?

THE PREMIER: This is an important question that the member raises. We're concerned about the homelessness - people living rough, for sure. We see that happening in Halifax. We see that happening in many communities across the province. We see that happening in many communities across the country. It is a challenge of our time, for sure. That is why the minister, through the department and through leadership, working with non-profit organizations, working with municipalities, is making significant investments - not only in shelter, but wraparound services to make sure we can support Nova Scotians as best as possible and meet the needs where they are. The need is significant. There's no question about that. We'll continue to make investments to support Nova Scotians.

ZACH CHURCHILL: I think if the government was taking this issue seriously, they could tell us what the inventory is of beds that are available in the city while people desperately need them - if they were taking this issue seriously.

When asked yesterday, the Premier said that there are going to be people living throughout the Winter in tents. He said that in the scrum yesterday. I wonder, if the government actually moved this Summer - when the red flags were being waved, when the alarm bells were being rung that homelessness had doubled, instead of trying to brush that issue under the rug and downplay it - if we'd be in a better position today.

It took nine weeks to order those shelters. Does the Premier recognize that had he ordered those shelters in the Summer, we'd have those shelters available for people who need them tonight?

THE PREMIER: I'm not quite sure how the member defines "brushing things under the rug," but what I would say is this government, for the first time in 30 years, invested in affordable units - 222 of those. That didn't happen five years ago. It didn't happen 10 years ago. It didn't happen 20 years ago. It didn't happen 25 years ago. It happened now, under this government.

We will continue to invest in Nova Scotians. That's why we are seeing more affordable housing development happening across the province with the leadership of this

government. That's why we will continue to invest in Nova Scotians, to make sure that they have not only safe, affordable housing but also supports as are needed. We'll continue to invest in Nova Scotians because that's what this government does: gets to work supporting Nova Scotians.

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

PREM: ER DEATHS - ADDRESS

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I want to ask the Premier about the state of Nova Scotia emergency rooms. Freedom of Information data released to our caucus shows that there have been more deaths in emergency rooms in the last nine months than there were for the entire previous year or the five years before that. This government is failing to address a crisis in our emergency rooms, and it's resulting in more deaths. As a Halifax Infirmity staff person said in the paper yesterday, quote: "the crisis is constant." What is the government doing to deal with the constant crisis in our emergency rooms?

THE PREMIER: We all want the best possible outcomes for Nova Scotians when they visit an emergency department, but the very nature of an emergency department means that the reality is that not everyone who goes to an emergency room can be saved. That's why they're emergency departments. We will continue to work to support those working in health care. I know the minister was at the Halifax Infirmity this morning, and at that time there were two people in the waiting room and zero off-loads waiting to happen. I know the team at the Halifax Infirmity has been innovative in the way that they're coming up with suggestions on how to help support Nova Scotians who are arriving there. We all want the best outcomes for Nova Scotians. I think that what I would encourage the member opposite to do is to share the full information, not just little snippets out of context.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Here's some information that's not an anecdotal story: On Monday of this week, the Halifax Infirmity's score on the National Emergency Department Overcrowding Scale was 354, which according to a hospital staff member is disaster. It's been in disaster mode for months. Rural ERs are closed, people don't have family doctor, and people are arriving at our ERs sicker and sicker. More deaths in the first nine months of this year than in the entire last year and the five before that. While the Premier fails to make improvements in ER wait times, people are dying. My question to the Premier is: When is this government going to do something for the people waiting and waiting in emergency rooms?

THE PREMIER: We have issues in health care, there's no question, and our emergency departments often feel the brunt of that. There's no question about that, and that is where people should go when they're extremely sick. There are also other situations where maybe another course of access to care is more appropriate. That's why we've opened up so many channels. The pharmacy clinics are getting national recognition. You

might not hear it opposite, but nationally getting recognition - the mobile clinics - national recognition.

Just yesterday - I'm so proud of the minister and the team - they launched an app. It was the fourth-most-downloaded app in the country, I believe. The purpose of the app is to get people to the appropriate care at the appropriate time. Appropriate care is often an emergency department, but not always.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: The numbers don't lie. Spin doesn't work here. That app was pushed to every government phone in Nova Scotia, so let's see who actually downloaded it and whose phone it showed up on.

Speaker, the Freedom of Information data shows that it's not just the number of people who are dying, it's the proportion of people dying in emergency rooms that is growing. As a hospital staff member said, people die in the ambulance hallway. On Monday at 4:00 p.m., there are nine in the ambulance hallway. The patient who has waited the longest has waited 113 hours and 39 minutes. I'll table that.

My question to the Premier is: How much longer will people have to wait before this government does something not about apps, not about pharmacy clinics, but about the crisis in our emergency rooms?

THE PREMIER: All of these things are interrelated. There is no one single solution. That's why they're all important.

I would just encourage the member to share the full information. Obviously our population is growing, obviously our population is aging. Of course when you have more people aging you have more visits, but when you look at the proportion, the proportions are steady.

Of course, the member is making comparisons over a period of time, which included COVID, where emergency departments were often closed. There was an incredibly sharp decline during that period of time, so everything is relative.

The work that is being done by this government, under that minister, is leading the country in fixing health care.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

DCS: SHELTER BEDS - SPECIFY

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: Speaker, the Premier asked what I mean by "brushing things under the rug." I think we have another example of it. We've got Opposition parties that are talking about homeless people who are living in jeopardy, we have an increased

death rate in our emergency rooms, and what is the Premier focused on? Getting national attention on a new app. Does that not sound like brushing this under the rug?

“Brushing under the rug” is when you’re told the homeless rate is doubling in the province, and you say, Oh, it’s Summer, more people go outside and camp in the Summer. That’s brushing it under the rug.

My question to the Premier is: How many shelter beds are available now for people who are homeless? The Premier can’t even answer the question.

HON. TREVOR BOUDREAU: We know homelessness is certainly impacting people in Nova Scotia, people across Canada, and we have been very diligent in our work. We’ve been working very hard as a department for many months to secure shelter locations. Just as an aside, Speaker: over the last two years, supports were increased by \$8.2 million this year for homelessness to bring the budget to a total of \$18 million, which is a 261 per cent increase over the last two years. We know that there’s more work to do. We’re going to continue to do what we can to support our most vulnerable and those people who are experiencing homelessness.

ZACH CHURCHILL: You want another example of brushing something under the rug? When we’re talking about real people living in tents in freezing cold weather, the minister points to budget items. That’s brushing it under the rug.

The Premier and the minister stood up and told us that there are hundreds of beds available. There are many more available here in Halifax when people need them with temperatures dropping. They can’t point to any single amount that are actually available right now.

Will the Premier please stand up and tell people in this House and beyond how many shelter beds are available tonight for people who need them?

TREVOR BOUDREAU: We sense and feel the urgency. We’ve been working very hard as a department over the last two years to support people who are experiencing homelessness. As I mentioned, there are 296 shelter units in the province. Our government has also created 417 supportive housing units over the last two years. That is 71 per cent of all supportive housing units in the province in just the last two years.

What I would also say is that through the supports that we have done as a government over the last two years, it is recognized that it’s roughly 747 people who are not experiencing homelessness at this time compared to what was going on over two years ago.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney-Membertou.

DCS: NEW SHELTERS - DETERMINE

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: As we know, Winter is here. Yesterday it snowed. The temperatures were below freezing. The weather is just going to get worse while a thousand people in the HRM alone are experiencing homelessness. Yet we have not been able to get an answer from this government where these newly promised shelters will be.

To the Minister of Community Services: Does he know where the new shelters are going yet?

TREVOR BOUDREAU: As I've been saying, we feel the urgency. We recognize that Winter is close. We've been working very hard as a department to make sure we could support people experiencing homelessness. We recently announced three shelters, one in Bridgewater, one in Amherst. The one in Amherst has been open since early October. The one in Bridgewater will be opening November 15th.

We also have a shelter that we have secured here in HRM. We are continuing to do the due diligence right now to make sure that that location is safe and has the inspections it needs. I will be very happy to announce that when we can.

DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: The challenge is that they should have been announced already. They should have been announced months ago. Again, I'm going to ask this question. This is the third time that I'm going to ask this question to the Minister of Community Services. People are experiencing homelessness all over this province. We talk a lot about HRM because it is a huge issue, but it is happening, as we all know, in communities across Nova Scotia. I've asked this question twice already. Of the 100 beds in the shelters that are going to be located outside of HRM - I'm going to ask this question again to the minister, for the third time: Can he please tell this House where the shelters are going to be located in Cape Breton?

TREVOR BOUDREAU: We do feel the urgency. We do have those Pallet shelters on order. There are 100 for here in HRM and 100 for across the rest of Nova Scotia. We've been having conversations with service providers at municipalities. There were conversations with CBRM just this week as well as the service providers there. We are working very diligently to secure locations for those Pallet shelters. As soon as we can, we'll certainly let the member and others know where those locations will be.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Timberlea-Prospect.

DOJ: CASES DROPPED - EXPLAIN

HON. IAIN RANKIN: On Tuesday, I asked the Minister of Justice if he could provide an update on how many more cases are being stayed due to Jordan applications,

above and beyond the 15 - which is already an all-time high - reported in the Summer. I'd like to give the opportunity to the Minister of Justice to report back to the House, as he didn't know at the time: How many more cases since the Summer have been dropped because of Jordan applications?

[2:15 p.m.]

HON. BRAD JOHNS: I don't have that number yet before me, but I will get it to the member. As with the other times I've reported back, I'll bring it back to the House.

IAIN RANKIN: The answer is five. Five more cases since the Summer have been reported as dropped, out of 28 Jordan applications filed as of October 10th. That is reported - that's public. That's in the media. I'll table that. That's an astounding number. Never has it been more than four in a full year before 2021, and we're talking about five more cases being dropped in a couple months.

This is a serious issue. We know we need over 40 new Crown attorneys. His own department is asking for that. We're talking about sweeping issues under the rug. This is a matter that requires serious, immediate attention. Is it the contention of this government that they are going to sweep this issue under the rug to the next budget season, or are they going to act now?

BRAD JOHNS: As I think I said in the House before, we did ask the Public Prosecution Service's director to give us a report on the needs in Public Prosecution Service. We do have that report. We're analyzing that report. We do see some discrepancies in the numbers from what's there, but we are looking at potentially getting some per diem Crown attorneys and other things to get that backlog caught up. We'll continue to work on that.

THE SPEAKER: The honorable member for Halifax Needham.

DCS: HOUSING FOR HOMELESS NOVA SCOTIANS - ENSURE

SUZY HANSEN: My question is for the Premier. Yesterday he told reporters that it is a sad fact that people will be living in tents all Winter. If this is a fact, it is only because this government has decided it to be. This government has had ample time to prepare for the inevitability of Winter, but have failed to do so.

This is Nova Scotia. This morning was minus two degrees. Tomorrow will be zero. We know when Winter comes. Why is this government refusing to ensure all Nova Scotians have a roof over their head this Winter?

HON. TREVOR BOUDREAU: We have sensed the urgency. We feel the urgency. This department has been working very hard over the last two years to support people

experiencing homelessness and living rough. We have secured a location here in HRM. We have two shelters in rural Nova Scotia, as well, to support people who are experiencing homelessness. We know there's more work to do, and we'll continue to do what we can to support people who are living rough or experiencing homelessness.

SUZY HANSEN: If urgency means a year or two of waiting, that's not that urgent. Just this past Summer, the former Minister of Community Services said that people living in tents was a natural evolution of Summertime. Now again, this government is showing that they are content to leave our neighbours out in the cold.

An outreach worker with Out of the Cold Community Association warned last Winter that the ground is frozen. I know folks here who have lost their limbs and who have lost their toes. I'm worried that we're going to see loss of life. I'm worried that we're going to see loss of limbs. Does the Premier think that potential loss of life and limbs is also just a sad fact?

TREVOR BOUDREAU: We know that everybody deserves a safe place to live. We are working very hard as a department and as a government to support our most vulnerable. We continue to look at options for people. Like I mentioned before, the Pallet shelters are coming. There are 200 for across the province: 100 here in HRM and 100 across the rest of Nova Scotia. We know there's more work to do, and we're going to do what we can to support people who are experiencing homelessness and living rough.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

FTB: PAYCHEQUES PROMISE DITCHED - EXPLAIN

FRED TILLEY: This government promised a better paycheque for Nova Scotians working in the private sector during the 2021 campaign. It was the front of the platform, and it was all over signs across the province - another illusion of action. For the last two years, we have been asking this government where their Better Pay Cheque Guarantee is. Finally, after two years, an answer is given: the Better Pay Cheque Guarantee is not coming. My question to the Minister of Finance is: Why did it take this government two years to let Nova Scotians know that they never planned to do this promise?

HON. ALLAN MACMASTER: Because we've been spending a lot of money on health care, to fix the health care system. I've made that clear all the way through when these questions were asked. Our focus as a government has been fixing health care. That's something that is going to benefit every Nova Scotian whenever they might need it.

FRED TILLEY: Talk about an illusion of action, Speaker. We just saw another \$10 million app, which is the illusion of fixing health care, when every metric is getting worse under this government. When the Premier announced ahead of the 2021 provincial election campaign, he said the program would see corporations get 50 per cent of their corporate

taxes in exchange for returning to workers in the top 20 per cent. We've been saying for two years that this would never happen. The Premier said it would happen on Day 1. I'll table this information. My question to the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board is: When will this government put money in the hands of everyday Nova Scotians?

ALLAN MACMASTER: Well, I don't know if the member opposite has missed it, but we put more money in the pockets of many people. I think about CCAs - a 23 per cent pay raise. I think about young Nova Scotians who are in trades, in occupations we need right now, who are helping to address the many things that are being raised in Question Period. I think of one thing that's critical, which is housing. The more young people we have in this province getting into the trades, with that incentive to be forgiven their provincial income tax, the more success we are going to have building the housing that we need for people. There are all kinds of people who have had better paycheques.

I will also point out that under my own portfolio of Labour Relations, the last government never wanted to go to the collective bargaining table. They used to try to do their deals here in the Legislature. We're open to going to the table, and people are getting better paycheques because of it.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount on a new question.

FTB: NOVA SCOTIA LOYAL PROGRAM - UPDATE

FRED TILLEY: Speaker, we hear from the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board another illusion of action. He's doing things that were not included in their election platform: picking winners and losers. This is not the way to govern.

The economic plan from this government's platform is based on two key programs: the Better Paycheque Guarantee and Nova Scotia Loyal. The Premier admitted to what he's been saying all along: the campaign promise is not going to happen - which I'll table. Another Summer has gone by with an illusion of action, of wrapped trucks paraded around the province, but no points anywhere to be found.

My question to the Minister of Economic Development is: Will the minister admit to the province right now that this program, like the Better Pay Cheque Guarantee, is not going to happen?

HON. ALLAN MACMASTER: Speaker, the members talk about illusion. He talks about it so much, it makes me wonder if he might be a fan of *Use Your Illusion*, that album by Guns n' Roses. "Picking winners and losers" - think about that for a moment. We're picking targeted supports for those who are most in need. We're picking groups of people working in the health care system who are essential to the health care system functioning, and I think particularly about continuing care assistants.

We're choosing them. We're choosing young people, because we need more of them to help with our labour shortages. The member can suggest it's picking winners and losers. We're picking the people who are most in need, and the people we need to help us move the province forward.

FRED TILLEY: I'd like to thank the minister for that non-answer to the question. What the minister is essentially saying is that Nova Scotians who are working hard every day shouldn't be targeted with some sort of benefit that was promised to them, that they may have voted for because it was promised to them, and now they're not going to receive. Instead, we're spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on wrapped trucks, creating the illusion that Nova Scotians are going to benefit from this program. My question is: When will Nova Scotians see the benefit of the Nova Scotia Loyal program, or will it go by the wayside with the Better Pay Cheque Guarantee?

HON. SUSAN CORKUM-GREEK: I have stood in this House before and explained that Nova Scotia Loyal was an entire section of our platform. It encompasses an across-government approach, which includes a commitment as government - as a purchaser - to spending our dollars . . . (Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: Order, please. There's too much chatter.

The honourable Minister of Economic Development has the floor.

SUSAN CORKUM-GREEK: This includes leveraging our own purchasing power and becoming very well-acquainted with the realities of both that purchasing power, and the limitations and nuances of trade agreements. I would point to an amendment that was put on the floor the other evening on a bill that looked to sole-source to Nova Scotia a particular apparatus. That would have engaged in a trade war. We are being very mindful of those opportunities.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford Basin.

HCR: QEII REDEVELOPMENT PROJ. - UPDATE

HON. KELLY REGAN: This government has totally dropped the ball on the QEII redevelopment project and has not been transparent with Nova Scotians on the status of the project. In May, the government announced they were going to "build more, faster." In reality, we have seen less, slower. The government was supposed to tear down the parkade this Summer as the first step, but then in the Fall, they hit pause on their so-called faster plan. In October, the minister said they were "designing like hell" - which I will table. We have seen no idea if these designs will ever come to fruition. My question is to the Minister responsible for Healthcare Redevelopment: What is the current status of the QEII redevelopment project, and when will it be completed?

HON. COLTON LEBLANC: I'm surprised that an allusion wasn't presented by the members opposite, because they frequently reference this project as being delivered on a silver platter. At best, it was delivered in a strainer. We have recognized that since Day 1. We are focused on moving this project in the right direction - a project that meets the health care needs of tomorrow and today, which the former plan failed to do. The plan that the former Minister of Health and Wellness tried to deliver was not able to be delivered by the construction industry.

We recognize that this is the biggest health care infrastructure project in our province's history. It is complex, and we recognize that the foundation of our new plan is more beds - something again that the member opposite failed to do.

KELLY REGAN: In fact, the only new build that's on time and on budget under the QEII redevelopment is the Bayers Lake Community Outpatient Centre. That's because it wasn't started under that government. It's opening in a month.

In the interim, at the Infirmary they're having to use a conference room for emergency patients to help relieve some of the pressures. We need the new hospital for patients and health care workers alike. Under the previous plan, the VG would have been torn down by the end of last year.

My question is to the minister: Now that we're nearing the end of 2023, will patients and health care workers ever be able to get out of the VG for good?

COLTON LEBLANC: I'll remind the members of this House of our plan. That is focused on the most acute needs of our health care system: more beds - beds, beds, beds. We need improved access and flow in our health care system. We need to be able to deliver a project - again, more OR capacity. The member opposite referenced ER capacity. That's why a new ER for the Halifax Infirmary is included in our plan. Before you start digging holes and building something, you need to have a plan. You need to have a design. That's why 2023 was always slated to be a design year. I guess the lack of awareness from the members opposite on how to design something probably clearly outlines why they didn't build or design any affordable housing units in their tenure.

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

MAH: MUNIC. PAYMENT PROMISE - KEEP

KENDRA COOMBES: My question is for the Premier. During the last general election, he made a distinct promise to the people of Nova Scotia. He said he would "double the payments to municipalities that the province ... pays" as a show of good faith. People voted for him based on this promise of much-needed investment in roads, water infrastructure, recreation, snow-clearing, emergency management, solid waste, and so

many other essential services provided by frontline municipalities. Why has the Premier broken this promise?

[2:30 p.m.]

HON. JOHN LOHR: That doubling did happen through our department. The first year, we doubled that. The CBRM chose to use it for a tax break to Walmart. In fact, in the last eight years, if you think about the eight years prior, there was no extra money given to CBRM, but through our actions, the next year we gave them an extra \$3 million.

This year we've stood up another program. We continue to be more generous than we saw in the previous eight years, and I don't have the memory to go back to the previous 12 years, but I have no doubt it was very little different. Maybe it was, I don't know. We continue to do more for our municipalities than has ever been done before.

KENDRA COOMBES: Let's remind the minister of the facts: The payments were going to be doubled during the whole time the agreement was being negotiated, and it was a one-time payment only. A promise broken? I think so. Not only is the Premier breaking promises, he's pitting communities against each other in the process.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing refused to apologize to the people of Cape Breton, particularly the CBRM, for his unprofessional and disrespectful conduct when he sent a letter to the municipal administrators, asking them to lobby the CBRM to accept a raw deal this government has put on the table. I'd ask the Premier to explain to the people of the CBRM, why he has thrown them under the bus?

JOHN LOHR: I disagree with the premise of the question altogether. We have done more for the people of CBRM than any other government. They only have to look around at all the projects going on. There's the Tartan Downs, there's the investments in CBRM in health care. We continue to do more. We've done more through that Municipal Financial Capacity Grant than any other government.

This current version of it is good for the people of CBRM. My message to the people of CBRM is that for the first time in a generation, there's hope in CBRM. We see things changing, turning around, and we want to be part of that hope. Our message to the people of CBRM is we care about them. We're working hard for them.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford South.

EECD: CHILD CARE SUPPLY - CLARIFY

BRAEDON CLARK: We learned yesterday that the Province held 12 public engagement sessions across the province to discuss the serious issues around the lack of child care availability. How many of those sessions were held in HRM, you might ask?

One. And that meeting was by invitation only, so not very public. Does the Minister think this is enough for the many parents in HRM who are waiting for child care spaces with little to no hope?

HON. BECKY DRUHAN: As we engage in a five-year transformational journey to build child care that meets the needs of all Nova Scotians across our entire province, we have multiple opportunities for engagement across the province, so that we fully understand what all Nova Scotians need.

I'm very excited that we did just recently undergo one phase of this engagement, and that included sessions across the province, in HRM and beyond. The focus of those small, intimate sessions was to hear directly from families about their specific needs, and very targeted needs. We wanted to hear about the needs of newcomers, so we had targeted sessions to focus on that. We wanted to hear about the needs of places that have seasonal employment; we had targeted sessions focused on that. We've heard from HRM and we will continue to hear from HRM and all Nova Scotians about the needs of child...

BRAEDON CLARK: As you would expect, media wanted to cover these important meetings, but guess what? According to the CBC, they were told by the department they could only attend if they signed a confidentiality agreement for the media. My question to the minister is: Does the minister think that asking media to sign NDAs is a way to inspire confidence in how this government is managing the child care problem in this province?

BECKY DRUHAN: I really appreciate the opportunity to speak to this because the sessions that we just recently held were intimate sessions where we invited families, parents and caregivers in to speak about very personal needs, to speak about the medical needs of their children, to speak about their financial issues. There were small sessions and we wanted people to feel comfortable and safe in an intimate environment. That is not something that is going to be fostered by having cameras in their faces.

We absolutely indicated to the media that we would provide all the information around what was being asked and discussed in the sessions and we'll be reporting back to the media on what took place. Those kinds of sessions are the sorts of things we need to have intimately done and that's how we were doing them, respecting the privacy and confidentiality of the families.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sydney-Membertou.

MAH: HOUSING SUPPORTS - IMPLEMENT

HON. DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: People in Sydney are feeling the impacts of the housing crisis. A story that came out this week talked about the MacIntyre family. A 69-year-old woman, Margie, and her 45-year-old daughter Charlene, who is also her caregiver, are unable to find a new place to rent as their current rental is being sold.

The family has been looking for two and a half months to find a new place to stay with no luck. Charlene said that out of desperation, she went to view what she thought was a one-room apartment in the north end of Sydney. The cost was \$1,500 and Charlene said it was a room with a kitchenette built into the bathroom. I'll table that.

My question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is: Where are the supports for families like the MacIntyres who can't find a place to rent in Cape Breton?

HON. JOHN LOHR: Speaker, I do want to express my sympathy not only for that family but we know that that story could be repeated in other parts of the province. The Drake Report, *Nova Scotia's Provincial Housing Needs Assessment Report*, tells us there's a tremendous need across the province. The only real solution to that problem is to build more supply. That's the reality. If we don't have more houses, that's the only way.

The report tells us that that is the only way out of this problem and we're working hard on that. I don't know if they are eligible for some of our programs but certainly I'd encourage the member to reach out on their behalf.

DEREK MOMBOURQUETTE: We will do that. I appreciate the comments from the minister.

Speaker, Charlene said she feels at a disadvantage looking for rentals because it feels as if the units are going to a person who shows up with cash in hand, for more than just a half month's rent for the damage deposit, which I'll also table. They also had to fight with the Residential Tenancies Board over being given less than two months' notice that the place had been sold and they needed to vacate the home.

If the government would create a residential tenancies enforcement unit that both tenants and landlords want, there would be fewer illegal practices that are hurting families like the MacIntyres in Cape Breton.

My question to the Minister of Service Nova Scotia is: Why won't they create a residential tenancies enforcement unit so less families are disadvantaged when trying to find a place to live?

HON. COLTON LEBLANC: I certainly echo the comments from my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and certainly to the family impacted in this particular situation. Again, there are rules pertaining to the selling of properties. Again, I encourage members to share those guidebooks and we can redistribute those to members.

Again, what I'd say is the creation of a compliance enforcement division is complex, understanding that yes, there are calls from both sides for the creation of it. However, I would caution that it is not going to be the silver bullet to the housing crisis. What we need here is more supply, more places Nova Scotians can call home.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland North.

DHW: AMBULANCE SERVICES SHORTAGE - EXPLAIN

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. We are continuing to see deterioration of the once world-renowned ambulance service in Nova Scotia. When people are calling 911 they are often left waiting hours before an ambulance arrives. Cumberland County, in particular, is being left without any ambulances in the entire county, weekly, despite that ambulances are supposed to be based in Amherst, Pugwash, Oxford, Springhill and Parrsboro. Last weekend, once again, no ambulances were available Friday night, leaving a woman in a life-threatening situation for over three hours. Can the minister explain why the government is leaving the people of Cumberland County without any access to emergency ambulance services?

HON. MICHELLE THOMPSON: The days of having an ambulance base where people are solely stationed is not really the case anymore. We need to have a system status plan. As we know, there are a number of calls across the province that are triaged by our very capable paramedics and dispatchers in this province, so we should expect, as Nova Scotians, that there will be movement amongst ambulances across this province in order to have paramedics respond to emergencies.

We have created a number of different initiatives. We recently implemented the transfer flight, which has allowed 1,300 hours back into ground ambulance. We are looking at a number of different ways. We are looking at a number of different models. I can assure the member opposite that we have a wonderful team that's working very hard in order to deliver emergency services to this province.

ELIZABETH SMITH-MCCROSSIN: I would like to highlight the fact that when some of these plans are being made to improve emergency ambulance services, we're not actually seeing any improvement in Cumberland County at all. I don't know if the rest of the province is the same.

Even this latest flight - it's between Yarmouth and Cape Breton. Northern Nova Scotia is left completely out of that planning. Cumberland County didn't have any - all of northern Nova Scotia, no community pharmacy clinics, no public housing. We are seeing a downgrade in the Pugwash hospital despite a new hospital being built. We are seeing every week continued times when there are zero ambulances in all of Cumberland County.

The people of Cumberland deserve an answer. Why are they being left behind and not provided adequate health care?

MICHELLE THOMPSON: I can see privilege prevails with half-facts. I will say, in terms of the clinics that were available to the pharmacy, there was actually a provider,

but due to an issue with the pharmacy, they were unable to continue. We're working very hard to find a new provider, and we want to support them.

[2:45 p.m.]

There have been a number of initiatives across this province. We are not leaving anybody behind. To the member's point, that's the whole thing about a system status plan - 1,300 hours back into a ground ambulance system is not nothing. It benefits every single Nova Scotian in this province.

I understand that it is a complex system. It is difficult to understand, but I can assure the member opposite that we are working very hard in this province to deliver health care to every single Nova Scotian.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cole Harbour.

ANSA: FOOD SECURITY - INCREASE

HON. TONY INCE: Speaker, we know that there are barriers for marginalized people trying to access supports. As Feed Nova Scotia outlined, the highest percentage of individuals living in food-insecure households in 2022 was found among Black people, at 40 per cent, and Indigenous peoples, at 33 per cent. I'll table that. My question to the Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs: How are we ensuring that we are increasing supports for African Nova Scotians and Indigenous peoples who are facing food insecurity?

HON. TWILA GROSSE: I'll speak to what we're doing with regards to food insecurities for the African Nova Scotian community. The Department of Community Services has invested money into my area, which is Preston - it's called the Preston Area Food Network. There's a huge network that's open, and it's open in the three communities of Cherry Brook, North Preston, and East Preston. Members in the community who need that service, who need that facility, are able to go and gain access to requirements and food items every week.

TONY INCE: We need to ensure that an equity framework is being used effectively in supporting and expanding our support services. However, there is a disproportionate amount of marginalized folks going to food banks, and they are facing food insecurity.

My question to the Minister of Community Services is: How is the government using an equitable lens when providing income supports to Nova Scotians?

HON. TREVOR BOUDREAU: Certainly, within our department, we recognize the importance of working with diversity and equity and supporting people who are marginalized, and certainly my colleague had mentioned the collaborative food networks

that we have across the province. We have three pilots across the province where \$200,000 was given to three different communities, one of those communities being the Preston Township, another one being Eskasoni in Cape Breton, and another one in Cumberland.

We've been working hard to make sure that we're identifying the challenges there in those communities, and certainly trying to support those communities through these types of initiatives where we work within the community and the service providers within those communities.

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

LSI: PAY EQUITY: ENFORCE

LORELEI NICOLL: One way the government could provide more transparency is by enforcing pay equity and transparency. There is a broader, global trend to use transparency in pay practices to try to close the wage gaps that persist still for women and other equity-seeking groups. This is the law at the federal level. It is the law in P.E.I. and Newfoundland and Labrador, and in B.C. It is also the law in multiple states, and in the European Union. My question to the Minister of Labour, Skills and Immigration is: Will the government follow suit with other provinces to enforce pay equity and transparency?

HON. JILL BALSER: Thank you, Speaker, and thank you to the member for raising this really important question. Newly appointed to the Council of the Status of Women, I am really excited to be able to engage with community partners to be able to dive in to understand this more. We know that it is such an important issue, that women need to be able to feel that they are seen and heard in very important leadership roles, not only nationally, but of course right here in Nova Scotia.

I would look forward to working with the member. I know the member will have some ideas and wonderful input to be able to add to that conversation. It's important work, and it's stuff that we will be committed to doing.

LORELEI NICOLL: I thank the minister for that response. That's what I was hoping. I look forward to working with her in that regard, because at the end of the day, pay equity is very important for women. We've had a lot of talk today about sweeping things under the rug. We know which gender actually cleans under the rug.

THE SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings South.

DOJ: PRIVACY COMMISSIONER - EMPOWER

HON. KEITH IRVING: Why is the Premier unprepared to table legislation to give the Privacy Commissioner order-making authority?

HON. BRAD JOHNS: I'm not the Premier, but I will answer the question. I don't think we said we will or we wouldn't. What we are in the process of doing is a fulsome review right now. We'll see what comes back and whether that's a recommendation.

KEITH IRVING: The Premier said: "We're going to work with the Privacy Commissioner to make sure that the proper authority is there so that Nova Scotians have access to the information that they rightly should have access to." He went on to say: "I just haven't focused on it, to be honest, and maybe that's my fault." I'll table that as well.

We're into the sixth session of this House. Is the Premier prepared to admit to Nova Scotians that their right to access information is still not a priority for him?

BRAD JOHNS: A review is being done, and we'll see what comes out of it.

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

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

HON. ZACH CHURCHILL: I'd just like to bring the House's attention to a friend of the House, Ben MacLean, who is here, who hails - I don't even want to say which part of Pictou County because that'll get me in trouble. He certainly comes from that part of the province and is living in Halifax now. I'd like to thank Ben through you, Speaker, for coming in and watching the House.

I ask the House to give Ben a warm welcome. (Applause)

THE SPEAKER: Nice to see you again here, Ben.

The honourable member for Kings West.

CHRIS PALMER: Thank you, Speaker. I beg leave to make an introduction.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, please do.

CHRIS PALMER: I draw members' attention to the East Gallery and one of my longtime friends and former Kings West resident - no stranger to many in municipal politics through the years. I'd like to welcome my friend Diana Brothers, who is here today.

Diana contacted me and wanted to come down to the Legislature and have a visit. Diana was a long-time municipal councillor in Greenwood, the first female warden in Kings County, and the first female warden in all of Nova Scotia. She's been involved a lot in initiatives to fight racism and discrimination, and a lot of the work she started is still ongoing in Kings County. She laid a great foundation there.

Even though she's not a resident of Kings West anymore - we've lost her to the big, bad city - she's well connected at home and I'm very thankful for her support. Thank you, and welcome, Diana. (Applause)

THE CHAIR: The honourable member for Preston on an introduction.

HON. TWILA GROSSE: I beg permission to recognize, in the East Gallery, Sharon Brown Ross. Sharon was instrumental in the planning, design, funding, and construction of the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia, which celebrated their 40th anniversary this past September. I also want to recognize that her contribution as a public servant with the Public Service Commission was at both the regional and national levels. She was instrumental in the development and implementation of the Employment Equity Program for the federal government, and she was my mentor. Thank you, Sharon. (Standing ovation)

THE CHAIR: Welcome, ladies. I hope you enjoyed the last couple of hours.

The honourable Government House Leader.

HON. KIM MASLAND: Pursuant to Rule 5(c), I move that the hours of the House be: Friday, November 3rd, 9:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m.; Monday, November 6th, 4:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.; Tuesday, November 7th, 1:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.; Wednesday, November 8th, 1:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.; Thursday, November 9th, 1:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.; and Friday, November 10th, 9:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m.

THE SPEAKER: There has been a request for a recorded vote.

Ring the bells. Call in the members.

[2:54 p.m.]

[The Division bells were rung.]

THE SPEAKER: No one can come in. Order. No. Sorry, those are the rules.

We will now have the Clerk conduct a recorded vote.

[The Clerk calls the roll.]

[3:54 p.m.]

YEAS

Hon. Brad Johns
Hon. Tory Rushton

NAYS

Susan Leblanc
Kendra Coombes

Hon. Barbara Adams	Suzy Hansen
Hon. Kim Masland	Lisa Lachance
Hon. Allan MacMaster	
Hon. Twila Grosse	
Hon. Michelle Thompson	
Hon. John Lohr	
Hon. Trevor Boudreau	
Hon. Timothy Halman	
Hon. Kent Smith	
Hon. Brian Wong	
Hon. Susan Corkum-Greek	
Hon. Brian Comer	
Hon. Colton LeBlanc	
Hon. Jill Balser	
Hon. Pat Dunn	
Hon. Greg Morrow	
Larry Harrison	
John White	
John A. MacDonald	
Chris Palmer	
Melissa Sheehy-Richard	
Danielle Barkhouse	
Tom Taggart	
Nolan Young	
Hon. Steve Craig	
Hon. Patricia Arab	
Hon. Zach Churchill	
Hon. Kelly Regan	
Hon. Iain Rankin	
Rafah DiCostanzo	
Hon. Tony Ince	
Lorelei Nicoll	
Hon. Ben Jessome	
Braedon Clark	
Ali Duale	
Carman Kerr	
Ronnie LeBlanc	

THE CLERK: For, 39. Against, 4.

THE CHAIR: The motion is carried.

The honourable Government House Leader.

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

THE SPEAKER: We will have a short recess as we set up for Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

[3:58 p.m. The House resolved into a CWH on Bills with Deputy Speaker Danielle Barkhouse in the Chair.]

[11:59 p.m. CWH on Bills rose and the House reconvened. Deputy Speaker Lisa Lachance resumed the Chair.]

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

THE CLERK: That the committee has met and considered the following bill:

Bill No. 340 - Municipal Reform (2023) Act.

and the Chair has been instructed to advise that the committee has made some progress on this bill.

THE SPEAKER: The hour of adjournment has arrived. The House stands adjourned until 9:00 a.m. on November 3rd.

[The House rose at 12:00 a.m.]

NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)**RESOLUTION NO. 787**

By: Hon. Karla MacFarlane (Pictou West)

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

Whereas local resident Marianne Guimond White has published her first book *Romance on the Hector* to coincide with the 250th anniversary of the landing of the ship *Hector* in 2023 about the budding romance of two Scottish settlers on board the vessel sailing from Scotland to their new home in Nova Scotia in 1773; and

Whereas the Pictou Antigonish Regional Library offered a writing workshop in 2022 called the Beta Reader Spot Program for local writers in which Marianne created this romantic novella; and

Whereas Marianne has been writing short stories and poetry since she was a teenager, but this is her first historical fiction book telling the story of love, suspense, and intrigue;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating Marianne White in publishing her first novel featuring the significant historical icon the ship *Hector* in *Romance on the Hector*.

RESOLUTION NO. 788

By: Hon. Colton LeBlanc (Argyle)

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

Whereas Susan Surette-Draper, author, artist, and proud Acadian, grew up in Lower Eel Brook, Nova Scotia, where her family lived for seven generations; and

Whereas her second book, *Refuge*, a spectacular work of historical fiction, resulted from her research over several years and connects to her own family history; and

Whereas *Refuge*, an agonizing tale of love, loss, and survival in Acadie, tells the moving story of Pierre Suret and Catherine Bro, who escaped the deportation of the Acadians but not the consequences of the great upheaval;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Susan Surette-Draper on the launch of her second book, *Refuge*, and thank her for bringing attention to our Acadian heritage.

RESOLUTION NO. 789

By: Hon. Colton LeBlanc (Argyle)

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

Whereas writer Debra Amirault Camelin is an Acadian with ancestral roots in Pubnico and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, and is an 11th-generation Belliveau and a 9th-generation Amirault; and

Whereas on February 28, 2023, Debra Amirault Camelin launched her first novel, entitled *Nathalie: An Acadian's Tale of Tragedy and Triumph*; and

Whereas the novel is based on two actual Acadian families, ancestors of Debra Amirault Camelin, and follows the story of a woman named Nathalie who is separated from her family and true love during the brutal 1755 Acadian Expulsion;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly recognize author Debra Amirault Camelin on the release of her first novel through which she shares her Acadian heritage and pride.

RESOLUTION NO. 790

By: Hon. Colton LeBlanc (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is an exciting and momentous event and marks the beginning of a wonderful journey; and

Whereas few events in life are as powerful and positive as the birth of a child; and

Whereas on March 13, 2023, Brittany and Nigel Cottreau welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Brittany and Nigel Cottreau on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them a lifetime of happiness as parents.

RESOLUTION NO. 791

By: Hon. Colton LeBlanc (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is an exciting and momentous event and marks the beginning of a wonderful journey; and

Whereas few events in life are as powerful and positive as the birth of a child; and

Whereas on March 15, 2023, Danielle Boudreau and Ryan LeBlanc welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Danielle Boudreau and Ryan LeBlanc on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them a lifetime of happiness as parents.

RESOLUTION NO. 792

By: Hon. Colton LeBlanc (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is an exciting and momentous event and marks the beginning of a wonderful journey; and

Whereas few events in life are as powerful and positive as the birth of a child; and

Whereas on March 21, 2023, Konsallia Kinslow and Hunter Atkinson welcomed their son into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Konsallia Kinslow and Hunter Atkinson on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them a lifetime of happiness as parents.

RESOLUTION NO. 793

By: Hon. Colton LeBlanc (Argyle)

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

Whereas the birth of a child is an exciting and momentous event and marks the beginning of a wonderful journey; and

Whereas few events in life are as powerful and positive as the birth of a child; and

Whereas on June 3, 2023, Tanika Faye and Devon Sabean welcomed their daughter into the world;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Tanika Faye and Devon Sabean on this miraculous event in their lives and wish them a lifetime of happiness as parents.