



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

**DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS**

**Speaker: Honourable Kevin Murphy**

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**Third Session**

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2016**

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House of Assembly  
*Nova Scotia*

**HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2016**

**Sixty-second General Assembly**

**Third Session**

**1:00 P.M.**

**SPEAKER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy

**DEPUTY SPEAKERS**

Mr. Gordon Wilson, Mr. Keith Irving

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Just before we begin the daily routine, the topic for late debate tonight, at the moment of interruption, as submitted by the honourable member for Lunenburg is:

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Tourism Strategy has been encouraging growth throughout the province and across industries, and with record numbers of people visiting Nova Scotia directly relating to the Tourism Strategy, small business owners have benefited greatly.

The late debate at the moment of interruption.

We will now begin the daily routine.

**PRESENTING AND READING PETITIONS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**TABLING REPORTS, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS**

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make a statement to the House concerning our province's unprecedented experience with wildfires over the summer as we come to the end of an extended wildfire risk season. As Minister of Natural Resources, I am very proud of the way the great men and women of our department worked to battle the numerous fires in our forests during the summer of 2016, a very dry summer.

We all saw how the fires in Fort McMurray, Alberta, changed how Canadians look at wildfires. It served as a very real reminder of the impact fires can have on our communities. It was in the shadow of what occurred in Alberta that our dedicated firefighting professionals here at home were battling wildfires across Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I spoke to a gathering of more than 100 men and women within our department, from district offices all over the province, to say thank you. Our firefighting professionals worked tirelessly over the season to protect people, properties, parks, and forested lands. I know I speak for all Nova Scotians when I say we are very grateful for their commitment and dedication to fighting fires that affect our province. I include in this expression of thanks not just the front-line firefighters but also all the others who supported this important work: helicopter pilots, radio dispatchers, clerks, forest technicians, firefighting strategists and managers, and all the others who assisted.

I want to also extend our gratitude to the many volunteer firefighters who joined our DNR crews in putting out these fires; they were indispensable. Our volunteer firefighters are always there for us as reliable partners. We need their help, and they never let us down.

This was not an easy fire season. At some points we had more than a dozen fires at the same time in the province. The effort that organizations and people across Nova Scotia put into this past summer season truly demonstrates what our system is capable of. Everyone - volunteer firefighters and DNR firefighters, staff with EMO, TIR, DNR, the police, and municipalities - stepped up and got us through what was a very challenging time.

Of course, we really must thank our neighbours for their support. We were very lucky to have assistance from New Brunswick, P.E.I., Newfoundland and Labrador, Parks Canada, and Quebec. Their work was vital in keeping on top of the fires and not pushing our firefighters past the point of exhaustion.

Many Nova Scotians made use of our online and social media challenges to stay informed during the fires. Our website received more than 80,000 views, and a dedicated team responded to questions and kept the public well informed.

Mr. Speaker, conditions were so dry this year that I, as minister, extended the official wildfire risk season to October 22<sup>nd</sup>; that's this Saturday. This is the last week.

Extending the burning restriction season has helped reduce risk. This was a precautionary measure to help protect people, properties, parks, and forested lands. But this measure would not have worked if not for the truly exceptional contribution made by all Nova Scotians.

Mr. Speaker, when we had to close the forest to travel, and restrict campfires and brush burning, the people of this province did their part by respecting those safety measures. They helped to reduce the risks and helped to minimize the spread of more wildfire. So we are grateful to Nova Scotians for stepping up and for being a part of the solution in our management of a very challenging season of wildfires.

To conclude, on behalf of Premier McNeil and his government, and all Nova Scotians, I want to reiterate my thanks to all the firefighters and those who supported them this season, to give them our thanks not only for the long hours of work, and difficult, dangerous work they did this summer, but for the dedication they show year round to our fine province, Nova Scotia. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: This is a quick reminder to the honourable minister not to refer to fellow ministers or the Premier by their surname.

The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking the minister for providing a copy of his remarks in advance.

This summer was remarkable for its warm, sunny weather. With that sun came the threat of wildfires. With the memories of the devastating fires in Fort McMurray so fresh in all our minds, the fire risk was very real.

The firefighters at the Department of Natural Resources and others worked selflessly to protect people and property. They did it without fanfare but with remarkable professionalism. To the dedicated men and women who worked for the Department of Natural Resources, I say thank you. Thank you for being available whenever you are needed. Thank you for taking time away from your own families to protect the loved ones of others. Thank you for risking your own lives to save others. As Nova Scotians, we are always grateful for the work of our provincial firefighters, pilots, dispatchers, clerks, forest technicians, firefighting strategists, and others, but we don't often take the opportunity to thank them enough. It's an honour to do that today.

I would be remiss if I didn't also extend our gratitude to the many volunteers who joined Department of Natural Resources crews to fight fires this summer. It truly takes a

special person to voluntarily take on this difficult and sometimes dangerous work without expectation of payment or thanks. It is that kind of attitude, that generosity of spirit that makes Nova Scotia so great. It gives us all a sense of confidence that our neighbours, friends, and even strangers, will be there to help when the going gets tough. It is also heartwarming to be able to count on the support of our neighbours in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, Parks Canada, and Quebec. We owe them all a debt of gratitude.

During this summer, there is no doubt that there were some difficult and trying days. Many of the activities that were restricted are things we traditionally associate with summer fun.

I join with the minister in commending all Nova Scotians who used caution, stayed out of the forest, and obeyed the extended fire ban for the good of the whole province. Because of the efforts of so many dedicated people, Nova Scotia and Nova Scotians were spared from potential loss and tragedy. That is something for which we are truly grateful. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader in the House of the New Democratic Party.

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the minister for his comments in advance.

I will just take a few moments to echo the sentiments offered by the minister, and I'm already on record in this House of thanking firefighters for their tremendous effort especially in southwest Nova Scotia. Here today, on behalf of the New Democratic Party caucus, I offer our sincere thank you to all those who helped the province through a difficult year of dealing with multiple fires. Their efforts have helped lessen the impact on these destructive forces. We also recognize the contribution of our neighbouring provinces who helped us through these troubled times. While many Nova Scotians love to enjoy our forests, and all we have to offer, we appreciate their respecting the extension of the wildfire risk season, and even after October 22<sup>nd</sup> passes, we ask that they still use caution when in the forest so that more incidents do not occur.

Once again, many thanks to all those who put themselves on the front lines to help protect and preserve this beautiful province and its people from wildfires this year.

#### **GOVERNMENT NOTICES OF MOTION**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. BERNARD: I would like to draw the attention of members to the east gallery. It is my pleasure to introduce Esther Boyd to members of the Legislature. Esther, could you please stand? Esther is a member of the RCMP Advisory Board in her hometown of Amherst. She has served in this role for the past seven years and she is one of hundreds of Nova Scotians who volunteer as members of our province's 160 boards, agencies, and commissions. By doing so, people like Esther make a real impact in their communities and do important work that makes Nova Scotia a better place to live and work.

I want to recognize Esther's contribution and thank her for the work she does for her community and our province, so please join me in welcoming Esther, her husband Samuel (Jack) Boyd, and daughter Jillian Webber to the provincial Legislature. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Community Services.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 82**

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

Whereas Nova Scotians from all communities, regions, and walks of life are needed to serve on agencies, boards and commissions; and

Whereas people can make a real impact in their communities while growing professionally and personally by serving in these volunteer positions; and

Whereas applications are now being accepted from people interested in serving on one of the 160 boards, agencies and commissions, and residents of Nova Scotia are eligible;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this Legislature recognize the contribution of the hundreds of Nova Scotians who serve in these roles and let people in their communities know about the many opportunities available.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Business.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 83**

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

Whereas last year the Tatamagouche Brewing Company, which opened its doors on June 17, 2014, started brewing the Giant Beer Series with higher alcohol, fuller flavours and more hops, and won a medal for their North Shore Lagered Ale; and

Whereas the Tatamagouche Brewing Company was one of three Nova Scotia brew companies to win medals at the prestigious Canadian Brewery Awards in Vancouver, but the only one to claim three awards; and

Whereas this year the brewery received a gold medal for its Giantess Barley Wine, a gold medal for the Russian Imperial Stout, and a bronze medal for its Two Rivers Baltic Porter;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly join me in congratulating the Tatamagouche Brewing Company for their creativity, entrepreneurial abilities and successes, and for being excellent representatives for Nova Scotia and our innovative small business community.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Agriculture.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 84**

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

Whereas security of our local food supply and ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food is a priority for community organizations around the province and government; and

Whereas the province supports sustainability of our food supply and access to healthy food through initiatives such as the School Milk Program that ensures students get a nutritious start to their day, Select Nova Scotia that educates consumers about the many ways to buy locally grown and produced products, and Nourish Your Roots program that connects students and their families with nutritious food and supports fundraising for schools; and

Whereas since 1979, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization has marked World Food Day on October 16<sup>th</sup> as a way to call attention to the importance of food security and the work being done to ensure that people around the globe have access to a healthy and nutritious diet;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House support the efforts of community organizations and government to promote food security and ensure all Nova Scotians enjoy the benefits of a sustainable food supply.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

HON. LEO GLAVINE: May I make an introduction?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, recently I was fortunate to attend the Halifax Wake Up Call breakfast, which raised over \$56,000 for the Stewart McInnes Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship toward prostate cancer. I want to recognize several key people involved in the event here today, and could they please rise as I introduce them: Darrin Quigley, chair for the Halifax Wake Up Call breakfast; Kent Lane, executive volunteer with the Halifax Wake Up Call breakfast; Sarah McInnes, daughter of the late Stewart

McInnes; Peter Mallette, executive director, Prostate Cancer Canada Atlantic; Ellen Townshend, Prostate Cancer Canada Atlantic; Rita-Clare LeBlanc, Prostate Cancer Canada Atlantic; and Sarah Dobson, Prostate Cancer Canada Atlantic.

I would also like to recognize at this time Peter Mallette, who for nearly six years has been raising awareness and helping to support prostate cancer research in this region. He has just announced his retirement. We wish him all the best.

I would ask my colleagues in the House to give those from Prostate Cancer Canada and our local people a very, very warm welcome. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 85**

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

Whereas 710 Nova Scotian men were diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2015, and 130 died from the disease; and

Whereas the improved testing and better treatment options have reduced the death rate from prostate cancer by almost 4 per cent per year between 2001 and 2009; and

Whereas the Halifax Wake Up Call breakfast event raised over \$56,000 for the Stewart McInnes Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship for prostate cancer research, and 29 men were tested for the disease at an on-site PSA clinic at the Wake Up Call breakfast;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House congratulate Prostate Cancer Canada Atlantic Region for its work to educate Atlantic Canadians about this disease and for its work to support earlier diagnosis and successful treatment.

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

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

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

The motion is carried.

The honourable Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to make an introduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MR. INCE: Today, I had the pleasure of announcing the government's investment in book publishers. A number of representatives of Nova Scotia's book publishing industry are here in the gallery today, up in the east gallery. I would like to introduce them and invite them to receive a warm welcome from the House.

As I call your names, could you please rise: Terri Lee Bulger and Heather Bryan, of Nimbus Publishing; John MacIntyre, of MacIntyre Purcell Publishing; John Merchant, of Curriculum Plus Publishing; Beverley Rock and Candida Hadley, from Fernwood Publishing; Francis Mitchell, of New World Publishing; Carolyn Guy, of Atlantic Publishers Marketing Association; Scott Smith, of SSP Publications; Dan Campbell, of Formac Publishing; and Ron Caplan, OC, and Sharon Hope Irwin, ONS, of Breton Books. Thank you all for all you do. (Applause)

#### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill No. 33 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 166 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Fences and Detention of Stray Livestock Act, and Repeal Chapter 167 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Fences and Impounding of Animals Act. (Hon. Keith Colwell)**

**Bill No. 34 - Entitled an Act to Amend Chapter 203 of the Revised Statutes of 1989. The Homes for Special Care Act. (Hon. Jamie Baillie)**

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

#### **NOTICES OF MOTION**

#### **STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

#### **SMITH, LOIS: PARRSBORO MAYOR - SERV. THANK**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: I rise today to acknowledge the retiring mayor of Parrsboro, Lois Smith, someone who I know is a friend to members on both sides of this House.

Mayor Smith was first elected to Parrsboro Town Council in 1997 and continued on the council until her election as mayor in 2009. She has been instrumental in many of the growth and sustainability initiatives of the town and has worked tirelessly for the people of Parrsboro.

Mayor Smith's retirement coincides with the merger of the Town of Parrsboro with the County of Cumberland. I'd like to thank Mayor Smith for her many years of dedication to the Town of Parrsboro and wish her many, many years of well-deserved and enjoyable retirement time ahead.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

### **LIBERAL GOV'T.: DISSENTING VOICES - TREATMENT**

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw attention to comments made by the member for Lunenburg yesterday in the Chamber. In response to political criticism on long-term care, the member made an unprecedented and personal attack on the Leader of our Party, Gary Burrill, claiming, "He checked his collar, too, at the Commissionaires' desk."

To call into question a person's vocational integrity and faith with these kinds of personal slurs as a defence for government's record is entirely unparliamentary, Mr. Speaker. The government should focus on explaining their cuts to Nova Scotians, rather than mischaracterizing those who are critical of them and their record.

Shame indeed, Mr. Speaker, at this government's tactic to suppress dissenting voices.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bedford.

### **ALL-CRAFT RENOVATION: FUNDRAISING DONATION - THANK**

HON. KELLY REGAN: All-Craft Renovation in Bedford often organizes fundraisers for worthy causes, but recently they decided to focus their support on the grandchild of one of their own. Danna was born with bilateral schizencephaly, one of the most severe forms of the rare brain malformation caused by an in-utero stroke.

Although Danna wasn't expected to live to her second year, she's now 18. The folks at All-Craft realized that some help to purchase a wheelchair-accessible van would mean her family could lift her more easily and without injury. This, in turn, would mean Danna could continue to be active outside her home.

The team at All-Craft took a portion of their revenue from each project they completed over the past two years, and on August 5<sup>th</sup>, presented Danna's family with a \$16,000 cheque to help purchase the Danna Van.

I was delighted to be on hand for the presentation, and I ask the members of the House to join me in giving All-Craft Renovation their warmest thanks for their generosity.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS - SENIORS CARE: BUDGET CUTS - REVERSE**

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Seniors have dedicated their lives to this province. They decided to raise their families here and to work and prosper in Nova Scotia. They have planned for the future and made financial contributions.

What they did not plan for was a \$6.7 million cut by this Liberal Government. With these budget cuts, seniors who have worked all their lives are seeing their quality of life decline. It's shameful. Seniors deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. Mr. Speaker, this government can show seniors the respect they deserve by reversing these cruel cuts.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

### **MILTON BAPTIST LADIES AUX. - ANNIV. (100<sup>th</sup>)**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Mr. Speaker, the Milton Baptist Ladies Auxiliary was formed in the summer of 1916 by Mrs. Carrie Kempton-Morse. In 1955, when the Milton Baptist Church was lost by fire, the ladies raised funds totalling over \$4,000 to provide for a new church. Today, the ladies auxiliary is a small but dedicated group of women who continue to serve the community by holding fundraising events and financially supporting the church whenever the need arises. I would like to recognize the hard work of the past and present members of the Milton Baptist Ladies Auxiliary and congratulate them on the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this organization.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

### **LEE, CHRISTOPHER: COMMUN. CONTRIBUTION - RECOGNIZE**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, Christopher Lee of Sydney reminded us about the power of helping those in need in our community in the aftermath of the Thanksgiving storm that hit. Since offering his help for free in Sydney on a community Facebook page, he has helped countless people clean out their flooded homes. Because of his generosity and hard work, Christopher has landed a temporary job with a restoration company. Although Christopher is now employed, he will continue to help others after hours because he recognizes the importance of volunteering in our community.

Christopher's selfless actions led some to call him an earth angel. It's an honour to recognize Christopher Lee for his unbelievable work ethic, his desire to help those he doesn't know, and for being a living example of the Cape Breton spirit.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River.

### **AGRIC. - FARM PRACTICES: SAFETY/SUSTAINABILITY - ENSURE**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, a new report by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization says climate change will seriously compromise food production in countries and regions that are already highly food insecure. Well, as the NDP Critic for Agriculture, this concerns me greatly and concerns our caucus. Globally more than 60 million people, two-thirds of them in Eastern Africa and Southern Africa, face food shortages this year because of droughts linked to El Niño. The report also warns that agricultural framework currently in place is a major driver of climate change.

Agriculture, forestry, and changes in land use together produce 21 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions and here at home farmers know the importance of environmental stewardship. We need to work with them to ensure that farm practices are safe and sustainable.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth North.

### **SPRING LOADED TECHNOLOGY - SUCCESS WISH**

HON. JOANNE BERNARD: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to celebrate a Dartmouth-based company named Spring Loaded Technology. This venture targets the baby-boomer generation's active living lifestyle, many of whom engage in activities as varied as alpine skiing to mountaineering. Launched with start-up funds from major investors, venture capital firms, and a loan from our government's own Innovacorp, Spring Loaded Technology is currently working on an order of 190 of their UpShot tactical knee braces for the Canadian military.

Since July, the company has doubled the size of its office space, manufacturing plant to 6,500 square feet and increased their number of employees to 25. Chris Cowper-Smith - the Spring Loaded Technology founder, president, and CEO - is now focusing on their R & D efforts towards incorporating their products into hockey pads, ski boots, and foot plates to help those with neurological problems or foot injuries to move their feet forward.

I ask my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Spring Loaded Technology in Dartmouth North and wish them continued success.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**“MAKING THE INVISIBLE, VISIBLE!”: ORGANIZERS - APPLAUD**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, on April 20<sup>th</sup>, the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, Kings local, organized a professional development session entitled Making the Invisible, Visible! This session was created to give members background on community organizations that are working to help those living in poverty in our area, including students they see every day who use and/or could benefit from these organizations.

The sessions featured a panel of speakers including Tim Amos representing the Canning Food Bank; John Andrew, Director of Open Arms, Kentville; Russ Sanche, Director of The Portal in Kentville; and Greg Mackin, Principal of Adult High Schools in the AVRSB.

I would like to applaud these organizations and their members for all their hard work supporting those living in poverty, for raising awareness about the issue and challenges these individuals face in our community, and for educating the broader community on those helping those living in poverty.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable New Democratic Party House Leader.

HON. DAVID WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I ask the House if we would be permitted to revert back to Introduction of Bills?

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

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

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: May I make an introduction first?

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: In the west gallery, I would like to introduce Gabriel Enxuga, who is the community educator at the Youth Project. Also, we have Rhys - if Rhys would stand please. Rhys is a member of the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project.

We would like to thank them very much for being here today, and I ask for the House to give them a warm welcome. (Applause)

**[INTRODUCTION OF BILLS]****Bill No. 35 - An Act Respecting Gender-Neutral Identification. (Hon. Denise Peterson Rafuse)**

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

**[STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS]**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

HON. LENA DIAB: I beg leave to make an introduction, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Permission granted.

MS. DIAB: With us in the gallery today is Mr. Bert Walker, whom I would ask to stand, please. I will read a Member's Statement shortly. Also with him is his neighbour Nancy Richards, whose grandfather Lindsay Cann Gardner was a past Speaker of this Nova Scotia House of Assembly from 1934 to 1938.

I ask all members to give them the warm welcome of the House. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Armdale.

**WALKER, BERT - BIRTHDAY (85<sup>th</sup>)**

HON. LENA DIAB: I rise today to express my gratitude to Mr. Bert Walker, a kind and compassionate constituent. After meeting him when Premier McNeil and I toured Halifax Armdale earlier this year, I received an invitation from Bert to visit Canada's Naval Memorial, the HMCS Sackville, docked at the Halifax waterfront. Bert, you see, is a trustee with the Memorial. In August, I was fortunate to have the chance to take Bert up on that offer and I was fascinated to learn just how much history we have docked right here in Halifax.

The HMCS Sackville itself represents a significant part of our nation's history. The 75-year-old ship is the last remaining Canadian corvette from the World War II period. The corvettes quickly took on a convoy-leading role they were not initially designed for and, through the bravery of their crew members, became an indispensable counter against German submarines.

Bert provided me with an informative and riveting tour, and I want to thank him for the unique experience, and I ask all members of this House of Assembly to wish him continued good health as he celebrates his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday next week. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

**SM. BUSINESS: GOV'T. (N.S.) - SUPPORT**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: In recognition of Small Business Week, I would like to comment on the challenges that entrepreneurs and small businesses face in Nova Scotia. Small businesses face sky-high taxes and power rates, patchy cellular service, dismally slow Internet speeds, and mountains of red tape. As a former small business owner, I can tell you the daily struggle can be challenging, particularly in rural Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, government must find meaningful ways to support small businesses by creating an environment that allows businesses to grow and prosper and create employment opportunities. As our province battles with our young people moving to more prosperous employment opportunities in other provinces, and an aging population, a business-friendly environment combined with the natural beauty of our province would help retain some of our young people, and make us an ideal place for newcomers and immigrants to put down roots.

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

**TOURISM N.S. - FIN. STATEMENTS: FILING - ENFORCE**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: In accordance with legislation, Tourism Nova Scotia is required to prepare and submit financial statements to the Minister of Business no later than June 30<sup>th</sup>. However, in his recent report, the Auditor General noted that this Crown corporation has yet to file these statements.

Tourism Nova Scotia had expenses of over \$25 million last year. It is simply unacceptable that this Crown corporation would miss such an important deadline. I call on the Minister of Business today to ensure that this situation is rectified and does not happen again.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Colchester North.

**PATTON, SYDNEY: ACHIEVEMENTS - CONGRATS.**

HON. KAREN CASEY: Mr. Speaker, 18-year-old Sydney Patton from North River, Colchester North, is attending Mount Saint Vincent University this Fall, and then on to Dalhousie Agricultural Campus for her Masters in Agriculture. Her genealogy supports her interest in agriculture since her grandfather Ed Lorraine, a former beef farmer and Minister of Agriculture in the Nova Scotia Government, and her uncle, Jim Lorraine, who now runs the farm, have kept it a viable and diverse operation.

Patton has been involved with 4-H for 11 years. She has tried numerous activities, but feels best suited to working with livestock. She is currently a junior leader helping youth work with their horses. Patton is delighted with her 4-H involvement because it has helped her earn two scholarships. She is one of three Nova Scotians to be presented with the TD 4-H Agriculture Scholarship worth \$2,500. She also received a renewable Weston Family 4-H Agricultural Scholarship, which covers one full year of tuition.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of the House of Assembly to join me in congratulating this very deserving teenager. (Applause)

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

**BROOKFIELD ELEM. SCH.:  
TOYOTA EVERGREEN LEARNING GROUNDS PROG. - CONGRATS.**

MR. LARRY HARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to congratulate the Brookfield Elementary School and its playground committee on earning a \$3,500 grant from the Toyota Evergreen Learning Grounds program, and to recognize playground committee members Gail MacFarlane and Denise Bolten, who played a huge role in planning the site, and submitting the grand application.

The grant, which is the second that the school has received from the program, will be used to plant native evergreen and deciduous trees to provide shade and shelter for an outdoor learning space. Students will benefit from the program in many ways, including an appreciation of, and respect for, nature, natural play space with rocks and logs for climbing, and an awareness of our responsibilities toward maintaining a healthy natural environment.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**CDN. SPRING CANOE KAYAK CHAMPIONSHIPS:  
ATHLETES/VOLS. - CONGRATS.**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Last month, Dartmouth played host to the Canadian Sprint Canoe Kayak Championships. There were 1,400 athletes from 40 clubs across Canada taking part in the events. Nine Olympians competed, including the three Nova Scotia athletes who were in Rio: Mark deJonge, Ryan Cochrane, and Genny Orton.

This is the first year they funded women's canoe. Many talented Canadian women were on hand at the event in preparation for the 2020 Olympics, where women's canoe will make its debut.

Mr. Speaker, Lake Banook is a world-class venue that continues to host national and international events. I want to congratulate all the athletes and volunteers who helped make the most recent sprint championships a success.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Preston Dartmouth.

**ORTON, GENNY: OLYMPIC ACHIEVEMENTS - CONGRATS.**

HON. KEITH COLWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Genny Orton of Lake Echo's Orenda Canoe Club as a world-class Olympian athlete. She became the fifth Olympian to come out of the Orenda Canoe Club. Genny is a World Cup bronze medal winner, and proudly represented Canada in the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

Genny is a fine example of all that is good in athletes, and a role model for many young paddlers in her home community of Lake Echo, Nova Scotia. I am proud to congratulate Genny on her tremendous achievements, and for proudly representing Canada at the 2016 Olympics.

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

**GOWRIE MEM. ELEM. SCH.: STAFF/STUDENTS - CONGRATS.**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Gowrie Memorial Elementary School in Port Morien, which closed its doors the last school year. An open house was held in June to honour the school's 66 years of providing stellar education to the community. Parents and former students going back 30 years or more packed Gowrie. Reminiscing was done as they said their goodbyes.

I stand today to congratulate Gowrie Memorial Elementary School staff and students who, over the years, made the school such an important institution in their community.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**HFX. NORTH MEM. PUB. LIBRARY - ANNIV. (50<sup>th</sup>)**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: On September 24, 1966, a small library branch was opened in the North End of Halifax on Gottingen Street. Established with funding from the Halifax Relief Commission to commemorate the 1917 Halifax Explosion, the Halifax North Memorial Public Library quickly became a library hub of the local community. Dedicated to serving local residents, Halifax North Memorial Public Library features an extensive African Nova Scotian, First Nations, and multicultural collection, and computers with Internet access for community use. To mark its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, the library will be hosting a celebration tomorrow evening from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., with live readings, music, and of

course, cake. Mr. Speaker, I would like the House to congratulate the Halifax North Memorial Public Library on 50 years of service to my district and our local community.

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

**WAVERLEY-FALL RIVER VOL. AWARDS CEREMONY:  
RECIPIENTS - CONGRATS.**

MR. BILL HORNE: It was my honour to attend the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank volunteer awards ceremony, where 18 individuals were recognized for their valuable contribution to our community. Adult Volunteer of the Year was shared by Trish Polley and Tim Carroll. The Youth Volunteer of the Year went to Brooke Clarke, and the Committee's Choice Awards went to Victor Cobb, and youth Adriana Caswell. Congratulations and thanks go to all the volunteers who help strengthen our communities.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

**HAWBOLDT/LAYS MEM. ROAD RACE - ANNIV. (40<sup>th</sup>)**

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Young runners set the pace for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the Jimmy Hawboldt/Fred Lays, Sr. Memorial Road Race. The race paid tribute to the man who started it in 1976, Joe Horne, and his family was there in his honour. Organizer Andrea MacEachern received Honourable Mention for Desire, Determination, and Dedication to the Sport Award. Doug Chisholm, Hawboldt's grandson, was also presented with an Honourable Mention for Desire, Determination, and Dedication to the Sport Award. Both of these awards were presented by Cheryl Lays in memory of her husband, Fred Lays. Dave MacLennan was permanently presented with the five-mile trophy for his many wins over the years. The day of tributes and appreciation was a wonderful ending to a race that has continued for 40 years.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Queens-Shelburne.

**BEBB, TREVOR: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: Trevor Bebb was born in Berriew, Wales, in 1926, and spent most of his life in close association with the sea. In May 1944, he volunteered for the Royal Navy, serving until 1948 as an able seaman, during which time he chipped and painted his way across three oceans and a dozen seas, from the Irish to the Yellow. In 1952, he obtained a Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree from Cardiff University, and taught school in France, Wales, and England. In 1963, he immigrated to Canada where he continued teaching in Lockeport, Nova Scotia, until he retired in 1983. Since he arrived in Canada, he lived principally in Lockeport, where for 14 years he had been researching and writing about the rich maritime history of the area. Trevor Bebb died in Welshpool,

Wales, on June 15, 2016. The County of Shelburne has lost a superb, respected individual, and a great friend. May he rest in peace.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Chebucto.

**LONERGAN, GERRY/EAST COAST BAKERY: OPENING - CONGRATS.**

MR. JOACHIM STROINK: I rise today to acknowledge and congratulate Gerry Lonergan, owner and operator of East Coast Bakery, a thriving new local business on Quinpool Road here in Halifax. Gerry opened the East Coast Bakery in May of this year and since then has been an integral part of the community, donating his delicious bagels to various charity events in the city. He is passionate in his support of other local businesses, as well as advertising their menus on the wall of his bakery.

East Coast Bakery produces the only traditional, honey-boiled, kosher bagel in the city, which they serve still warm, right out of the oven. The bakery offers tours where visitors can watch their bagels being made right before their eyes. Gerry's energy and enthusiasm for bagels and local business is a true asset to our city and our province.

I am very proud to welcome yet another local business on Quinpool Road. I would like to congratulate Gerry and East Coast Bakery on their success so far. Mr. Speaker, businesses like the East Coast Bakery can thrive here in Nova Scotia because we as government have cut red tape, and we are helping small businesses hire new grads. We are also helping young Nova Scotians land their first jobs right here in Nova Scotia with our Graduate to Opportunity program.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**MORGAN, VIRGINIA: RETIREMENT - CONGRATS.**

HON. PAT DUNN: I stand in my place today to recognize a long-time NSCC employee who recently retired. For approximately 45 consecutive Septembers, Virginia Morgan has been at her desk at the Nova Scotia Community College in Stellarton. Virginia left Trenton High School after completing Grade 11 and enrolled in a secretarial program. Toward the end of her two-year program at the Pictou County Vocational High School, she accepted an administrative job at the college. She was paid 85 cents per hour, and her gross salary was \$4,607.72.

Her colleagues at the community college wished the very popular employee many years of happiness in her retirement. Congratulations to Virginia for her dedication and commitment to thousands of students who studied at the Pictou campus in Stellarton.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River.

**TRUTH & RECONCILIATION REPT.: RECOMMENDATIONS - REVIEW**

MS. LENORE ZANN: During the Fall session of the House, the NDP caucus would like to draw the Legislature's collective attention to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report from December of last year. As members of this House continue to champion the interests of their constituents and of all Nova Scotians, we must not forget the legacy of the residential school system: thousands of children taken away from their families and communities, only to be abused and neglected at the hands of the Canadian state. Generations of indigenous peoples, both in this province and this country, have been and continue to be affected by the injustices cast upon them by their colonial experience.

As NDP Critic for Aboriginal Affairs, I encourage all members to review and reflect on all of the TRC's 94 calls to action as we enter them into the public record.

To be continued, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hants East.

**JOHNSON, MARGARET JOSEPHINE: DEATH OF - TRIBUTE**

HON. MARGARET MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on August 25, 2016, Hants East lost a pillar in our community: Margaret Josephine Johnson, known as Mrs. J.

Mrs. J devoted her life to teaching, beginning in various one-room schools. When Hants East Rural High opened in 1957, she came to teach there, and she stayed every day until her retirement. At HERH she was involved in activities such as drama, sports, Home and School, Allied Youth, Reach for the Top, and driver education. Mrs. J was an active and devoted volunteer in her church and community, credited with creating the Caring and Sharing Food Bank program. She was involved with numerous other causes and organizations.

The Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal was awarded to Mrs. J for her volunteer commitment to her community.

Mr. Speaker, this tiny, energetic woman has left a hole in our community and our hearts. I would like to acknowledge Mrs. J's contribution to our community and our province.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

**ADVOCATE HBR. VILLAGE:  
CANADA'S 150<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION GARDEN - SELECTION**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the Village of Advocate Harbour on being chosen as one of eight communities in Nova Scotia and one of 150 clubs across Canada to host a celebration garden for Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Advocate District Development Association has received 3,000 bulbs from the Canadian Garden Council. These bulbs were to be planted by all members of the community at their planting ceremony on October 15<sup>th</sup>.

The tulip is the international symbol of friendship and an enduring symbol of our national kindness and hospitality. It is an honour to thank everyone in Advocate Harbour for bringing the community together for this great event. I encourage everyone to visit the community of Advocate Harbour in Spring 2017 to view this celebration garden in honour of Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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

**BOWATER LANDS: USAGE - COLLABORATION ADVISE**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: I'd like to express my continuing disappointment with this government's action related to the former Bowater lands. When these lands were purchased by the province in 2012, many felt that this was making the best of a difficult situation. The purchase was for all Nova Scotians, and many people were excited about the potential that lay ahead.

However, I don't believe this government has listened to Nova Scotians about how these lands should be used. I am aware of the numerous, sometimes conflicting, perspectives on how best to manage the lands, and I understand the upward pressures on government to provide a stable supply of wood fibre. However, I think that collaboration, not isolation, in decision-making is the answer.

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

**MOORE, REBECCA: REFUGEE FAM. ASSISTANCE - RECOGNIZE**

HON. LLOYD HINES: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a very special woman from Stillwater, in St. Mary's District, Rebecca Moore.

Rebecca started out in the SMILE, St. Mary's Improving Life Experience group, when they began the process of welcoming a new refugee family to their community. Since the arrival of the Waanfas, she has taken the lead in their English training and helping the parents, Makene and Akili, with child care and integration into their church, as well as the

larger community. She has ensured that the children have participated in the recreational day camps throughout the summer and she personally drove the children to swimming lessons in Liscomb, all while balancing her own responsibilities and helping her husband, Mitchell, in raising three young girls.

I am truly moved by the dedication and commitment, and kindness, Rebecca has shown to the Waanfas. Her desire to help others is absolutely remarkable. She continues to give each day and is motivated to make a difference in people's lives. It's folks like her that truly make our province a better place to live.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou West.

### **BDC SM. BUS. WK. (10/16 - 10/22/16) - RECOGNIZE**

MS. KARLA MACFARLANE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to recognize BDC Small Business Week. There are thousands of small, independently owned and operated businesses in Nova Scotia that together are the backbone of our economy, particularly in rural Nova Scotia.

During this week I would like to encourage my colleagues to participate in Small Business Saturday, presented in partnership with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, with Interac and Postmedia. Show your support by visiting small businesses, take a picture of the business, or with the owners, and post to Facebook or tweet using #smallbizsaturday.

This is a great opportunity for elected officials to do our part in supporting small business, shopping local, and recognizing the significant contribution that these businesses and owners make to our communities.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

### **COM. SERV. - FOOD BANK USAGE: INCREASE - DETAILS**

MS. MARION MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, yesterday when I rose in this Chamber to ask the Minister of Community Services about the dramatic increase of 20 per cent in food bank usage since her Party took office, I was met with the usual self-congratulatory, back-slapping applause from the government side of the House. Seventy-five hundred more people - a third of whom are children - are lining up at food banks across this province, and the jubilation with which this fact is met is quite unbelievable.

At times of crisis such as this, Nova Scotians are experiencing difficult times and they want to know that their government is understanding and humbled by any form of suffering that occurs during their mandate, but this type of compassion is lost on this

government. Instead, we have a government that applauds itself over minimal short-term Band-Aid solutions while more and more Nova Scotia children are going to bed hungry.

Mr. Speaker, this is shameful.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Cole Harbour-Portland Valley.

### **HARTLING, BETTY JEAN: ACHIEVEMENTS - CONGRATS.**

HON. TONY INCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a Cole Harbour-Portland Valley constituent, a grandmother and engaged community member, Betty Jean Hartling. She was recently honoured for serving 35 years in the Halifax Sheriff's Department; in fact, Ms. Hartling was Halifax's first female deputy sheriff.

Betty Jean is also a volunteer seamstress for Nova Scotia Baton, and a loving cookie maker for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. She is also a highly devoted mother and grandmother.

I would like the members of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly to join me, and her family and friends, in congratulating Betty Jean on her outstanding career achievements, and to thank her for her dedication to her family, community, and law enforcement.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

### **LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES: FOOD BUDGET - INCREASE**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, after working their whole lives and making important contributions to our province, seniors deserve a retirement that is both supported and dignified. That means residents of long-term care facilities should enjoy the simple pleasures of fresh fruit and vegetables, butter, and appetizing meals. Unfortunately, a \$3.4 million cut to nursing home budgets means that the food budget for many of our seniors is between \$5 and \$6 a day. Too often it means a monotonous menu of bland food.

Instead of blaming the situation on hard-working professionals at nursing homes, the Premier should stop putting the quality of the lives of seniors in the crossfire and increase the food budget for our nursing homes.

Mr. Speaker, this should not be a matter of dollars and cents for this government, it should be a matter of respect.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for Members' Statements has expired.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY****ORAL QUESTIONS PUT BY MEMBERS TO MINISTERS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

**PREM.: NURSING HOMES - BUDGET CUTS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: My question is to the Premier. In each of the last two years, this government has cut the budgets of nursing homes, Mr. Speaker. At Northwood Halifax, that cut for this year alone is \$423,000. The government was warned in writing that these cuts were unworkable: unless we reduce building temperatures and lighting, have residents bathe less, or provide residents with less food or food of lower quality. I'll table that letter from Northwood with that quote attached. I'd like to ask the Premier, since he was warned about the devastating effects of these cuts, why did he go ahead and make such devastating cuts in our nursing homes?

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL (The Premier): I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I have the privilege of representing a number of those nursing homes in my constituency, in the constituency of Annapolis - Annapolis Royal Nursing Home, which I visit quite often, as well as Heart of the Valley Nursing Home and Mountain Lea Lodge in Bridgetown. I'm very fortunate to have so many caring individuals who care for our citizens, our parents, and our grandparents. As the honourable member would know, that issue was raised - I think he even raised it - during the election. We have a different point of view than the nursing home. We believe that funding can be saved through administration. Mr. Speaker, to be fair, we've sent an auditor in. When we get that audit report, we'll respond to it.

MR. BAILLIE: There are very caring staff in all of those nursing homes. The fact is, they need a caring government that actually gives them the resources to deliver the services. That is what's missing here today. They can call in all the auditors they want. The fact is that this government cut nursing homes like Northwood, the ones that the Premier just mentioned, and others all across the province. These cuts are cruel. They are heartless. They are mean-spirited. They were warned of the effects, Mr. Speaker. They don't need an auditor. They were warned of the effect as Northwood wrote to the government itself. They said the expectation now is that we'll provide food for our residents at a cost of \$5.12 a day. No one should be expected to live on that. How can the Premier possibly justify ordering nursing homes like Northwood to feed our seniors - our parents and grandparents - on \$5.12 a day?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member is completely inaccurate, Mr. Speaker. What we've said to those nursing homes is, take the savings out of administration and don't apply it to your profit line. Invest it in seniors in this province, where the money was intended to go.

MR. BAILLIE: If the Premier had any idea what was going on in nursing homes, he'd know we're talking about non-profit nursing homes that operate on a shoestring, that are providing food to our parents. The letter that I just tabled comes from one of them saying that his government requires them to serve seniors on \$5.12 a day. Those aren't our numbers; those are Northwood's numbers. It's about time this government actually looked at the devastating effects of their actions. Now that they know, now that they've been warned in writing, now that they've been told that the effect of their action is \$5 a day on food, will the Premier do the right thing and reverse those cuts, yes or no?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member would know the nursing home he's actually talking about also has a for-profit line. We want to make sure that the investment we're making to go to seniors is being spent on seniors, being directed to the very people who we've been giving them money for, not to be hived off into investments. We're more than prepared to look and send an auditor in to work with that company to ensure that the investment this government is making is going directly where it's supposed to be, to seniors.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader in the House of the New Democratic Party.

#### **PREM.: HEALTH - FED. FUNDING FORMULA**

HON. STERLING BELLIVEAU: My question, too, is for the Premier. For the past two days, the provincial Health Ministers have been meeting with the federal minister to try to come up with an agreement about health transfers. In August 2015, the Premier said he was opposed to the federal government distributing health funding based on population without taking aging demographics into account. In February of this year, the Premier said it would be difficult for any government to make changes to a funding formula. I'll table these documents. My question to the Premier, is he asking the federal government to change the funding formula to take into account Nova Scotia's aging population?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As he knows, the Minister of Health and Wellness and his colleagues from all across Canada were meeting over the last number of days. All Canadian provinces continue to stay united around the fact that we believe the increase in health care funding should be at 6 per cent. The minister has been very clear that aging populations, like Atlantic Canada's, need to have some reflection in that, in the investments that the national government is making. We're continuing to work with the national government to make sure that we have a sustainable long-term funding model for health care that will allow us to deliver health care to our citizens.

MR. BELLIVEAU: As the meeting in Toronto started, the federal minister said when she goes to her Finance Minister to ask for more money, she needs to be able to tell them that the money will be used for health. A report by the Nova Scotia Auditor General

found that our own Department of Health and Wellness underspent their budget by more than \$31 million. I have tabled those documents, Mr. Speaker. My question is, how can this Premier argue that he needs more money from the federal government when his own government has underspent the health care budget?

**THE PREMIER:** The honourable member should know the fact that we spend more money on health care than we actually receive from the federal government. We continue to invest along with our partners. When he was in government, he made a decision. His decision was to pay out unsustainable wage increases across the public sector. We've reduced the wait times for long-term care.

**MR. BELLIVEAU:** What is clear is this government campaigned on a promise of a doctor for every - I repeat, every - Nova Scotian, and yet there are 90,000 - I'll repeat that, 90,000 - people in this province without access to a family physician. Somehow the budget for physician services was cut by \$0.5 million this year. If this government can't deliver on its promises to Nova Scotians, what assurances can this Premier give that he will be able to give a fair deal for health funding for this Province of Nova Scotia?

**THE PREMIER:** I was very proud to stand with the Minister of Health and Wellness and the Nurses' Union to announce more nurse practitioners, family practice nurses, providing 14,000 Nova Scotians with access to a primary care team with a doctor, a nurse practitioner, a dietitian. Those are all positive signs. There's an announcement coming - it may be made today; if not, it will be made shortly - of new doctors accepting 1,000 patients. I'm looking forward to that. We have a locum service in Digby which is allowing more access to family physicians. Do we have more work to do? Of course we do, Mr. Speaker, but we're going to continue to work with our health care providers to make sure that we maximize the full scope of practice so that Nova Scotians who require health care in this province actually receive it from the appropriate health care delivery.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington.

#### **PREM. - HEALTH: FED. FUNDING TRANSFERS - ACCOUNTABILITY**

**HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT:** My question is to the Premier. As the federal Liberals are set to cut \$60 billion in health care spending over the next 10 years, we learned something very interesting. The federal Liberal minister feels that there is a lack of accountability from the provinces where the health transfers are not being spent totally on health care for Canadians. What we've learned from this exchange is that Nova Scotia is one of the ones they're suspicious of. We received an extra \$46 million in transfers, and we all know that this year, the Liberals cut \$5.5 million of the health budget, not including the underspending of over \$30 million. My question to the Premier is simply this, what did you do with the money?

THE PREMIER: The honourable member should know as a former Minister of Health, quite frankly, the national government is talking about reducing the escalator, Mr. Speaker; they're not actually cutting funding. What they're saying is that the increase will be 3 per cent, not 6 per cent. We completely disagree with that. We're prepared to work with the national government to target funding on the needs of Nova Scotians, for example, in home care. We believe in that. A national Pharmacare Program we're not opposed to targeting. What's happening and what the Prime Minister is highlighting is that under Conservative and New Democratic Governments in this province, they funded money in this province which never got to programming or never got to where it was intended in reducing wait times. They used it to spend somewhere else.

I would ask the former Minister of Health to go back to when he was Minister of Health and explain what he did with the cash. We know what we're doing: investing in home care, reducing long-term care wait-lists, continuing to provide health care professionals, continuing to reduce the number of people to access primary care. Those are all positive signs.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: What the Premier should ask is maybe the last Minister of Health in the Progressive Conservative Government - oh, wait a minute - she's over with the Liberals now. Ask her. She should know.

Mr. Speaker, \$51 million that that Premier had something to do with. Wait times are getting worse. Long-term care is chaos. People don't have doctors. And you're saying that you don't have a way to spend that money. You have spent it somewhere . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member for Argyle-Barrington not to refer to members opposite directly.

The honourable member for Argyle-Barrington has the floor.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, people are without doctors. You know, even the people of Barrington who have been asking for a dialysis unit have been told that there's enough money for them. I think this government has lost its credibility in taking care of Nova Scotians. Yesterday, I thought the federal Liberals were at fault - but now I can see that with creative accounting, this Liberal Government is at fault. When will the Premier do the right thing and make health care a priority and put the \$50 million back where it belongs?

THE PREMIER: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the comments by the Official Opposition House Leader towards our Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. I want to make it clear to him that she only had five months to clean up his mess, and any reasonable person would know it takes more than five months to do that.

We're going to continue to work with our national government to ensure that we continue to invest ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Premier has the floor.

THE PREMIER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to work with the national government to ensure the appropriate funding model is a sustainable fund, care is in place, and we'll continue to make sure wherever you live in this province you have access to primary health care. We're very excited about the health care professionals across this province who are willing to partner and work together for the first time in a long time. All of them know that collaborative care is the way to go, and we're looking forward to make sure that we continue to build on the great work that has already happened, and we're going to continue to make sure that every community has access to primary health care.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River.

#### **PREM. - TRUTH & RECONCILIATION COMMN.: PLAN - TIME FRAME**

MS. LENORE ZANN: Mr. Speaker, 10 months ago, the national Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its final report. It's also been 10 months since the Premier, who is Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, made a commitment to answer the commission's call to action. So, since then, we've heard next to nothing about what this government is doing to address the report's recommendations. In fact, unlike Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia's Aboriginal Affairs website does not even have a dedicated web page outlining this government's forthcoming actions to realize reconciliation in this province.

My question for the Premier is, when can indigenous Nova Scotians expect to hear a tangible plan from this government on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question, Mr. Speaker, and the Truth and Reconciliation is important for all Canadians. We've continued to work, I've continued to work not only with my Aboriginal counterparts across the country, but I've worked with Premiers across the country as well, as the national leadership of the Aboriginal community to continue to make sure that we implement those recommendations across not only Nova Scotia, but, indeed, across Canada.

MS. ZANN: Well, I know a number of indigenous people in Nova Scotia feel they have not been consulted deeply and meaningfully. The federal government has announced its intention to initiate a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women. This requires a buy-in from all of the provinces in order to be meaningful, but once again, this government has not been transparent about Nova Scotia's role in the forthcoming

national inquiry. Our New Democratic Party caucus filed access to information requests to find out, but everything we've received was redacted beyond clarity. I will table that.

So I ask the Premier, can he please tell us how his government intends to participate in the national inquiry into murdered and missing indigenous women and why is this such a big secret?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, it's not a big secret; all she had to do was ask. We as a government both in Opposition and on this side have continued to support - we had unanimous consent in this House by all Parties - I want to say, one of the few Legislatures in all of Canada to support the inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women.

When we had the request from the national government, we said we were a willing partner from the beginning, and we're a willing partner now, and we'll do whatever is required to ensure that this inquiry is done the right way to ensure that these communities and these families get the support and, quite frankly, the understanding that they need.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

#### **PREM. - NURSING HOMES: CUTS - EFFECTS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. For two years in a row, the government has cut the budgets for our nursing homes. Now, they are feeding seniors on \$5.12 a day. We tabled evidence to that effect just a few moments ago.

Nursing home operators themselves are saying it's impossible to provide a proper meal to their residents, to our parents and grandparents, on that budget. The Premier can say that it has to all come out of administration, but the fact of the matter is it's not, and he knows it, and we have the evidence here before this House.

How can the Premier possibly tell Nova Scotians that front-line care isn't affected when we have evidence that our seniors are eating on \$5.12 per day?

THE PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Again, it's not accurate. Across this province, we have heard from some nursing homes on a whole host of issues that the minister has gone in, and we've gone in, to look at. There has been a difference of opinion, but at the end of the day, we believe the commitments we've made and the funding we've put in place can provide the quality long-term care that our seniors and our families expect.

MR. BAILLIE: Well, the Premier can believe it's not accurate if he wants, but tell that to Trudy Helmke. I'll table her comments. She's a resident at Northwood. She has seen a real decline in the quality of food there in the last two years. She calls the food now bland. She has identified the potatoes they're now eating to be powdered potatoes, Mr. Speaker.

I don't know if you remember them, but I remember them from when I was a kid, and they're terrible. Our seniors deserve better. Trudy Helmke isn't making it up. She's living it every day.

Bob Enos is another senior at Northwood. He has spoken up to point out that his grandson has to bring him butter because they don't have real butter anymore. This is the reality that we're facing. I don't know how the Premier can say otherwise.

Does he truly believe that people like Trudy Helmke and Bob Enos are just making it up when they report that the food quality has gone down at their nursing home in the last two years?

THE PREMIER: No, Mr. Speaker, but I believe the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party could be.

We've done the appropriate thing. We've sent an independent person into the nursing home to deal with the exact issues that he has raised and to deal with other issues. If we're wrong, we'll respond to that. Any time I've been wrong, I've acknowledged that and moved on and done the appropriate thing. We believe we've funded this nursing home to the tune it should be, and we'll continue to do so.

If it's deemed, as we've gone looking into that, that there's an issue, we'll make sure it's looked after.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

### **PREM. - NURSING HOMES CUTS: SENIORS - EFFECTS**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Well, I'm glad to hear that, Mr. Speaker, because the fact of the matter is that the Premier is wrong on this one. He was warned, and he was warned in writing.

Michael Walsh, the president of the Continuing Care Association, wrote to the Premier recently. I have that letter, and I'll table it for the House. He said: While the provincial government has been telling the public that these cuts will not affect front-line care or the jobs of health care workers, service providers are being left with few options to mitigate the losses and maintain operations at acceptable levels. But the cuts are still going ahead.

The Premier either doesn't get it or he doesn't care. Why is he allowing these devastating cuts to go ahead when he has been told in writing about the effect it's having on our seniors?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I want to say to him that we've worked with providers across this province. I've been in many of these nursing homes. Contrary to what he believes, there's top-quality care. The men and women who are out working every day provide quality care to our citizens.

I'm going to continue to stand by those hard-working Nova Scotians who are looking after our seniors. We're going to continue to work with them, and if there are issues, we'll work our way through them in individual places. As I've said to the honourable member, we've gone into a nursing home - the very issues that were raised during the by-election - and we said we'll send in an independent person to have a look.

MR. BAILLIE: The Premier can stand by his talking points. He can stand by his auditors all he likes. We'll stand by the Trudy Helmkes and the Bob Enoses and all of those seniors, our parents and grandparents, who every day are being asked to eat on \$5.12 per day.

The Premier has been warned. He has been warned in writing. He just doesn't get it - just like the film industry, which they messed up. Just like Pharmacare, which they messed up. Now we have our nursing homes with seniors eating on \$5 per day, writing the Premier, telling him the effect, and he still won't turn it around.

He was warned in writing, as I said a moment ago, by the Continuing Care Association, who said: It's not feasible to feed our clients on less. It will result in the public losing faith in our health care system.

So I ask the Premier . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time allotted for the member's question has expired. We'll move on to the next question.

The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - COLLABORATIVE CARE TEAMS:  
DOCTORS - INCLUSION**

HON. DAVID WILSON: The Premier's answer didn't expire, but I'm sure we'll come back to that.

Mr. Speaker, the president of Doctors Nova Scotia recently wrote an opinion piece expressing her frustration with this government's handling of the Health and Wellness file. While she called the Premier's announcement of funding for nurses and nurse practitioners to join collaborative care teams a positive step, she said the announcement was incomplete. I'm beginning to think that this is because the government's plan for health care is definitely incomplete.

My question for the Minister of Health and Wellness, how have doctors been included in discussions about the plans for collaborative care teams across this province?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I'm pleased to be able to report to the member's question and to all members and to Nova Scotians that, yes, we went through a challenging year in terms of working out the master agreement. Since that has been concluded, doctors have had tremendous input into the primary care report that will be coming to me in December. We know that they have to champion not just collaborative care development across the province, but that they also have to be the leaders in working towards the best primary care that can be delivered.

MR. DAVID WILSON: It's been more than a challenging year; it's been a challenging three years in our health care system. I don't know which doctors the minister is speaking with, Mr. Speaker, but I can tell you I've been contacted by many of them who do not feel that this government is engaging with them on these changes.

A letter from the Canadian Association of Community Health Centres points out that 88 per cent of Nova Scotia's existing community health centres report significant operational pressures, and no Nova Scotia community health centre receives core operational funding in the province. Over the summer, there were two collaborative practices in the North End, for example, struggling to make government funding work. The subsidized rent deal negotiated with the North End Community Health Clinic addressed their points for a moment, but I'm not sure about the Duffus Health Centre.

So I'd like to ask the minister, does the government have a provincial strategy for supporting collaborative practices, or are they just issues being dealt with on an ad hoc basis?

MR. GLAVINE: What I can say is, having personally visited ten of our collaborative practices across the province, all of those sites, whether it's in Bridgewater or whether it's in Middleton, wherever these communities are that have moved in that direction, all of those sites are pleased with the arrangement that has been made with them in terms of the lease arrangement, the common space, the non-doctor providers, nurses, family practice nurses. Those arrangements have all gone very, very well.

What I can tell the member opposite is that I, too, have been meeting with doctors. I can tell the member opposite that, yes, they raised a few concerns, but they're bringing solutions to the table as well.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth East.

**SNS: 211 WEBSITE - STAFFING**

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: My question is for the Minister of Service Nova Scotia.

According to the 211 website, the minister's department provides 95 per cent of the funding for the service here in Nova Scotia. The service website says, "The service helps Nova Scotians by reducing the frustration of trying to find the right community or social service . . ."

Unfortunately, if you call in the evenings or weekends, the service is staffed not in Nova Scotia but in Ontario. The result is often incomplete or inaccurate information, or information which only pertains to Ontario. As an example, last night a resident called and they were told that the service was in Ontario and they should call their MLA. When asked who their MLA was, they were directed in the wrong place.

Why is a service - intended to provide service to Nova Scotians - being staffed by Ontario agents?

HON. MARK FUREY: I appreciate the question from my colleague. I'd certainly like to learn more about the concerns brought to the attention of my colleague. If he's prepared to share those circumstances, I'm more than prepared to look into them for him.

MR. YOUNGER: I'm certainly happy to provide the detail, and this is not the only time. This is not just about government funding jobs in another province; it's about inaccurate information. Over the past three months, I've experienced people directed to my office saying they were told by 211 that they live in Dartmouth East when they did not; we still helped them of course. We've encountered quite a few cases where after-hours calls are resulting in blatantly incorrect information about programs in this province or information directing them to programs only offered in Ontario.

What is the minister going to do to ensure that calls are answered in Nova Scotia and, most importantly, that accurate information is provided after hours, when the problem seems to exist?

MR. FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I find it hard to believe that this member has had this information for three months and only now chooses to bring it forward. I'm more than prepared to work with the member to find efficiencies and better services through the 211 program for all Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

**PREM. - NURSING HOMES: BUDGET CUTS - RESTORE**

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Seniors in our nursing homes are eating powdered potatoes in the last two years because they don't have the money to get real potatoes. They're eating canned vegetables because the government has cut the budget. They can't afford fresh vegetables anymore.

As the president of the Continuing Care Association says, "it's not feasible to feed our clients on less. The residents are our number one priority." Will the Premier make the residents his number one priority and restore the cruel cuts that his government has made to our nursing homes?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. Of course, seniors are our number one priority.

MR. BAILLIE: No one is buying that - not after Pharmacare, not after they tried to double their premiums, not after the cuts they made to our nursing homes. Money might be the number one priority, but the health and welfare and the medicines of our seniors, that's the last priority of this government. In fact, the Premier's whole defence this afternoon seems to be - we'll cut first and we'll ask questions of the auditors later.

Put seniors first. That's what Trudy Helmke and the seniors at Northwood are saying: put seniors first. That's what we are saying. It's a simple yes or no question. Will the Premier actually put that money back into the food budgets or not?

THE PREMIER: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As you know, we continue to work with organizations across our province, whether they're not-for-profit or profit, to continue to make sure we deliver services to our seniors across our community. Every member of this House, I'm sure, represents a nursing home in their respective communities. I encourage them to go out and get in, talk to the people that work in there, talk to the residents. When there are issues raised, we'll deal with them as we continue to do.

I want to remind the honourable member that 40 per cent of the seniors in this province have a reduced cost in Pharmacare, thanks to the good work of the Minister of Health and Wellness.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - SENIORS: PHYSICIAN SHORTAGE - EFFECTS**

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. People from one end of the province to the other have been trying to show the government there are simply not enough family doctors to go around. In order to be

admitted to a long-term care facility, the senior must have a family doctor. In many cases the staff at the facility will have to make a special ask of a local doctor to take them on as a patient. This puts the physicians in a terrible position knowing a senior may not find a safe place to live if they do not stretch their patient load.

So my question to the minister is, what does the minister propose in cases where a senior does not have access to a family physician and ends up in hospital?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to give the member opposite the most recent update in terms of recruitment. Today the health authorities announced that a new doctor in North Sydney will be taking on 1,000 new patients in North Sydney, Sydney Mines, Florence, Bras d'Or and Georges River. So there's a good chance that senior will be getting a doctor.

MR. ORRELL: I guess another question I'd have - but I'll expect the answer later - how many patients did the doctor in Bras d'Or have that was forced to give up his family practice?

The Liberal Party promised a doctor for every Nova Scotian the last election and it fell short by nearly 100,000 people - 10,000 people in Cape Breton alone. As the population ages, so do many family physicians. All of these factors must amount to a huge amount of stress for our Nova Scotians. This is the last concern a senior in our family should have when they reach the point where they require 24-hour care.

My question to the minister is, will he present his plan to remedy this situation and how will he assist the long-term care facilities and seniors in the meantime?

MR. GLAVINE: I thank the member opposite for bringing that question to the floor. We all know that primary care is of the utmost importance. Sometimes when you go to meet with your colleagues from across the country, they sometimes point out to you that you have a number of very good initiatives.

Since July 1<sup>st</sup>, we have added 21 new family doctors, 18 specialists . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Health and Wellness has the floor.

MR. GLAVINE: I won't be happy until all Nova Scotians have a primary caregiver, but I'm pleased to say that at the present time we have the third-highest number of patients being seen by doctors and primary care providers in the country.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Dartmouth South.

**JUSTICE: HOSPITALS - INMATE SECURITY**

MS. MARIAN MANCINI: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. Many questions were raised about security procedures for inmates in hospitals when a woman was recently shackled in her hospital bed while recovering from surgery. The minister herself said it sounded like we had gone a little too far, while the Minister of Health and Wellness said it seemed like a 19<sup>th</sup> Century practice - and I'll table that. Aside from being highly degrading, shackling this woman could have jeopardized her recovery.

I ask the minister, if this woman was a low flight risk and other security measures were in place - there were two guards in the room 24/7 - why was she shackled to the hospital bed in the first place?

HON. DIANA WHALEN: I'm really glad that the member opposite has raised this issue. This had certainly come to my attention as a result of that particular woman who was in custody being shackled in a hospital. As she has said, the quotes from both the Minister of Health and Wellness and myself indicated that we were not satisfied that that was the right response. We asked for it to be reviewed, and the shackles were removed.

As a matter of principle, the first concern is always the health of the individual. Corrections will always work with the health provider to ensure that health is not impacted.

MS. MANCINI: This case has raised broader concerns about security procedures in place for when female inmates access health services. For example, Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, female inmates who wish to access prenatal care must do so in handcuffs - this is a policy that needs to be reviewed as well.

I'd like to ask the minister, will the review taking place be looking more broadly at security procedures relating to inmates accessing health care services such as prenatal care?

MS. WHALEN: Thank you again for that follow-up question. Whenever any of our offenders are outside of the institution or are being escorted somewhere, they need to do a risk assessment each time, and I think that will remain the case. But we want to make sure that we have a proportional response, and that it is the correct response whenever you look at what the flight risk is, or what danger might be posed by that individual. I think we need to take a cautious approach, but also a very compassionate approach in doing that. That will be what we'll be looking for in the review.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Kings North.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS - BUDGET CUTS: RELEASE - TIMING**

MR. JOHN LOHR: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. The budget cuts to long-term care facilities have had a very real and visible effect

on seniors' care. Many facilities do not have the resources to provide all the services and goods they need for residents.

Adding to the difficulty, the minister announced funding cuts to the facilities well after they had finalized their budgets for the year. They had to go back and make cuts retroactively. Rate changes for individuals living in long-term care facilities are released November 1<sup>st</sup> each year. It is only fair that any changes made to funding plans be made public at the same time.

My question for the minister is, will the minister finally realize how short-sighted these cuts are and ensure they do not repeat this haphazard approach to funding?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to respond to the member for Kings North and his concern about homes. Possibly he's speaking universally, but perhaps the ones he is familiar with, like myself, in the Annapolis Valley - what I can say is that I've been in several during Continuing Care Month to talk over both the short- and long-term concerns that they have.

I think the member opposite knows as well that in the Annapolis Valley we have a number of first-class nursing homes. The care is outstanding. They've made some changes with administrative deficiencies - finally working together for bulk purchasing, a number of homes going to the same insurance provider, they've met the challenge, and we'll be certainly supporting them going forward.

MR. LOHR: Each year that the government has made cuts to senior care and long-term facilities, they have at the same time been asking service providers to deliver more. This simply does not make sense. Operating costs have gone up significantly, and the government is downloading more and more responsibilities onto facilities. The organizations are underfunded and doing their very best to provide care to seniors who have contributed to this province their entire lives. Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is, will the minister commit that any additional programming requirements are matched with additional funding for long-term care facilities?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, it was important that homes start to work together, realize a whole number of efficiencies, and really what the cut certainly brought forward. Nursing homes that, in fact, have been running a deficit for a decade - we're going to work with them especially so that all nursing homes can operate in the province without a deficit, and we will work towards improving those areas that need some help. I'm pleased when I go into a nursing home like St. Vincent's Nursing Home here in the city, where 40 per cent of their diet is locally-procured, Nova Scotia-grown produce.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou Centre.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS: DOCTOR SHORTAGE - EFFECTS**

HON. PAT DUNN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Alexander MacMillan is a victim of Nova Scotia's health care crisis. Mr. MacMillan has no family doctor and lives with daily pain. He is frustrated and angry. He is forced to rely on walk-in clinics or the emergency room to provide help when his suffering becomes unbearable. Because he has no family doctor, temporary pain management is all he can hope for - not treatment for the cause of his unbearable pain. My question to the minister is, would the minister admit that his inability to deliver on the Liberal election promise is victimizing people like Alexander MacMillan?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, I don't think it's any secret that I need to keep from the member, but he has probably heard that a new collaborative practice will be coming to Pictou. We're doing all we can to meet the primary care needs in that community, and at times, there can be a gap. There was the death of a doctor in that community last year, and another one retired with, again, very little notice. We're working to now have doctors give a longer-term picture of what their practice will be, in terms of number of patients, when they're winding down towards retirement. That will give us a better picture to recruit as well as we have since July 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

MR. DUNN: Mr. Speaker, Alexander MacMillan has been without a doctor since February. His son, Zachary, stated that having no family doctor has devastated their family. He stated his dad's quality of life has been destroyed and has financially ruined him. My question to the minister is, how long will people like Alexander MacMillan have to suffer before the minister takes action to fix the doctor shortages in Pictou County?

MR. GLAVINE: Mr. Speaker, we know that there is the provision for a patient to certainly go to their ER if there is an issue of concern to them, and I know that when anybody loses their family doctor it's a difficult time. The Nova Scotia Health Authority is working to make sure that all the residents of Pictou County will have a primary care provider, and good progress has been made, with 21 family doctors coming to the province just since July 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Halifax Needham.

**IMMIGRATION - SERV. ORGANIZATIONS:  
MULTI-YEAR FUNDING - CONSIDER**

MS. LISA ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Immigration. Language training, employment services, and family counselling will always be needed in order to retain new immigrants to our province and give them a proper welcome. Most of these services are provided by organizations like ISANS and the YMCA, whose staff are forced to reapply for the same provincial funding every year. This creates an unnecessary administrative burden for those working at the front lines of settlement

services. Will this government consider moving to multi-year funding agreements with the handful of organizations assisting immigrants here in Nova Scotia?

HON. LENA DIAB: Mr. Speaker, I know first-hand how it's not easy to settle in a new place, and that's why the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration is investing more in immigrant settlement services across this province.

This year we've increased our settlement funding to \$6 million for those services. The federal government does a yearly call for proposals, and for the province to issue a call for settlement services each year aligns our funding with the federal government's yearly proposal as well.

MS. ROBERTS: Long-term funding agreements would save the province and the service providers both time and money. Providers would have fewer applications to file, and this government would have fewer applications to process. More of our public investments in the provincial immigration system would reach newcomers. Why does this government continue to make harmful cuts in other departments when there are clear opportunities like this to save money and improve efficiency?

MS. DIAB: As I said, immigration settlement funding has increased to \$6 million this year from \$5.4 million in 2013. We keep investing more in those settlement services. We value very much the settlement partners that we're working currently with this year. We're working with 14 of them. So not only will yearly funding for the moment allow us to align our funding with the federal government, but also priorities change.

I can give you the extreme example that we had this year of the refugees that came within the last 12 months. Had we done multi-year funding, we would never have been able to align our services and forecast for that. So the yearly funding at the moment works very well for us.

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS: HEALTH FACILITIES - PATIENT TRANSPORT**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Clare and Florence Wadden are two individuals who are in their senior years, married over 50 years. They had health problems. Florence landed in a home. Clare made a decision to go into an assisted living home and made arrangements to have Florence moved there. He offered to take her by car. He was refused that. He asked if he could take her by taxi, and was refused that. So at the end of the day, he was told the only way they could transfer her from one unit to another was by an ambulance.

My question to the minister is, does the minister believe that a \$500 charge to move a patient at a nursing home from one facility to another health facility is a reasonable charge that can be made?

HON. LEO GLAVINE: I thank the member for bringing that case here to the floor of the Legislature. After today's session I will work with him to get more details. I think we can get a resolve to this very quickly.

MR. MACLEOD: I want to thank the minister for that. I just think it's important that people understand that if you stood on the doorstep of one of these nursing homes, you can see the other nursing home. As a matter of fact, I could even walk there, if I had to. (Laughter)

A \$500 charge to move somebody less than 500 yards is an unreasonable, unrealistic, unprecedented cause and factor for seniors in this province. I look forward to making sure that the minister not only address this for Mr. and Mrs. Wadden, but for all Nova Scotians who find themselves in that same predicament.

MR. GLAVINE: These situations come along and they highlight that there can be inadequacies within the protocols that have been part, sometimes, of our old health districts. Sometimes the operator had certain protocols. I believe there can, in fact, be a number of safe ways in which we can look after transportation needs.

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

#### **MIRA RIVER PROV. PARK: SEASON - LENGTH EXTEND**

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. There has been a fair amount of investments being made into provincial parks over the last little while, and that's a good thing; nobody would dispute that. However, we have a park on the Mira River; it's called the Mira River Provincial Park. It's a very good facility. It has been upgraded for a number of years now.

The question is the length of the season. Those who are there and use that facility say that the season is too short. Other facilities on Cape Breton Island have been kept open because of the Celtic Colours festival. I wonder if the minister could address the situation regarding the period of time that this park is open.

HON. LLOYD HINES: I thank the member for the excellent question. I have to agree with him that the Mira park is one of the most beautiful parks that we have in the province. Nova Scotians in this year have demonstrated the love that they have for the parks because, in the province, the early indications are that our occupancy at our parks is up over 20 per cent. That's a very, very good thing. I think that increase is probably assisted

by the Grade 4 program that we put in place, the efforts that we made to make it more welcoming for our veterans, and the excellent staff that we have at our parks.

MR. MACLEOD: I can say that the staff at this park and all of our parks are highly exceptional individuals, but what we need is an increased season to help with the tourist season that we have, to help with the people who come to Cape Breton to visit Celtic Colours. I would hope that the minister will review the situation and look at extending the park's opening time by at least a month shouldered on both ends.

MR. HINES: In view of the overwhelming outpouring that we've had this year for our parks across the province, in a dynamic organization, we're always looking at what we need to do and how we can better serve the public, and we certainly are going to take that into consideration.

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

#### **ENVIRON. - CAPE SHARP TIDAL PROJ.: FISHERS - TALKS CONFIRM**

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: My question is for the Minister of Environment. The push to develop tidal energy in the Bay of Fundy has hit a major roadblock with a group of Nova Scotia fishers seeking a court order to suspend the minister's approval of the Cape Sharp Tidal project until a judge can review the case next year.

A spokesperson for the fishers has said they are still holding talks with Cape Sharp, but there has been no word on talks with the minister or anyone else in government. I'd like to ask the minister, is she or anyone else in government currently in talks with these fishers?

HON. MARGARET MILLER: The Bay of Fundy, as we all know, is recognized as a Nova Scotia treasure, and it's a wonderful asset for all of us to enjoy and share with the world. Nova Scotia Environment's role is to assess the environmental effects monitoring plan for the Cape Sharp project.

We are satisfied that the proposed monitoring plan, together with monitoring and studying enhancements, will help improve the understanding of the interaction between the turbines and marine life. That said, I have met with the fishermen in the past and listened to their concerns. I don't believe I've had any requests since to hear from them.

MS. PETERSON-RAFUSE: Many Nova Scotians are excited about the potential of tidal energy, but I doubt they would want to see tidal energy be developed at the expense of our traditional fisheries. It is important that all sides in this conflict find some common ground and continue to seek solutions through dialogue before the province ends up in a

lengthy court battle that could create further animosity and cost to the taxpayers of this province.

I would like to ask the minister, what is she doing to prevent this situation from further escalation and costly litigation?

MS. MILLER: I have no issue with talking to these fishermen at any time about their concerns. I know that they have asked for a judicial review of my decision. I think what the member needs to know and what the public needs to know is that the approvals and the research have been done since 2006, so there's a lot of background involved . . .

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

## **OPPOSITION MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

### **MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Resolution No. 11.

Res. No. 11 - McNeil Liberals: Cost of Living Increase - Condemn - notice given Oct.14/16 - (Hon. J. Baillie)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Pictou East.

MR. TIM HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker, a federally mandated carbon pricing scheme, a carbon tax, when Nova Scotians have already done so much to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, is further proof that the Ottawa Liberal Party is taking our province for granted. If you think of the Supreme Court debacle, the fact that our ACOA Minister is from Toronto, and now the Ottawa Liberals want to impose even more costs on Nova Scotians.

Nova Scotians are willing to do their part to lower greenhouse gas emissions and over the past decade they have already done so much - they have the power bills to prove it. If you listen to the Premier on this issue, he has changed his wording a little bit and he has changed his tone a little bit. Outside of changing the wording and the tone, the Premier appears quite content to sit back and let Ottawa impose a carbon pricing scheme on Nova Scotia. He might not call it a carbon tax anymore, but he's certainly willing to talk about a cap and trade.

Meanwhile, other provinces like Saskatchewan are speaking out strongly against carbon pricing. Saskatchewan has even said that it's considering legal action against the

federal government, but where is our Premier? I remember it wasn't that long ago that the Premier always used to refer to the Harper Conservatives, and for a while he would refer to the Trudeau Liberals, and now he refers to the national government. It's interesting. Outside of some changes in wording, where is the Premier in standing up for Nova Scotia?

Making matters even more troubling in the eyes of Nova Scotians, we learned recently that the Premier, in fact, set up his own carbon pricing working group in the Department of Finance and Treasury Board. Apparently that's a group that has been going on for some time now. So on the one hand we see a bit of huffing and puffing, and maybe a bit of a staged walk-out out of a meeting, but on the other hand, behind the scenes, under cover of darkness, the Premier is actually setting up a working group about carbon pricing.

When he was asked by the Leader of the Official Opposition about what options that group was considering or had been asked to examine by the government, the Premier refused to answer. I wonder why? Clearly, if he set up a working group he would have given them a mandate. Maybe I shouldn't assume too much about this government, but generally that's what people would do.

When he was asked about it, the Premier wouldn't answer. He wouldn't answer in here. When he was asked out there, he took a different approach - a far more aggressive approach.

What is the Premier hiding from Nova Scotians and why is he refusing to share his own work in carbon pricing? What is he hiding? That's a fair question. It's a bit laughable that we have the Premier who promised to run the most open and transparent government in history - a bit laughable. When you actually ask him about something, there are no answers, there is no openness, there is no transparency.

While other provinces are showing leadership on this issue and defending the people they represent, our Premier is sitting on his hands and waiting to see what Ottawa does next. He is waiting for them to do something. He can pretend all he wants. He can pretend that he is opposed to a carbon tax, but he has not yet made any clear statements or taken any clear action that he would stop Ottawa from imposing one.

He has remained silent on the whole cap-and-trade issue. Nova Scotians know that cap and trade is just a carbon tax by another name. Anyone who is on social media has seen some of the little memes and videos where federal Liberal ministers refer to it as a "carbon tax" and then try to correct themselves and say "a price on carbon." They know it's the same thing. We see that time and time again.

Cap-and-trade would still drive up costs for Nova Scotians. It would still make our economy less competitive, at a time when we need to create more jobs, not drive jobs away. There are fewer people working in this province today than there were when this

government came in. That's the fact. We know that cap-and-trade - or carbon pricing, or a carbon tax - will make Nova Scotia less competitive.

All of this makes people wonder, whose side is the Premier on? Is he standing up for Nova Scotians, who already pay some of the highest power rates in the country, or is he standing up for his Ottawa Liberal friends? Maybe the Premier hopes that he can pull the same stunt he did with the efficiency fee - we all remember that one. He promised to get rid of it, but then he just hid it in another line item on a bill, because he thought Nova Scotians aren't smart enough to figure that out.

Well, we did figure it out. We know it's just a hidden tax, now. We know it's still there. Maybe the Premier is going to try to find a way to bury Ottawa's new carbon tax and try to hide it, thinking Nova Scotians won't know the difference on that. Well, he's wrong.

Carbon pricing would have a devastating impact on too many Nova Scotians, and under this government, our economy is already struggling. It was laughable yesterday, when the ministers opposite would stand up and refer to one sentence about the BMO report about the economy, but they didn't say the next sentence, which had the truth in it about what our economy is doing. I'll get that to hand and I'll read that.

It's just another example of how they give you a little bit, but they don't give you the whole story. It's not open. It's not transparent. This is an economy that is struggling. And now the Liberals want to make it harder to get work, harder to get kids to sports, and harder to pay the bills. The cost of living will continue to rise for Nova Scotian families. We're paying more in taxes than we ever have - up 17 per cent under this government - and services are declining. This is a government that's managing to do far less with more, and now they want to sit by and let the carbon tax go.

What would a carbon tax do to our industries, like the mining industry? The mining industry employs 5,500 people and generates \$420 million per year in economic activity. People in the mining industry will remember that the Premier, while he was campaigning for their support, promised to give the industry a fuel tax rebate. Of course, he didn't deliver on that once he was elected, but that's just another \$2.6-million broken promise in a long string of broken promises.

Imagine what increases in the cost of fuel would do to these mining companies. Imagine the size of the fuel price increases that they would see under a new carbon pricing scheme. PricewaterhouseCooper has already said that Nova Scotia is the highest-cost jurisdiction for mining. That is not something we should be proud of. We should be alarmed by that fact, and we should be deeply, deeply concerned that the Ottawa Liberals are going to make it a whole lot more expensive, because in that scenario jobs will be lost.

A typical mine in Canada spends about 30 per cent of its budget on energy. This is ranging from the diesel for the trucks, to electricity to process the base metals at the

refinery. The cost, 30 per cent - a pretty dramatic cost of doing business. Others have had experience with this. The Mining Association of Canada says that B.C.'s carbon tax results in mining companies paying out more than they get back in in the form of reduced taxes. It's costing the mining industry there, and it will certainly cost the mining industry here. And that's just one industry. We would see that across our fishing industries.

In fact, the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture has already spoken out about what carbon pricing would mean for them. They went so far as to write to the Premier, and in their letter, the Federation of Agriculture said that taxing energy would put Nova Scotia agriculture at a competitive disadvantage. (Interruption)

Yes it would, sir. It absolutely would. It would make it harder for agricultural businesses to innovate. It would make it harder for them to generate opportunities for themselves.

If you think about that industry, that's an industry that relies on transportation to get its products to market. A lot of the product is exported. Guess how it's moved around? It's moved around by vehicles that require fuel.

Where will the new costs associated with the Liberal carbon pricing be absorbed? I think we know the answer to that, Mr. Speaker: by all of us consumers. We'll all pay more. That's the way that would work.

Do the Liberals in Ottawa and the Liberals here in this House not think that our farmers are already doing their part, already doing as much as they can, to reduce their carbon footprint and make Nova Scotia greener? If you sit idly by and let Ottawa jam some carbon pricing scheme on them, you're saying that, no, they're not doing enough, and they need to do more.

Myself, I think that farmers, like the rest of us, are doing their part. They understand that their business has an impact on the environment, and they know they have a role to play. The agriculture industry is doing its part, but they need a federal government and a provincial government that will work with them, not against them. Carbon pricing works against Nova Scotia agriculture. It works against Nova Scotians.

This isn't just about the major industrial players like our mining and agricultural sectors. This is about ordinary families. The Auditor General reported some stark figures over the last couple of weeks. He said Nova Scotians are paying 17 per cent more in taxes than they did just four years ago.

Does the Premier really think, does the Premier really believe, that we can ask those Nova Scotians for more? That's what a carbon pricing scheme will do. It has been reported that the carbon pricing scheme will cost the average family \$1,250 a year. That's sports equipment for their kids. That's an investment at retirement. That's money that is gone in

the form of another tax, whatever you want to call it. That won't be in the hands of that family to spend on the things that matter to them; it will be money passed over in the form of a tax.

This is a very, very real issue. It's a human issue. They're looking to the Premier for more than huffing and puffing. They're looking to the Premier for more than staged walkouts probably coordinated with the federal Liberals. They're actually looking for the Premier to do the right thing to stand up for Nova Scotians, for the job creators of our province, and for those families that are taxed enough.

Here are three things that he could do and start with right away. The first thing he could do is, he could send a firm message to Ottawa that he opposes all carbon pricing schemes, including the hidden tax that is the cap and trade. The next thing he could do is, he could release all information - all information - on his own secret carbon pricing working group, including their mandate, terms of reference, and findings. The third thing he could do is, he could follow the lead of other jurisdictions like Saskatchewan, and he could get serious about considering all options available to him - including legal ones - to fight the Ottawa Liberals' carbon pricing scheme.

Only when he's done those three things can he really have any credibility when he looks Nova Scotians in the eyes and says he's putting their interests before his own political interests because, so far - exactly as we should expect from this Premier - it's politics first, people second.

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

HON. RANDY DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Pictou East for his comments thus far on Resolution No. 11. I find it interesting that the member for Pictou East thinks that the cost of living and the economic situation of Nova Scotians is laughable. He uses that term several times in his commentary.

I think what's laughable is the member for Pictou East suggesting about Nova Scotians looking for more than just huffing and puffing, because the only huffing and puffing I hear is coming from that side of the Legislature. I think if the member for Pictou East wasn't so busy huffing and puffing, I think he would realize that, indeed, the action taken by this side - by the Government of Nova Scotia - the action that we've taken over the last number of years since we've been in government is not huffing and puffing. It's action. It's action that Nova Scotians are looking for and that is represented by the continued performance when Nova Scotians respond to polling in terms of their preference. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has the floor.

MR. DELOREY: To that point, I find those points very interesting from the member for Pictou East. What I'd like to focus on here, as a response to some of the comments brought forward. I'd like to take the opportunity - he made reference specific to the agriculture industry - I think this is a great opportunity to highlight and recognize the great work that our Minister of Agriculture has been doing with the agriculture industry since coming into government.

The success of his work with the industry is seen in the work and outcomes in agriculture and the optimism that the agriculture sector feels in Nova Scotia. Indeed, I was out in Truro just a week or two ago, and stopped in at Perennia to see the great work that they're doing there. The CEO and employees there - as well, on my tour, I saw some clients of Perennia who were in making use of the facilities, and the work that was being done there. They highlighted how important that work was, and the access to the services provided by Perennia has been in their establishing and growing the research needed by their businesses. They all highlighted exactly how important the work of the Department of Agriculture, and the leadership of the Minister of Agriculture, has been to the growth and the success of the work being done by that group.

I'd like to thank the employees of Perennia, and the many people in the agriculture sector across Nova Scotia, for continuing to work with the Department of Agriculture, and the Minister of Agriculture, to continue to move forward, and really continue to thrive as we have a long history in Nova Scotia in the agriculture sector.

I think it was just yesterday the Minister of Agriculture took a moment to recognize one of my own constituents, Casey Van de Sande, for his long-term work and successes in the agriculture sector, and his contributions to Nova Scotians, not just through his work in the agriculture sector, but through his contributions and volunteerism through 4-H and other community programs.

With respect to some of the other aspects here, the member has highlighted talking about how Nova Scotia is performing. In 2015, we had the second-fastest growth in youth employment in Canada. Across the country, Nova Scotia was a leader in improving the youth employment situation. That didn't happen by accident. In fact, it actually reversed a trend where Nova Scotia was under-performing - not performing well - having challenges retaining youth in Nova Scotia, but indeed, the youth unemployment rate gap between Nova Scotia and the Canadian average has not been as small since 2010. That hasn't happened by accident.

Indeed, I'd like to take a moment just to recognize the work my colleagues, the Minister of Immigration, the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education, and the Minister of Internal Services - all of the work my colleagues are doing, developing programs and initiatives to recognize youth and to help create an environment that helps support them to get their first job in Nova Scotia, to help them sustain and establish deep roots here like

many of us in this Legislature have, the deep, deep roots that we have in our respective communities in this great province that we have.

Some of the programs, just to touch on the Graduate to Opportunity program, Mr. Speaker, and the START program under the Department of Labour and Advanced Education, those programs providing opportunities to our youth who wouldn't otherwise have had those opportunities; they'd have to look elsewhere to find employment. Graduate to Opportunity is a great program that was brought forward by the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education; it was brought in through the budget two years ago, was seen as a successful program and one which we increased the funding for in this year's budget. Why did we do that? We did that because we recognize the importance of our youth. It's no secret that there have been demographic challenges across Atlantic Canada and, indeed, Nova Scotia is not immune to those demographic challenges and the aging population.

For us to truly address these long-term challenges, these are challenges that have been coming and past governments have chosen to ignore them. They have chosen to not take action whereas our government came in, recognized the challenges that have been building up for some time, and took action.

If we want to address an aging population and the challenges with that, we need to start working to support retaining our youth in this province. What we heard when we reached out and communicated with youth, we discovered what is it that will help them stay in Nova Scotia. Indeed, it's employment. It was the opportunity to get their first job, to get the experience that they need in order to then be active participants in the labour force in Nova Scotia - and, as I said, programs like START and the Graduate to Opportunity program, those are programs that obviously if you look at the improvement and the growth in our youth employment in the Province of Nova Scotia I think it's fair to say that the work and the programs that have been put in place are being received favourably, and we look forward to continuing to do more work there.

The growth of the proportion of youth in Nova Scotia employed in 2015 is up by over 3 per cent from when we took office in 2013. That's an improvement that improves the lives of those young Nova Scotians and that youth workforce is aged 15 to 24 years old.

So in addition to that, you know, I've mentioned previously again the forecast for Nova Scotia does have us looking to perform well economically relative to our sister provinces in the Atlantic Region. That's something to be proud of, and it's something that's going to be positive for all Nova Scotians. We continue to move forward on the economic front, but it's not just Atlantic Canada - there are other jurisdictions that are not forecasted to do as well as Nova Scotia in the coming years.

So, in addition to the growth and the economic forecast and the outlook for Nova Scotia as a leader in Atlantic Canada, as I mentioned our youth employment improvement,

I'd also like to talk a bit about the work being done in terms of the traditional growth of our employment. Indeed, just recently, Statistics Canada's latest data shows that Nova Scotia has actually reversed a trend of declining population such that we've moved forward and we've actually achieved the highest population in many years. A lot of that work has to do with the work again as I mentioned for youth retention programs, youth employment programs but also the work of our colleague, the Minister of Immigration, the work that she and her department have done both to create and maximize opportunities to bring efficiencies and opportunities to people from outside of Canada who are looking for an opportunity for a new start for themselves and for their families.

They see Nova Scotia as that opportunity, and the Minister of Immigration and her department have been working hard since coming into office to identify the opportunities, to improve our performance in immigration in attracting people from outside of the country. One of the first things that the minister noted of course was how we had in the Province of Nova Scotia when we came into office, just over a 600 cap on the number of immigrants that we could as a province take the lead on attracting and accepting. Such a small number when you compare it to a jurisdiction of similar size like Manitoba, a jurisdiction that had similar demographic challenges but which started much earlier than the Province of Nova Scotia, before we came into office.

We saw that they were able to negotiate and work with the federal government on immigration programs, such that they had a cap somewhere in the vicinity, I believe, of upwards of 5,000 people that they could bring in, versus our approximately 600. They're about 10 times the size of the cap available to Nova Scotia. Why did that happen? That happened because past governments of Nova Scotia didn't see the opportunity, the value in a solid immigration strategy to move this province forward.

Since coming into office, our Minister of Immigration negotiated with the federal government, which makes the decisions and controls those caps, and doubled that cap up to over 1,300 immigrants that we're now able to take the leadership position on and attract to Nova Scotia. Not only did she increase the cap, through the work of her department and through their initiatives, they've actually managed to fulfill that cap. They've been successful in recruiting and bringing immigrants to Nova Scotia.

Bringing Nova Scotians in, and having new immigrants come to Nova Scotia, is only one part of the challenge. The second is encouraging those new Nova Scotians to stay. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to stand here and acknowledge, through the great work of the Department of Immigration, and under the minister's leadership, I believe the most recent data shows that last year our retention rate improved to 74 per cent. That's moving in the right direction. Can we do better? You bet. And with the work being done in the Department of Immigration, I have the utmost confidence that we'll see that strategy and the work of both attracting more immigrants working in partnership with the federal government, and their Atlantic growth strategy - which of course has a lot of attention and consideration to the immigration file.

Mr. Speaker, there was a lot of talk by the member for Pictou East when this debate started, about greenhouse gas emissions and the environmental strategies. I think it's important to highlight the role that Nova Scotians, from one end of the province to the other, have played in the last number of years such that right now Nova Scotia is already the first province in Canada on track to actually achieve the greenhouse gas reductions which were part of the Canadian commitment as part of the Paris Agreement. That agreement, which was ratified just a few weeks ago by the federal government, sees Canada committing to a reduction of GHG emissions by 30 per cent of the 2005 GHG emissions.

This year, Nova Scotia is on track to have achieved that 30-per cent reduction already. Thanks to the work through the regulatory approach to managing our energy sector, we're on track to continue to see greenhouse gas reductions in this province. As a province, we've set hard caps on greenhouse gas emissions coming from our energy sector. Again, we're anticipated to be on track to exceed the commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Environmentally, Nova Scotia is certainly punching above its weight in that regard. The member opposite has asked about the working group on looking at carbon pricing. It may come as a surprise to the member opposite that we received a report a couple of years ago, the tax and regulatory review report. An extensive portion of that report was making reference to Nova Scotia to consider looking at carbon pricing. Indeed, the explicit reference in that report was towards a carbon tax. Mr. Speaker, it made all the sense in the world for the Government of Nova Scotia to pull together the experts through Finance and Environment to have them (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury Board has the floor.

MR. DELOREY: I would like to suggest it's not laughable, and it's not huffing and puffing. It's good governance to bring together the experts within Finance and Treasury Board and Environment and Energy to review the recommendations that came through a report commissioned by this government. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I think the Premier has been very clear as to the results of that review.

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

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Mr. Speaker, you can really tell when it's an election in the air because the money flows and the bragging flows. It's interesting that this government tends to take the positive work of others and claim it as their own, or circumstances that are positive and then claim them as if they had something to do with it.

In fact, the reason that in this province we are meeting those greenhouse gas emissions is due to the former NDP Government that put those targets in place, put the

appropriate programs in place. Here we have the government going around the country bragging as if they've had anything to do with that.

Certainly we do know that the whole issue of carbon taxing is one that needs much discussion because there is a fear that people will have additional costs because of that. However, there are ways to get around that that we've seen in other countries throughout the world where they have programs, if there is carbon taxing, that money goes back into the pockets of the people of their country because of the way that the system is set up.

What we need - which this government does not do - we need discussion and we need collaboration. It's ironic that this is not even happening with their own federal cousins, that they're fighting against the wishes.

On the other hand, when the Prime Minister is available to promote in an election or make people think that they're voting for the Prime Minister or Mr. Trudeau, they take that opportunity. But now the Prime Minister has a totally different way of thinking when it comes to the environment than this particular government. We've seen that in many issues that are taking place now in the province in terms of clear-cutting and also in terms of how our lands are being used that we worked so hard to get back.

As I said, there is a fear with the carbon taxing and that's because of the fact that there are ever-increasing costs of living in our province. One of the other things that the government neglects to do is look at history and what took place during that time of history. It's easy to point fingers, but when the NDP Government was in their mandate it was during one of the worst economic downturns in our entire world. To manage through that and at the end of the day we had an A-plus rating, which was never given to the province in history, I would say that was something to be very proud of.

It's very difficult, even today as the economy has been taking a turn for the positive, there are still many struggles out there for our community members and people trying to make ends meet, but this austerity agenda of this government has actually burdened many of those Nova Scotians. We have seen that whole concept of an austerity budget has not worked in other places around the world. It's too bad that the government has not done their research in that area and has looked at the fact that the austerity budget is something that is very painful and really does not work at the end of the day because you want people to have the dollars in their pocket to be able to spend in the economy. If they don't have that or if there is a sense of worry then people will not spend money. They'll try to save that money and that really negatively affects your economy.

There has been an alarming number of negative impacts on the people of Nova Scotia from this austerity budget. We can look at the fact that since 2013, we have 7,500 more people that are using our provincial food banks. Last year, which is very shameful, one third of food-bank users were children. That's hard to believe, that in our province we would have those many children who are required to use food banks. That is a reality in

our province - and it's not something to turn a blind eye to. That's what the austerity budget does - it turns a blind eye and those who are most affected are those who are most vulnerable.

It is unacceptable in today's age that we would allow that many children to have to use food banks, and we should be really embarrassed to live in a province that allows that to happen, but at the same time did not mind giving \$22 million to the Royal Bank, does not mind giving money to a company in Bermuda. (Interruption) Well, somebody just mentioned Irving Shipbuilding - but, at the same time, what they do is they turn around and they use that when it's positive for them in the media and when it's creating jobs and so forth. So, you see how this government works. It hasn't got their own thoughts - they take the thoughts of previous governments or organizations that have done good work and they always put their name on it as if it came from them. We've seen that many times.

There are lots of issues in our province now with people going bankrupt, and that's a serious, serious problem. Once again, the austerity budget will just put another nail in the coffin for those people who are dealing with those financial hardships.

You know I can say, Mr. Speaker, very proudly, and it's not easy at all to reduce the poverty level in a province and when the New Democratic Party were in government we were able to reduce that by 18 per cent, and it would be interesting to see what reduction has been done by this government; I have not heard a figure whatsoever with respect to that. And that was because we focused on the most vulnerable and the need to do multi-programs that would reduce that poverty level.

Once again, it's always, as I said before, it's always in the language, it's always in trying to whoever can provide that facade. And that's what the government here, this Liberal Government, does. It's always making up a facade of a situation, but when you pull back the curtain you see behind the curtain that it is not as truly as positive and as good as what they're saying.

The Premier will stand in this House and he'll talk about the fact it's not the government's responsibility to create jobs - and I find that very ironic. I also find ironic that I saw in a recent media interview with the Premier and he had said, oh, the other Parties are so negative. Well, I think that some people should look back in Hansard during the time that the Premier was in Opposition and how negative he was each and every day and talked about those same things in a negative way. But now it's completely different on the other side. I know others who spoke about and used to ask our Minister of Economic Development, what are your targets for employment? I wonder who that was. That individual knows who he is. And you know it was all about, back then, targets and what strategy do you have, and now it's totally flipped around that it's not the government's responsibility to do any of that and that it is the responsibility of our businesses and also our communities.

Well, there is part responsibility there for business and community, but it needs to be led by a very strong government showing by example, and that's not happening with this government. The government just puts their hands up and says it's not our responsibility.

We're seeing fewer jobs in our province. Statistics Canada's numbers show that through the first nine months of this year there are 2,400 fewer jobs in the province compared to last year, so there is a downward swing. I don't know where the government gets their figures, but it's probably the made-up figures, the same as what they did with the Education and Early Childhood Development portfolio - in making up that figure of \$65 million that was taken out, and we know that not once has the Department of Education or the minister tabled that information. We know that those figures came from being cost pressures and not real figures.

Once again, it shows that it's all about this façade - if we can throw something out and it sticks, we'll use it, and that's what has happened with respect to that particular portfolio. I know the minister knows that. It's the same as the money that's going back - part of the money going back is just the transfer of a department, or a division, coming from the Department of Community Services, which were the early years going into the Department of Education. So we count that as \$45 million going back to the Department of Education, which is just a transfer of a department.

So people have to try to wade through that misinformation and it's very difficult. That's why even the Minister of Community Services had stated the other day the particular amount of her budget upon coming into government. Well that, once again, was the fact that that department was taken out of her department and moved into the Department of Education, which did reduce that budget by \$44 million.

That's what the problem is - it's that we have a government that continually just plays a shell game to try to have people think that things are better than they are, or things are a certain way, when they truly are not that particular way.

It's interesting also - one of the things that I find very surprising is that when we were in government, the Premier, who was in the Opposition, continually went on about the increase in taxes in this province, and the increase in the HST, however he neglects to say that he had the opportunity to reduce that, because before we left government, we put forth legislation that was passed to reduce the HST by 2 per cent.

So the government had a chance to do that, and refused to do it, and so really does not have the right to say that with the former NDP Government that the taxes were higher, because there was a plan there to have that reduced. I think that Nova Scotians - when it is election time and they're finding it difficult, they should be going and asking those in the Liberal Government - why did you not reduce that HST by 2 per cent when you had the

opportunity? It was actually in legislation. It was legal and you repealed that - you took that away. So why did that happen?

It is really truly a shell game with the financial figures and it's unfortunate because those who are suffering from that game are the most vulnerable. It's our seniors. I know we've had a lot of discussion about that and we'll have more.

I have two senior parents. I know what's going on, and it's certainly not what the minister has been saying. I know from my discussions with people working in home care, and working in long-term care, is that in long-term care there has been reduction - not only in their food budgets, but in their staff. I spoke to somebody recently that only two people were looking after the entire Alzheimer wing in their home because of the fact that this government has taken dollars away from long-term care.

When we were in government, we created 1,000 long-term care beds. This government continually says that they're putting their money into home care. I have parents that receive home care. If you want to talk to me for several hours, I'll tell you what's happening in home care, and the reduction that's taking place, and how the home care organizations are struggling and are trying to actually reduce the services to Nova Scotians because their budgets are being reduced.

When we're talking about this province and this economy, things have gone up. Jobs have gone down. I'll just say to people, watch out for those election promises because none of them that were given in 2013 were followed through. Those promises were totally broken, and they will be again. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

HON. JAMIE BAILLIE: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to the resolution today. Nova Scotians, I think, are starting to watch the debate about carbon taxes and carbon pricing, the debate that's going on between the Liberals in Ottawa and the provinces across the country. It all seems very political, but I think it's important that we put it in the proper context for our own province here in Nova Scotia. That's our job here on the floor of this provincial Legislature.

After all, this is a wonderful province. I think Nova Scotians are united in being proud of its great beauty, the advantages that we have in our natural resources, our access to the ocean, among other things - our wonderful universities, the opportunities for people to get a good education. Everywhere you travel, Nova Scotians acknowledge all of the great things about our province, and then they always add, it's awfully expensive to live here.

The fact is, alongside all the great things about this province, there's the reality that the cost of living is very high and that it goes up even when our wages do not go up. The

fact is, our wages are flat. Our employment is down. Fewer Nova Scotians are working today than four years ago, and those who are working are not getting a raise. They are trying to get by, but their costs are going up in so many ways, whether it's their taxes or groceries, housing keeps going up and up. Yet they're expected to get by on less.

Not all of that is in the control of our provincial and federal Liberal Governments, I acknowledge that, but some of it is. Whether there's an actual long-term plan to create jobs and opportunity or not is absolutely in the hands of the provincial government. As we know now and confirmed by the Throne Speech, not a mention of what a government could do to spur on real job growth. In fact, private sector job growth is down 6 per cent from 2012. There are fewer people working today in private business than there were before this government came to office, and too many people who have jobs have jobs that are at low or modest incomes and are at great risk when the cost of living goes up.

When the cost of living goes up and you don't have any more money in your budget, something has to give. That's why we are so worried about things like child poverty. That's why we are so worried about people being able to afford their medicines, like our seniors, who are on fixed incomes on their pensions. It's why we fight so hard when the government tries to raise their cost of living even higher by boosting up their Pharmacare premiums.

We now know from the Auditor General himself, who reported in this House just last week, that the taxes each and every one of us pay here in this province are up by \$850 per person. A family of two is paying \$1,700 more just in the last few years. Solutions to that problem, like bracket-creep removal, like actually increasing the basic personal exemption so our lowest-income Nova Scotians get a break - they get rejected by the government. They get rejected and rejected over and over again. The cost of living that's in the government's hands, the tax burden they create, goes up and up.

No wonder we're worried about young people leaving when they graduate with a student debt and have an urgent need to get a job, and the jobs are scarce. They have an urgent need to start paying down that debt, but the income isn't there in the jobs that we do have. Nothing is done. The Throne Speech comes in and it doesn't even mention the cost of living.

Now we understand why Nova Scotians are so concerned that they have a Liberal Government - maybe federal, maybe provincial - that's about to dig even deeper into their pockets through carbon pricing. Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotians can't afford to pay more. They literally can't afford it. Just picture a family in your own constituency that has kids in daycare, that has two parents working, that has done everything right to get to this point, that has done all that society could ever ask of them. They went to school. They got an education. They went out and they looked for months and months and months, and they found a job, each of them. Now they are having children and raising those children, and the cost of daycare goes up. The cost of driving to work is going to go up with carbon pricing. The cost of heating their home is going to go up with carbon pricing. But their

incomes are not going up. They get to the end of the month, when their paycheques are deposited into their accounts, and they sit down to pay their bills. They wonder why there's nothing left over for a family vacation, for a dignified retirement, or to invest for their children - maybe an RESP. They are struggling even though they have done everything we could ever ask of them.

Those very families are the ones that we need to stand up for, that we need to protect, that we need to encourage, and that we need to support - not by creating new schemes to dig deeper into their pockets but by putting in place the conditions so they can work hard, they can work as hard as their ambition wants them to, and they can pay their bills, and they can save a little at the end of the month. This is not too much to ask. This is the reality across Nova Scotia, whether you live here in the capital, whether you're in Hammonds Plains or Sackville - where child care and commuting and the price of gasoline and home heating are big issues - or whether you're in rural Nova Scotia, where the commute distances are long, and the jobs are even harder to find. These are the very people we need to get behind and protect, but that's not what's happening, Mr. Speaker.

I guess, to be honest, many of them voted for the Liberal Government in the last election, the Liberal Party going into government, because they heard the promises about our power bills, just as an example, that they would break the monopoly. There would be competition for their electricity needs, and our power rates would go down. None of that happened, Mr. Speaker. None of that happened. I know there has been a lot of spin coming from the government side, but the fact is our power rates have gone up 3 per cent so far in this government's term of office. They are scheduled to go up another 1.4 per cent next year, 1.4 per cent again the year after that, 1.4 per cent compounded the year after that, and then a big balloon increase of 6.4 per cent the year after that. That is the schedule of power rate increases that are coming our way - and I'll table that - according to Nova Scotia Power and the Utility and Review Board.

This is a matter of fact. They're paying more for their power. If they're not happy about it, and they go to the phone book, or they go on their computer to look for where they can buy power from someone else, there is no one. There is a monopoly. There is one choice, and the rates are going up. Mr. Speaker, that's the reality. Nova Scotian families are already upset about what they're being asked to pay when they were promised otherwise.

Now we have carbon pricing, a scheme dreamt up in Ottawa that is going to be imposed on every province, which will drive up the cost of living even more. You take that \$850 each in taxes, you take that power rate increase, you take our grocery increases, you take the daycare cost increases, and you can add big jumps in the cost of heating our homes and in the cost of commuting to work. In fact, it has been calculated that our gasoline will go up by eight to 10 cents a litre from current because of carbon pricing alone and the same amount for heating fuel.

Nova Scotia has a lot of families that heat their homes with oil, a lot of families, because natural gas has not reached the homes that it should be reaching. The supply of natural gas is not there like it should be. Electricity is not a cheaper option. Nova Scotians heat their homes with oil in many, many cases, and that price is going to go up. Imagine, a tax on how you heat your home, a tax on how you drive to work. That's what's coming. There's no choice in this; that's what we've been told by the Ottawa Liberal Government. The only question is whether it's going to be a direct carbon tax that we can all see or some hidden carbon price like cap and trade that we're still paying but that's buried somewhere in our everyday bills.

Nova Scotians have seen this government when it comes to hidden taxes. They speak and debate loudly about how they don't like taxes we can see, like a carbon tax, like the efficiency tax on our power bills - and some people are led to believe that means they're against increasing our taxes altogether. But they aren't, that's the trick. That is the trick, because this government is perfectly fine with driving up our taxes as long as it's hidden. Look at the efficiency tax - look at the efficiency tax on our power bill which they campaigned on, they ran ads on. They promised in television debates they would come off our power bill and we'd save money. But then when they got in, it didn't come off our power bill at all. They took it off the part you can see, and they added it to the part that you can't see. But it's still there; in fact, it's higher than it was three years ago.

The cost of living goes up for every Nova Scotia family that's wondering, why is it harder to make ends meet? There's the answer: taxes like the efficiency tax didn't go away like the government promised, they were just hidden. So here we have a Premier who wants Nova Scotians to believe he's against a carbon tax, because you can see it and you can feel it, but we have asked in this session of the House alone, in the last week, question after question about the hidden ways of charging Nova Scotians more, like the cap-and-trade option. You know what? The Premier has had opportunity after opportunity to say no to that too.

We've asked simple questions like, are you looking at a cap-and-trade system which indirectly costs Nova Scotians more, and he does not answer. We have given him chance after chance to assure Nova Scotians he is against hidden carbon pricing as well, and he will not answer. In fact, we now know - not thanks to the government telling us, because they didn't tell us - but it has now come out that for over a year the Premier has had set up a working group on carbon pricing, looking at the two options: a carbon tax, and a cap and trade. Well, we've asked to see what they're studying and we're not allowed to see that; more importantly, Nova Scotians are not allowed to see that.

Well, let me just say that there are ways to deal with climate change. Climate change is real. Protecting our environment is important. Strong regulations that make the polluters pay, that cap the large polluters, is the way to go. It is the reason for our success in this province already. All I can say is that for the Ottawa Liberals to impose on the

country a means of dealing with climate change that actually don't reduce greenhouse gases while taxing those provinces twice, and have a good story to tell, just shows this is all fluff.

We're being asked to pay more for no good reason other than fluff, because under the Ottawa Liberal plan, 87 per cent of Canadians won't have to do anything different. It doesn't matter to the Liberals in Ottawa, and it doesn't matter to the Liberals here either. Eighty-seven per cent won't have to do anything different because they're in a province that has a carbon tax or has cap and trade already, and their emissions are not going down. But in this province, where we actually have a 30 per cent reduction, we have to pay twice. That is unfair. It is wrong. It hurts our pocketbooks and drives up our cost of living.

The Premier says he's against carbon tax. Let him say to the people of Nova Scotia he's against cap and trade, too, so he can work on stopping an injustice before it starts. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: Mr. Speaker, would you please call Resolution No. 4.

Res. No. 4, Doctor Shortage: Liberal Gov't. - Admit - notice given Oct. 14/16 - (Hon. A. MacLeod)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Northside-Westmount.

MR. EDDIE ORRELL: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today and speak to Resolution No. 4 in this Legislature, about a doctor shortage in the Province of Nova Scotia that our Liberal Government doesn't seem to be concerned about or doesn't seem to want to admit that there is a problem with doctors here in the province.

I worked in the health care system for 25 years before I got into politics. I know the need and the value of a family doctor. I have been very fortunate in my days to have a family doctor for me and my family. My parents have had family doctors - the same doctor - for their whole lives. They went from a father to a son.

When we need that family doctor he's there. When illness came upon my family where my mom and my dad both have heart conditions, it was the family doctor who saw them first and referred them to specialists. Those reports would come back to the family doctor for follow-up and for care after the specialists had dealt with the situation. So a family doctor, in my books, is essential.

We heard earlier that all we do over on this side is huff and puff, but I know that for someone with a respiratory condition the huffing and puffing is a problem. So I think

everybody should realize if we're huffing and puffing about a situation, there is a problem there.

When you're talking about a doctor shortage here in Nova Scotia - especially Cape Breton, where we had most of the doctors who have left were good family doctors who couldn't put up with the working conditions they had, or situations with the specialists where they wanted to do some little bits of work because they had injuries and were told they weren't allowed, but then they could go to other parts of the province and do the same that they asked for there. With one health authority, I would think that those policies would be uniform across the province, but obviously they weren't.

So there is a problem. There is a situation where we don't have enough doctors to deal with the health care needs of the citizens of this province. We're told there are approximately 100,000 people in the Province of Nova Scotia without a family doctor. I think that's a pretty conservative estimate, considering that the Minister of Health and Wellness stood in this hallowed place and admitted that 3 to 4 per cent of the people aren't even looking for a family doctor. So that's 3 to 4 per cent of the almost million people who live in this province, on top of the 100,000 that they know of. That's what we know of.

When we talk about 300,000 to 400,000 in the province without a doctor, that wouldn't necessarily need one right now, but our province is aging, and as a person ages they do develop some health issues - albeit, some of them are minor and they can go to a walk-in clinic and have a situation resolved, but when the major illnesses arise and you need that family doctor for referrals, for reports, I think it's essential that they're there.

They're saying that people are looking for a family doctor may wait up to five years. I ran in the last election and one of the election promises was to ensure a doctor for every Nova Scotian. There are 300 from the Liberals that were to ensure a family doctor. The Premier has said in this House that that is still the goal - and we're going to continue to strive to meet with that commitment, of course, he told reporters, and if I don't, I'm sure you'll hold me to account.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we're hearing it every day. We're hearing from the people who don't have a doctor who are in dire straits because of an illness. Their doctor is retired; their doctor has passed away; or they just got sick of the situation in the province and left.

The Premier also said it would be silly for him to say they were not going to aspire to that goal, but then we hear that it is four to five years before that may even be achievable. That wasn't in their election platform. It was to ensure a doctor for every Nova Scotian. Everybody assumed, and they took their word, that that was right away - not four to five years. We know if it's a four to five year projection, it's probably more.

The solution to some of that - as the CEO of the Health Authority has told people - is to establish collaborative practices. They're going to establish them across the province,

and with those clinical teams, give access to a family doctor. We're also told in here that that's five to ten years away.

The people in this province are sick now. Mr. Speaker, if one of us were to drop here right now, I'm sure we'd be well looked after by our health care system. But when that report has to go back to your family doctor for follow-up, and you don't have one, that's where the care chain stops. Where do you send those reports? Who does the follow-up?

I recently had a mother in my office who has a handicapped child who visits the IWK yearly. Her pediatrician has moved on. He's gone where it's better for him to practice, and he's going to do some teaching. He was an excellent pediatrician. But the doctor in Halifax now has nowhere to send those reports, and there's nowhere for that lady to turn when she gets sick in Cape Breton, but a four-hour trip to Halifax.

Now, tell me that's fair to the people who live in Cape Breton. A doctor for every Nova Scotian is just not there. What do we do? We open up orphan clinics in response to that. I don't like the name "orphan clinics," Mr. Speaker, because it's people who don't have a family doctor or have somewhere to go.

We opened one in Sydney. It started off with nine family doctors rotating through on their own time, doing their own practice, covering the emergency room, doing all the duties required of a family doctor. Then, on the goodwill of the doctors, they went to a clinic in Sydney and saw patients in the evening. They started out with nine doctors. Within the first month, that was full. They stopped taking patients. Then the doctors dwindled; now they're down to two family doctors doing the orphan clinic, because those other doctors realized they have their own patients to take care of as well.

With the aging population we have, and people needing more care and spending more time with them, some of the doctors just don't have the time to do that. God bless them for trying, because those 1,000 or 1,500 people they capped them at needed a family doctor. The lack of these doctors is really hurting the health care of the people of the province.

We're also told that 1,100 family doctors are due to retire in the next 10 years. That's 1,100 doctors, and the average doctor who is retiring today has more than the 1,300 or 1,500 patients that new doctors are required to take when they set up a practice here in the province. My own family doctor, at a conservative estimate, says he has about 6,000 patients.

We're told they'll replace him if he retires, but with one doctor. So where do those other thousands of patients go? Again, no patients - no doctor. In my area alone, there are seven or eight more doctors in that same situation - ready to retire, 5,000 to 6,000 patients, nowhere for them to go.

What do these patients do? These patients already have a doctor, and they're used to being able to go to a doctor. So what happens is that the doctor doesn't retire. Is it fair to ask a doctor to work 30 to 35 years, to give up his family life for that time, and then not be able to retire? I say it's not, Mr. Speaker.

In last year's budget, Doctors Nova Scotia expressed their disappointment that there was no money in the budget for family physician recruitment. A popular family doctor who practices here in Halifax, Dr. A.J., said in an article that people who want to retire cannot tell their patients who their next family doctor will be. It's breaks their hearts to turn them away, but they're at full capacity.

Mr. Speaker, it's not the doctors we're blaming. The promise of a doctor for every Nova Scotian was made by the Liberal Government when they were running in the last election, and we hear every day that they're not fulfilling that promise. Mr. Speaker, when a person needs a family doctor, as I said, it's essential.

We heard today on the news that the provincial government, our Liberal Government, has not taken full advantage of our health funding from the federal government. The federal Health Minister said that she thought that some of them weren't spending their money properly. On the news, they reported that budgets were not being spent to the maximum that was given to them by the federal government.

Where does that money go? If we've lost 20 to 30 doctors in Cape Breton alone, and the Minister of Health and Wellness tells us we're going to get 10 new doctors, in my estimate, that's 20 doctors that aren't getting paid in the province. Because of that, they're not spending their money; they're saving their money on doctors.

Where is that money going? We hear it's not going to the nursing homes. There has been no new nursing home beds opened in the last little while. Food budgets have been cut, as we're hearing. They're laying staff off, if that's the case.

We're not spending our health care budget. We know that the aging hospital in Halifax may be replaced. The federal government won't commit any money to help out with that. Where is that money going?

We've had restrictions on walk-in clinics which are preventing many graduating physicians from practising, and they're forced to leave the province as well. Dr. Mark Fletcher said back in May that it's hard for walk-in clinics in the Halifax region to attract and retain staff under the new Health Authority's rules and regulations.

Like I said before, doctors who are due to retire are hesitant to do so. Because of that, they're getting themselves into situations where their health could be compromised -

over-worked, aging population. As I asked about this afternoon in Question Period, seniors committed to long-term care are having difficulty because they don't have a family doctor.

The Minister of Health and Wellness has told us that there is one new doctor coming to Cape Breton - actually, North Sydney. I congratulate him for that, but one doctor is not going to cover the 10,000 patients that we know of who don't have a doctor. So we need another 10 doctors just for the 10,000 we know of. That's not including retirements.

There are nearly 500 Nova Scotia students studying abroad. I've spoken with the Health Minister, and we're going to try to change this, treat our Nova Scotia students who are studying abroad the same as the students who studied in the province. I do give the Health Minister credit for that, but how long is that going to take? I know my own situation. My daughter is one of those students who are studying abroad. She'd love to come back here, and she'd love to work in Cape Breton. I'm hoping we can work towards that goal to make that happen because that will be another 1,000 or 1,500 patients in Cape Breton who would have a doctor.

We're starting to hang our hat on collaborative practices. When I worked in the hospital, doctors had their own offices, and I considered them collaborative practices. If I needed something from a doctor, I called the office. They spoke to me, and we worked on it. If they needed to get a patient in quicker than the average person because of an emergency situation, they called the physio department, and we got that person in. If I needed bloodwork to figure something out, I called the doctor, and the doctor would write a prescription for it and send it off to the lab in the hospital - or an X-ray or an orthotic or whatever.

That's the best form of collaborative practice that we've had, but that's changing, I know. Everybody wants to work under one roof and have that access where they can walk across the hall. What most doctors need is some flexibility, flexibility to do what they do best, what they love to do.

I've spoken to a few doctors who were worried that because they work in their office five days a week, they have to do rounds in the hospital. Some of the hospitals in the area have what they call a hospitalist, a doctor who works in the hospital and sees patients there and keeps the family physicians from having to go in every day to do that. That's a great idea, and that's something we can do that's pretty cost-effective. It can cut down on the amount of stress on our family doctors and hopefully help us recruit more here.

But for the time being, Mr. Speaker, we have to find a way to make sure the patients without one get a family doctor as promised.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Clare-Digby.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the Official Opposition for bringing this forward as a topic for discussion. I truly think that any time two or more people gather to talk about our health care it's a good thing. I think it's an opportunity for us to get a message across - what needs to happen, what changes we need to see in the health care world.

It's a very emotional, very close topic, it's one that I know touches each and every person in this House. I think we've all had our conversations around it, and we all have our challenges in our communities. Not only do we all have them but we've had them for a long, long time.

I just want to briefly mention an acronym called MEDIC. This was coined over 20 years ago in my community - it's Medical Emergency Doctors in Crisis - 20 years ago that acronym was coined in my community - MEDIC - and a team of people was put together to try to battle the challenge they had for doctors.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a new situation, this is one that progressive governments before us have fought and tried to find a solution for. I'm quite confident to believe in my heart that we have an answer. Now, I know that sometimes it concerns Opposition when government in power comes up with a solution, but I really do feel that this is one that has to be taken seriously. What it is - it's more a fundamental change in the way that we look on how primary health care is delivered in this province.

There was a statement made by Dr. Harrigan, I believe, that really struck me the most. She said that if you were put asleep 100 years ago and woke up today, and all of a sudden you walked outside and saw the technology, saw the cars, saw the changes, you'd be scared to death - and the only place in the country that you would be comforted is when you walked into your family practice doctor's office, because it's the same as it was 100 years ago. That is a very profound statement.

We need to start building relationships in our communities, we need to start building on collaborative practices. I want to touch on how important it is when I mention communities, because just a recruiter does not bring a doctor to your community. Money doesn't do it, we put \$125,000 into tuition relief - nobody has mentioned that, I'll see if others will - to try and recruit doctors in under-serviced areas in rural Nova Scotia. We see already that money is not the answer, Mr. Speaker. It takes a community to bring doctors in, and it takes a team, you need to have that core team.

I've watched for years, just recently seen the frustrations of a municipal entity that hired a professional recruiter, offered a lot of money on the table to find a solo practice family doctor to come into the community and, after six months, could not fill that seat. We have to change the way we do things. We don't have a problem with recruiting doctors; we have a problem with retaining doctors, and it has taken successive governments to learn that.

One of the biggest fundamental changes that we've seen that I believe has made this possible is the reduction of nine health authorities to one, where we have one clear, constant vision. Previously, we watched it - communities bent against communities, where they were each recruiting, trying to compete for the same doctors. The revolving door - that has all changed.

I'm very pleased to be working with a group of very professional people in the Health Authority today. We've put together a group of stakeholders in my area - it's the leaders, it's the municipal leaders, the leaders of the clinic, the Health Foundation, and the Health Authority - to talk very frankly about what the needs of the community are, and how the Health Authority can bring those doctors there. I'm confident that that's the model, and those are the things we need to start doing in our community.

We need to stop - he opened up his phrase, my good friend did - on the huffing and puffing. Yes, we have to stop the huffing and puffing, and we have to start building some relationships in our community with everybody that's involved to show the positive things. Don't you think for one minute there aren't doctors that watch what goes on in our communities. We need to start showing that there are positive things there and working together.

The master agreement was probably - we're three years in, and it's really hard to imagine in an entity, which is probably the largest corporation we have in this province in our Health Authority, the changes that we've made in three years. The work that has been done to realign, the work that has been done by the minister to get the master agreement set aside, now we can continue into the hard work that we need to do. It's important for us to all understand that we're the first government, I truly believe, that has ever had a plan in place on how to deal with this, and we need to get that message out to all Nova Scotians.

I was very fortunate just last night . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. The member for Clare-Digby has the floor.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it hits a note any time that you talk about the fact that you have a plan and they didn't.

So last night I had the fortune to be in my riding and meet with the community, and listen to the community. And I will tell you one of the biggest frustrations that I had, and I will continue to have - and we need the support of everybody in this House, not just on our side of the government, but we need the support of the people on the other side.

My colleagues here in the House need to start spreading the message that for us to truly move forward, to truly position ourselves down the road where we're going to be able to provide primary health care - I'm not talking a family doctor, I'm talking about primary

health care, which is all the intricate parts of it, from nurse practitioners, to mental health clinicians. We need to get that cultural change made that solo family practices are not what we're seeing coming out of the universities now. We're not seeing the Dr. Westbys that we had - which was the platinum-plated doctor in my community - who was still doing house calls. You cannot recruit those doctors. You need to build those teams, and we need the support of everybody in this House to start changing that culture and moving in that direction.

Nurse practitioners - eight years ago, I can remember when I was working with the Municipality of Digby as their deputy CAO, a young lady came in to council to lecture us about nurse practitioners and how underutilized they were in the health care system. Eight years ago, she was lecturing government. My, how the times have changed. Today, they are the most sought-after part of our collaborative practice. The biggest challenge we have now is to actually recruit them, and I'm so proud that our minister has realized it and got that. The 22 that we've just added to our provincial plan are going to service 14,000 people. They're talking about numbers - there's a real number - 14,000 people are going to be serviced, and that's just one example.

There has been a lot of work done in the area of health; there has been a lot of work done by previous ministers. I know of the CECs, for example, by the previous government. Certainly, they filled the role that they did, but the actual fact is doctors and doctor recruitment is not a new problem. It's an age-old problem that I feel personally we're going to have fixed - not tomorrow, not in a year's time, and I believe, as we've heard from the Health Authority, this is going to take five to 10 years. But, in saying that, if we don't start changing today, five to 10 years from now we'll have the same solutions that the previous governments had: spinning the wheels.

Can we do more today? Yes, we can. We need to start looking at innovative ways. The new family practice locum is an innovative way to service under-serviced areas.

Now I know that the plan for putting it in place, a plan to have doctors . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I'd like to ask all members to keep the chatter down.

The honourable member for Clare-Digby has the floor.

MR. GORDON WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think for some reason that the previous speaker had once been interrupted but I'll take two, I'll take three.

AN HON. MEMBER: Take it as a compliment.

MR. GORDON WILSON: I'll take it as a compliment, yes.

I'd also like to point out the fact of what we're doing around the family practice locums. Mr. Speaker, this is an innovative idea to serve under-serviced areas that are in crisis, where we'll have family practice doctors come in on a three-month rotational basis to make sure that there's continuity of care. This isn't a walk-in clinic concept, this is one where continuity of care is paramount, that the people who are going to be able to see these doctors in the under-serviced areas are going to have access and get in and see an actual family doctor. That's an idea that for some reason was missed.

Also the work that we're seeing in the areas of building on these collaborative clinics, the support that we're putting into ensuring that they're put up. Ten years ago, 11 years ago in my area, before they even talked about collaborative clinics, the Municipality of Clare invested \$4.5 million in a clinic with taxpayers' money from that community. They took the vision and they took the role on doing that. Today that clinic is full and why is that clinic full? Because they were ahead of a lot of other communities in their vision of what we needed to do.

They bought a house right next door to the clinic. You talk about innovative ideas, and in that house they would allow residents who wanted to come down and do their residency to stay in that house for free and come together as a group. What kind of a model is that? There is a prime example in this province of how we do things differently in a lot of areas.

What was happening, I think, is we weren't seeing these things shared. We had nine different health authorities, we had nine different visions, and we had nine different strategies on how we were going to recruit. But that's just one that I'd like to share with people.

I know that in my area - and I really don't want to keep coming back to Digby but Digby is a good example of under-serviced areas. It isn't the fact that we don't have good communities there to support it, it isn't the fact that we don't have return of services or we don't have rebates for people for tuition relief, it isn't any of that. I think the real reason is that we are not working together enough with the Health Authority. We need to truly build those relationships.

I'm very fortunate that the group that we have has built a lot of trust with the Health Authority in my area. People like Dr. Crystal Todd and Joanne Harrington who is in there with us - those are key people who came to my community and believed in my community.

I have just a little comment that I also want to make. This is in my Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne - I'll say it again when I do my reply. Mr. Speaker, health care has continued to be the major daily focus of work in my community. We have finally found what I believe to be the answer to a problem that has plagued Nova Scotia for decades. With the new Health Authority there's finally a plan to build primary health care

models across the province. The lack of doctors in the Digby area has gone on too long and I'm pleased to say it will be ending soon.

I would like to take this time to recognize someone special, our true champion in health care. I would like to pass on my personal thanks to the Minister of Health and Wellness for leading the way in changing not only the way that our health system is organized but the future for our children. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Sackville-Cobequid.

HON. DAVID WILSON: I'm going to try not to respond to the comments from the previous speaker, but I have to say, Mr. Speaker, it's very hard to agree with his last comment. I like the previous speaker; he has a great last name, and he's a good fellow. But to stand in his place today and give accolades to the Minister of Health and Wellness for solving all the problems in health care in our province is kind of stretching it. It's a big stretch.

As members of the Opposition, of course it's our role to stand in (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The member for Sackville-Cobequid has the floor.

MR. DAVID WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We stand in our place to challenge the government on their record. I have to say, so far their record is not that great in health care and achieving the things that they promised Nova Scotians. People will hold them to account when it comes to the next election, for example, and it's not just the Opposition Parties - it will be Nova Scotians.

I have to say, over the last three years, the government has not acknowledged some of the crises that we've seen in health care and not acknowledged that they're not going to achieve what they promised they would deliver to Nova Scotians. We've talked many times here about the commitment that the Liberal Government and the Liberal Party made about a doctor for every Nova Scotian. If you go back to the last election, and you go back to their platform, it's laid out there in a very easy way to read, a chart that goes through their commitments, their commitments to Nova Scotians - not just to the Opposition members here but to Nova Scotians, the people they represent and the people we represent on this side of the House.

In that chart, when you look at the health commitments, it says a doctor for every Nova Scotian. It was to start, I believe, in Year 1 and be completed by Year 3. Well, for those who might not know across the way, we're in Year 3 of your mandate, and that commitment is far from being achieved.

We're hearing now from those involved and those who are supporting the government - we just heard from the member who just spoke - that that commitment now is five to 10 years away. It's five to 10 years probably until we get to the point where the government will say we have a doctor for every Nova Scotian. They don't say that really. They say access to primary care or a collaborative team. Yet even in the Throne Speech, they make that commitment again, a doctor for every Nova Scotian.

It's interesting to hear that over and over again when the people who are supporting the government don't back that up. Ms. Knox has indicated a number of times in the media that it's going to take years to fulfill that commitment. It's not in one year, not in two years, not in three years - years. Now we're hearing from government members that it's sometime into the future when that commitment will be done. One of the things the government continues not to do is admit there's an issue and a problem.

It was almost a year ago next month, November of last year, when I brought forward an issue that was of concern to people in my area, and that was the lack of access to a family doctor. I said then and I'll say again that I rarely had to stand on my feet and say the constituents in my area who I represent don't have a family doctor. I heard from many of my colleagues on all sides of the House over the last 13 years, especially in rural communities in Cape Breton, that there are severe issues around the lack of rural access to a family physician. For years, it was mostly a rural issue in Nova Scotia - still very concerning, but a rural issue.

Over a year ago, because of a couple of retirements in my area by family physicians, thousands of constituents were left without a physician. That's very concerning, Mr. Speaker, not only as their representative but, I know, for everyone who stands in their place here and talks about and advocates for someone who doesn't have a family physician.

It's great for the government to say we're going to move in the direction of a collaborative approach, collaborative clinics, to address that. I said this in the past, and I'll say it again: I support that 100 per cent, Mr. Speaker. I support it 100 per cent, but I have to let you in on another secret. The Liberal Party did not create a collaborative approach to a model of care in health care. It has been going on for many years. The North End Community Health Centre here in Halifax - it has been a long time that they've worked in that manner. Collaborative Emergency Centres that were opened up under the previous government address needs of access to primary care in communities, especially in rural, under-served communities and, it was working well.

I have to say, even though there were nine district health authorities, those health authorities and people that worked in those health authorities were committed to making sure that communities around the province knew how to implement these Collaborative Emergency Centres. They didn't keep it a secret from one another, even though some of the comments are that we had nine different ways of doing things; they collaborated immensely. I know even the Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness worked on the South

Shore, worked extremely hard to make sure that what they did there was able to be simulated in other parts of the province.

So, to suggest that this is a new thing and it's going to take some time, the government took so much time I think in energy on the reconfiguration of those nine district health authorities that the issues that were extremely important to Nova Scotians - access to care, access to a family doctor - were put on the back burner. It's no secret. Here we are at year three of the mandate of this government and they're just finally announcing this collaborative approach to providing care to Nova Scotians and it's not just the members of this House that feel that the plan that was announced most recently with the Premier is incomplete or not healthy enough to meet the needs of Nova Scotians.

I know recently in an opinion piece, Dr. Michelle Dow who is President of Doctors Nova Scotia was critical of the Premier and this government on their inaction on trying to address some of the concerns that her membership have here in Nova Scotia. One of the biggest things that she said in that opinion piece was that there are a lot of physicians in this province who feel that they have not been engaged or asked to be engaged with how physicians in this province are going to play out and what role they're going to have in this new kind of model that the government has announced, and I'll read a couple of quotes from this opinion piece. I'll table it after my speech. Dr. Dow indicated:

“The Premier’s announcement of funding for nurse practitioners and family practice nurses to join collaborative care teams was a positive announcement, and many physicians welcome this news. But the announcement was incomplete. Physicians are an integral part of community-based health-care teams, yet the profession has not been engaged by either the government or the Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA) to help shape these teams.”

That should be a concern for not only government but for all Nova Scotians. Those we rely on when we have a medical issue, who are going to be a core part of this new plan, are indicating that they were not engaged in what role they're going to play in the future. That should be concerning to all of us. She also states:

“Unfortunately, the Premier didn’t announce any new physicians this week. The need is great: many of our communities face ongoing physician recruitment challenges. I’m worried for patients who need care now but can’t find a physician. I’m worried for patients who have to visit emergency rooms to receive primary care, care that can and should be delivered in a community clinic. I’m worried for my colleagues with unmanageable patient loads; physicians who simply can’t take on any new patients, even though they want to help.”

So, I think this opinion piece should be an alarming message to the government that we need more substance. When the Premier stands up - this was September 30<sup>th</sup> so it's not like it was a year ago or two years ago. This was some 20 days ago this opinion piece was printed.

So, we have the President of Doctors Nova Scotia saying that the government's plan is incomplete. There wasn't enough in it to ensure that Nova Scotians will see an improvement in health delivery here in Nova Scotia. We're some three years in and that's unacceptable. In 2009 when a new government took over, within two years there were new Collaborative Emergency Centres open in this province; within the mandate of the four years, there were nine, ten - I'm not sure of the exact number, I forget, nine or ten. We heard this announcement from the government some time ago and it was around the concerns around the walk-in clinics we have, especially in the Halifax area. There are a number of them, but they are needed. There are thousands of Nova Scotians, not only in HRM but around the province, who use walk-in clinics as their main source of getting treatment or being seen by a physician, or a nurse practitioner, which some of them have.

Last year this government allowed the Health Authority to change the requirement and change the way doctors are issued licences to work in these walk-in clinics and to work in the capital area, Mr. Speaker, the central area, which makes no sense to me. Maybe they could take that approach if they've just announced and opened up all these collaborative clinics all over the province, that you could say okay, a Nova Scotian who doesn't have a physician, here's clinics you can go to that can meet your needs. But that didn't happen. They made the changes to the requirement of the licensing of physicians, I think prematurely and, really, is it needed?

I'm fortunate to have a family physician who has a practice that has about five, six, maybe seven doctors, they have a nurse practitioner, but it's difficult at times for my family to get in and see a family physician. We and my family rely on walk-in clinics at times and it meets the needs.

I know, having been in the position of Minister of Health and Wellness, that there is a perception and there are some out there who think we need to limit the licensing of physicians, especially in the Halifax area because that will create an opportunity for them to go and get their practice or licence in under-serviced areas or in rural communities.

But that doesn't work, Mr. Speaker. They've tried it in other jurisdictions and it just does not work and it makes no sense to have changes to accreditations here in Halifax, in the central region, without having these clinics available for Nova Scotians to go to.

This issue isn't going away, Mr. Speaker. The Premier and the Minister of Health and Wellness, especially the Minister of Health and Wellness, continues to quote the statistics that sound great. Today I think he used, we're the third best province or territory in the country with the percentage of residents to doctors. That's hooray, hooray, we should

have a parade, but I have to tell you, if you do not have a family physician that means nothing. The thousands of people in my riding who don't have a physician, that statistic means nothing. We could be number one, but if you don't have a physician you can't come back every time we challenge the government on what are you doing, what's your plan? That's all we're asking, what's your plan?

Everything seems to be off into the future, Mr. Speaker - next year, 2017 we're going to get another plan on how they're going to address a family doctor for every Nova Scotian. That means nothing to those who do not have a family doctor. These are people who have chronic diseases, these are people who have illnesses that need the regular exposure and opportunity to talk with a care provider about their illness, how to manage that. It's a scary thing for a patient, for a mother, for a father who doesn't have a family physician for their kids.

I think the government has not made it a priority to address the issue currently, until they get to the point where you can point to these new clinics all over the province that can meet the needs and the health care needs of Nova Scotians.

I hope the government changes direction, comes out with a short-term plan of what they're going to do to address the some 100,000 Nova Scotians without a doctor, because it's a concern for those Nova Scotians, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I want to say that it is certainly an honour to be able to get up in this House of Assembly today to speak to Resolution No. 4, on the shortage of doctors in our province.

I wanted to start by saying that I'm no expert, but there are some things that I do know from common sense. I do know that the doctors, the nurses, the technicians, and the people who work in our health care system in the Province of Nova Scotia are second to none. They're some of the finest people you'll find anywhere, and we as a community and as a province are very fortunate to have that. They are well-educated; they go to work every day because they want to do their job. What they seem to be lacking is the support and help of the government, of the Health Authority and, indeed, of the community.

How do we fix that? In my time of having the honour of being able to represent people in this House there has never been, in my opinion, a single issue bigger than the health care of our Nova Scotian family. It is something that affects every individual, and it is something we need to come to grips with. Now, my colleague for Clare-Digby said that we do not have a problem recruiting doctors, that our problem is retention. I agree with him. But then it begs the question, why is it that these doctors do not want to stay in the Province of Nova Scotia? When they were being recruited, they saw something about Nova Scotia that made them want to come here. They saw something in the quality of life, or

they saw something in the roads that are here. They saw something in the area and the beauty and the quality of life - why do these people not want to stay?

When I talk to them - and over the summer, Mr. Speaker, I talked to a lot of doctors from a lot of communities - they tell me that they feel disrespected. They feel that their opinions are not worth anything. They say that the Health Authority and the Department of Health and Wellness and this government do not ask them for their input.

It has been said in this House by numerous people that money is not the answer, and I agree with that. But you know, Mr. Speaker, when you're trying to fix a problem with your car, you go to a mechanic and you ask that mechanic what he thinks is wrong and how he thinks you fix it. You don't go to the fifth floor of One Government Place and say, okay, what're you going to do? And that seems to be the approach that's being taken by this Health Authority and this government and this department.

We need to go to the doctors, the people who are dealing with individual Nova Scotians on a daily basis, who hear their concerns, who hear their complaints and know what they need to make things work. Just this week I had the opportunity to have to go and get an ultrasound done. I went to the hospital and I went in and started talking to the technician who was doing it.

This is a lady who had come here from Russia. In Russia she had been a neurosurgeon and a radiologist, and she practised there for 20 years. She came here and wanted to be a doctor in Nova Scotia. She settled in Cape Breton because she liked the quality of life it would offer. She went through all the testing, the hoops, and everything that was required for her to pass and be qualified and recognized by the Canadian government as a doctor here - at her own expense, because she wanted to practise medicine here. When she went to the Health Authority, the Health Authority said we don't have enough money for you to stay here and do a residency, and do all those things.

When we hear that we can't retain doctors, and we have people like this who want to come to our province, who are in our province, and are being underutilized, there's something wrong with that system.

My colleague, the member for Northside-Westmount said earlier today that we have 10,000 people on Cape Breton Island who do not have a doctor. Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, if you talk to the doctors, the doctors will tell you that that's - and no pun intended - a very conservative estimate. Some doctors put it as high as 25,000 Cape Bretoners who do not have a family doctor.

If that's not a crisis, Mr. Speaker, if that's not a problem that needs to be dealt with by this government, I'd like somebody to tell me what it is. You know, my colleague from Clare-Digby said it, people like throwing numbers around and it is not about numbers.

The question that needs to be asked, and I think it's a simple question, because today in Question Period the minister took great pride in getting up and telling us there were 21 new doctors who came to Nova Scotia. But the real question is, how many left Nova Scotia? Does anybody know the answer to that? I know, from what I'm told by the doctors' community on Cape Breton Island, that since the beginning of this year until now, there are over 30 doctors leaving and left - 30. That's only one part of this province, and he stood up and said that 21 are coming.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is nothing to frown on, but the reality is that if there's more going out than there are coming in, this 100,000 number of people without doctors is increasing.

The other thing that the Health Authority has told individuals time and time again is that we will replace every doctor who leaves, with a doctor. That statement is a powerful statement, and it means a lot to people when they hear it.

What the Health Authority, and what the department, and what this government are not telling people, is it is not uncommon for some of the older doctors to have anywhere from 4,000 to 7,000 people as patients and that the new doctors who are coming into the system, the new ones who are taking part of being part of our system are more limited, and only want to have anywhere from 1,000 to 1,500 patients. So, if one doctor replaces 1,500 patients and the doctor who left had 7,000 patients - and I only went to school in St. Peter's, so I'm not real sure about a lot of things - but I can tell you that still leaves 5,500 Nova Scotians without a family doctor, and that is an issue.

When you say that numbers don't matter, I think they do. As several of my colleagues have said, if you are the one who doesn't have a doctor, what do you do? If you were a lady who needs to go for a mammogram and are told, "Well, we can't give you your mammogram because you don't have a family doctor for us to send the report to," how is that helpful for that individual? How does that make the system seem to be better?

It's interesting because I heard my colleague from Clare-Digby say on a couple of occasions that we have to change the mindset of how people think about health care. I don't think he's all wrong in that, but the mindset that was created by his government, when they were running for office in this province, when they wanted to form government, was there will be a doctor for every Nova Scotian. That is what was implanted by the Liberal Government. In their Throne Speech they reinforced that, so when he says he wants to change the mindset, this is the very mindset that he and his Party created, so we have to consider that, I think, when you are looking down the road as to where we're going to go, as a community.

There were those who said that there isn't really a crisis in the health care system, yet there were 1,000 people who turned out to a meeting in Sydney to express their concerns. Out of that meeting, a doctor called for a public inquiry into the health care

system. One would ask you, why would a doctor want a public inquiry? Well, his reasoning was that he believed that in a public inquiry, people could come forward and voice their concerns and not fear retaliation by anybody or anything. The Premier, on the other hand, said that we don't need that, that basically, it would be a waste of money and time because we have a plan. Well, the people who don't have a doctor don't know what the plan is.

Did you know, Mr. Speaker, that if you're fortunate enough to go to one of these walk-in clinics, and if you're somebody who hasn't seen a doctor, somebody like me who hasn't seen a doctor in four or five years - which is not my case, as you know. But if you haven't seen a doctor in four or five years, you probably have more than one or two issues going. But that doctor in that clinic is told, you're only allowed to deal with one issue. Which is it that caused me to go there? Again, when we talk about where we are, what we need to do and how we find a solution, I think that the government and the Health Authority and the department are missing the boat.

We all know, Mr. Speaker, that the doctors who are here are good people. Why would we not ask them how to find a solution to what they deal with every day? My father-in-law landed in the hospital on May 30<sup>th</sup>, and he spent five days in the outpatient department before they could even find a bed for him. Every day, I went to visit him, and every day, a doctor came to me and said, you guys are on the right track; don't stop. They're not listening to us. They're not talking to us. They're not asking us to help solve the problem that has been created.

There's another thing that the member for Clare-Digby said that I agree with: this isn't a problem that was created overnight. It didn't happen under one government or two governments. All Parties in this province have had an opportunity to govern, but the problem is still there. Einstein says that the definition of insanity is when you keep on doing the same thing over and over and expect a different result. That's what has been happening here. People keep doing the same old things, and the result is still the same. There is a shortage of doctors. There are doctors who are here who want to stay who are being forced to leave because of practices that have been put in place by the Health Authority, by the department, and by the government.

Mr. Speaker, there is no more important issue than trying to figure out where we are with health care and how we fix this problem. It is quite obvious that the doctors, the nurses, the lab technicians, and the people who do the day-to-day work in our health care system - we need to engage them. We need to make them a very important part of the process of where we are here in the Province of Nova Scotia. Doctors are part of the solution. They are not the problem, as seems is the belief of the Health Authority in this province.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: That concludes Opposition business for today. I'll turn it back to the Deputy Government House Leader to call the next item of business.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. TERRY FARRELL: I believe that concludes business for today. We will resume tomorrow between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., at which time, for government business, we'll call Bills for Second Reading, Bill Nos. 22 and 23; Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne; and such other government business as may be necessary.

With that, I move that the House do now rise to meet again between the hours of 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is for the House to rise to meet tomorrow, October 20<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.

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

The motion is carried.

We have now reached the moment of interruption. The topic for late debate, as submitted by the honourable member for Lunenburg, is:

“Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Tourism Strategy has been encouraging growth throughout the province and across industries, and with record numbers of people visiting Nova Scotia directly related to the Tourism Strategy, small business owners have benefited greatly.”

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

#### **MOTION UNDER RULE 5(5)**

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Lunenburg.

#### **TOURISM: N.S. TOURISM STRATEGY - BENEFITS**

MS. SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing my topic for late debate. Indeed, the Nova Scotia strategy for tourism has been encouraging growth throughout the province and across industries with record numbers of people visiting Nova Scotia, and small business owners have benefited greatly.

Yesterday I highlighted the most recent statistics released, on October 11<sup>th</sup>, by Tourism Nova Scotia. Since they began tracking the records of visitors to Nova Scotia 15 years ago, Nova Scotia has not seen an August with such high numbers of visitors - year-to-date, 1,000,553 non-residents made overnight stays in Nova Scotia. These numbers confirm what tourism operators have been saying to us: this has been their best season ever.

On any given day, I could walk down the streets of Lunenburg or Mahone Bay, and note the vast number of licence plates that are from out of province. As a matter of fact, it's challenging to even drive through these towns, and it's challenging to find a parking space in these towns. Residents either shop early in the day, or after the supper hour - and that includes me, Mr. Speaker, so that I can find a parking space. Locals have also discovered that it's easier and faster to make your way through town on foot or by bicycle.

This is not a complaint. This is all good news. We residents know that during the harder off-season, these businesses will be able to survive. We've seen businesses like bike rentals, bike repairs, ice cream sales, and fine dining, right through to a big wedding destination place.

Tourism Nova Scotia's strategy to work with businesses is to help them grow, and enhance our product, and offer experiences to help motivate people to travel to our province. There are four pillars to the strategy: attract first-time visitors, invest in markets of highest return, focus on world-class experiences, and build tourism confidence.

Tourism growth builds business confidence. Look at Yarmouth. Kendall Adams, a business owner in Yarmouth, and Mayor Pam Mood have both expressed in the media the excitement that the ferry arriving, and having overnight stays, has given their town. Shop owners and landlords painted their buildings, and spruced up their town, and it was a welcoming experience for anyone coming off the ferry. This shows that Nova Scotians are welcoming people from out of province.

It has also taken some businesses into a new venture. For example, Eel Lake Oyster Farm and Ruisseau oysters decided to take advantage of the tourism opportunities. Not only do they farm oysters but they now offer tours of their lake to see their oyster farms, and also there's an experience for tasting oysters on their deck, and many people are taking advantage of this opportunity. I visited that farm, Mr. Speaker, last Fall, and I must say, what an expansion it has been to have the tourism aspect to their oyster farm.

Our focus on tourism, Mr. Speaker, is to attract visitors from outside the province to grow Nova Scotia's tourism sector. The new experiences have an ability to promote travel to the province and increase our profile across the world as a travel destination - the key to growing our industry and to build our tourism industry to a \$4 billion industry by 2024.

The EXCELLerator Partner Program was started to help build our product and to appeal to a new market segment. For example, Burntcoat Head in Hants County is the site of the Dining on the Ocean Floor, which is offered by the Flying Apron Cookery. I've seen the ads, Mr. Speaker, and hopefully you have too. What an experience this must be to actually dine on the floor of the ocean, and the excitement of wondering, is that tide going to come in while you are still finishing your meal, or having your last sip of wine?

Mr. Speaker, they are booked for two years - there is a two-year waiting list to have that dining experience. We know that as traffic increases in this area, more small businesses will be needed to meet the customer needs. They'll need more stores and restaurants and overnight accommodations, gas.

Since 2013, this government has invested \$185,000 in this park alone, because they know the potential for growth. It's a good and smart investment.

Mr. Speaker, we've heard from businesses all over the province that this is one of the best years they've ever had. The tourism numbers can speak for that. Tourism growth affects more than accommodations and campgrounds, it benefits small businesses in general, from gas stations to restaurants, to stores and garages. Visitors require these services. Look at the kayak rentals. We live in a peninsula, the waterfront activities alone are an industry. There are bike services, ice cream sales, all sorts of vendors in the waterfront. If you've ever walked the waterfront here in Halifax it's amazing what has happened here. On any given evening the boardwalk is crowded with people, their activities - and many that do not cost a person any money at all.

Tourism growth is certainly helping the food and beverage industry. We've seen significant growth in wineries, breweries, and distilleries, and 49 of them offer tourism experiences. They have created an experience called the Good Cheer Trail. I had an opportunity to do a winery visit, and I must say, I was quite impressed with how a vineyard has turned into a whole tourism experience.

Mr. Speaker, look at what the cruise ship industry has been doing here in Halifax. Their season started in June and it isn't to finish until the end of this month. We've seen record numbers of people, first-time visitors to Nova Scotia coming on the cruise ships. This has provided a lot of income for small businesses in Nova Scotia. We think we will see over \$104 million in economic benefit this year alone from the cruise ship industry.

Mr. Speaker, I know how exciting it is, I've spoken to - they come to Lunenburg and Mahone Bay on a regular basis. I'm often there because our Commissionaire, Mr. Ripley, sometimes contacts me and tells me he'll be there. I greet them and they love the experience of Nova Scotia and the fine dining and the shopping, and just the hospitality that we offer here in Nova Scotia.

I can tell you that last week I even heard the manager of Ambassatours say on the radio that it was all hands on deck, they had so many cruise ships with the boats being brought to Halifax because of the hurricane that even he was driving the bus to accommodate the visitors.

Mr. Speaker, from Yarmouth to Sydney, Lunenburg to Tatamagouche, we are growing our tourism industry. It was busy everywhere. The Nova Scotia Tourism Strategy is working and this year's tally is not in, but it will be a record-breaker. Thank you.

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

HON. DENISE PETERSON-RAFUSE: Here we go again, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Government trying to credit themselves when there are other factors that are behind the increase in tourism in this province. It's not solely their strategy, although it's good to have a strategy and I'm glad because I think this is the first strategy that they've had, but it didn't come from them anyway, it came from the tourism corporation.

Once again what we're seeing here is that we are pleased with the fact that tourism has grown in this province - and who deserves credit? The businesses, not the Liberals, the businesses that have been dedicated and committed to their own business, to their communities, and have been involved in promoting themselves and the communities they serve.

As I said, it is positive to have a strategy but it's not positive to try to take the credit away from those businesses and those in non-profit groups in the communities that are working very hard around the tourism industry.

There are a few factors that we can contribute to the increase in tourism in our province, and that's the fact of the difference in the dollar. That is a huge factor in encouraging people from the U.S. to travel here to Nova Scotia; it's also a huge factor when it comes to people within Canada travelling within Canada and going to other provinces, and that's what we've seen here in Nova Scotia.

We've also seen that people are staying in their own province and doing what they call "stay vacations." It is because the difference in the dollar is a huge contributor to why we are getting the increased tourism in our province.

We also have to look at the fact that the gas prices have been the lowest that they've been in years. Certainly that makes a huge difference when it comes to a family deciding whether they are going on vacation or not, because of the fact that it can be very costly to travel. When the gas prices are high, people tend to stay home. We know that and there have been stats around that. So you put together the fact that there's a difference in the dollar and that the gas prices are lower than they've been in years, and also let's add the

fact that fortunately we've had a beautiful summer of weather although, unfortunately, that has contributed to the drought and the issue with dry wells.

On the flip side of that, what it has done is it has encouraged more people to visit, take the cruises, come to Nova Scotia. It's good that we do have a tourism group that is marketing the province because the marketing ties in to these other factors that we're seeing that benefit. It's important to know and to realize that it is not because of an entire strategy that that has increased the tourism. It's unfortunate that the government wants to take that credit when that credit should be given to our communities themselves that come together and work very diligently to put on events and festivals and activities that draw people to Nova Scotia, and also the talent we have in Nova Scotia that draws people to come here to listen to our singers, to visit our beautiful communities. And that's why it is very sad that this government devastated the film and television industry and that we have lost so many young people who have left the province.

The difficulty is, and I've talked recently - I was on a movie set - and it's only a few producers that were able to get some funding, and what they're even saying now is that they can't get workers because the workers have left the province. So, they're having difficulty when there are two or three productions going on at the same time. The challenge is to even find workers or resources to support them - and that comes from the fact that the government devastated the film and television industry and has been scrambling in the last six months to do what they can because we know that we're sniffing an election, and that's when you see the money starting to flow and being thrown around.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing is that as an Opposition member we're to hold the government accountable, and there is a very troubling issue that has been brewing within the tourism industry and that's the fact that even the Auditor General recently pointed out that Tourism Nova Scotia, the Crown Corporation, who would be the ones that would take the credit on this strategy did not submit its financial statements as required to do so by the Finance Act. The Auditor General in fact pointed out that this is highly unusual, so that's a question that we need in Opposition to present to the government is, why is that? That was due the end of June, and we're talking - we're now October 19<sup>th</sup> - why is it that financial statements that are required have not been presented to the government and to the Opposition and to the people of Nova Scotia?

So, Tourism Nova Scotia had \$25 million in expenses last year, and it's really important that, if this government has created this Crown Corporation and it's a new corporation, they abide by the rules, and it is the responsibility of the government to ensure that they abide by those rules. So we do need some answers in this House of why they did not present their financial information - unless they've had discussions with Mr. Trump I guess may be why because, as we know, he won't submit his income information. So we don't know what's going on there, and we do know that we may get increased tourism if Mr. Trump gets in in the U.S. as we know that Cape Breton has invited people from the

U.S. to come and not only visit but to live in that beautiful area of the province if that's the turnout of the election.

So, I think it's important that those who should be commended for their hard work and for the favourable circumstances for tourism should be our businesses, as I mentioned, in our communities, our small, medium, and large businesses. It should be the community members that welcome tourists and how our people in Nova Scotia are so warm and welcoming when people come here. It should be those people who are in the creative industry should be thanked for what they do because that's what attracts people to our province. It's its beauty; it's its character; it's what we have to offer and all our talents that we have here. And that's why it has been so mind-boggling to so many people why the film industry was cut in the manner that it was because it brought so much money back to our economy and it also did not take much money away.

Now, what we're finding with the system that's in place in fact is actually doing the very thing that the government didn't want it to do - to give money to the larger producers that are outside of the province, because the set that I was on was actually a German film that was being made for Germany. Now, that's wonderful because our province is going to be shown in Germany but, once again, because of the debacle that had taken place with the film industry, what's happening is the opposite of what the government actually had stated from day one when they said that they wanted the money to go back into the hands of the Nova Scotia producers, but in fact it is not doing that.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank all those who really deserve the thank you for what has turned around to be a great tourism season in our very beautiful Province of Nova Scotia. That really goes back to the people of Nova Scotia, and not our government. Thank you.

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

HON. ALFIE MACLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to get up today to speak about tourism in our wonderful Province of Nova Scotia. I don't know how many people here know, but Cape Breton Island has actually been listed as the number one island in North America. (Applause) Now we're number three in the world, and I have figured out why that is: one of the judges hasn't been to Cape Breton yet, but when he gets there, we'll be number one in the world as well.

Tourism is a very important part of our economy in the Province of Nova Scotia, and certainly on the Island of Cape Breton. Tourism is up, as was indicated by the member for Lunenburg. But there are a few things I think I need to mention to her before I move on to some other issues. The U.S. dollar has made it easier for people to travel here, but it has also made it easier for Canadians to come here, because the cost of going to the United States is so expensive.

American tourists coming to visit us have decreased by 7 per cent - travelling by road, that is - but Tourism Nova Scotia has also reported that visitors arriving by the Yarmouth ferry have decreased by 24 per cent compared with last August.

Now, more than half of the additional tourism traffic that we've gotten here in Nova Scotia has come from Ontario, and then a great deal of other individuals have come from western Canada. But you know, those are just some of the facts and figures that are out there that have been put out by Tourism Nova Scotia. They are not my figures. They are Tourism Nova Scotia's.

Here is what is really interesting - and I think my colleague from the NDP started down that road. What has really made people come to Nova Scotia and visit this beautiful province is the hard work of the tourism operators we have here in different locations. I know that in the area I have the honour to represent - Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg - we have people like Tommy and Linda Kennedy in Louisbourg, who offer you an experience called the Beggars' Banquet where you can actually go there, get dressed in period costume, eat a meal from the 1740s, and enjoy some entertainment. People come from all over to do that.

The Louisbourg Playhouse, where we have people who come and perform - local people, talent all over the place - and people come to hear them and listen to them.

We just celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Celtic Colours, and I can tell you - and I know my friend the Minister of Business, he and I shared some time together on the weekend at one of the concerts they put on, and the entertainment is fantastic. It's the largest festival of its type in the world, Mr. Speaker, and that's what brings people to the Island of Cape Breton and the Province of Nova Scotia.

But it's not just that. There are other things that are going on. I did hear my colleague, the member for Lunenburg talk about the cruise industry. The cruise in Sydney, it's amazing the number of people who come to visit our communities and go around, but what we desperately need is a second berth in Sydney. The municipal government and the federal government are on-side, and we're sure that the provincial government won't be too long in making that operation take place and happen.

There are other things. Why, out in the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal's area, we have the Miners Museum, where you can actually go underground in a real mine and see what the conditions were like when they were working. It's amazing. It is the number one destination for people who come off the cruise ships in Sydney. That's where they want to go. They want to go underground. I spent part of my career working underground, and for the life of me, I don't know why they want to go and visit that. It takes a very special person, and the men who worked underground all across this province are very special when it comes to that.

The other thing we have in Glace Bay is the Savoy, a beautiful theatre with natural acoustics that needs to have support from the provincial government.

Then we look farther around on the island and Inverness an area that's an old mining area was remediated. Now we have golf courses there, two world-famous golf courses, Mr. Speaker, two golf courses that people travel to from all over the world by private jet. Do you know what that has done for that community? It has been an economic driver. It has seen people getting more jobs. It has enabled the community to build better infrastructure. That is a result of tourism innovation. And I might add, it was a provincial Progressive Conservative Government that did the remediation on that site to make that happen.

On the Northside, we have the Fossil Centre, where some of us will probably end up. You can go and visit the Fossil Centre, and you can see some of the history of what's taking place in our country and in our province and certainly on our island.

If you go to Port Morien, it was the home of the first coal mine in North America and the home of the first Boy Scout troop in North America, so there are lots of firsts.

Then there's the Fortress of Louisbourg. Anybody who has had the opportunity to visit the Fortress of Louisbourg can't deny the awesomeness of it - the largest recreation of an historic site in North America. When I got out of high school, I actually was a soldier at the Fortress of Louisbourg. (Interruption) My colleague, the member for Pictou Centre was actually there with the building crew. (Interruption) My colleague, the member for Cape Breton Centre just said I was one of the original fighters, and I was in the same platoon as him. The actual awesomeness of it, and we have re-enactors come from all over the world to take part in the things that are going on in the Fortress of Louisbourg.

When we talk about tourism, when we talk about things that attract people, we have entrepreneurs who do such special things. Mr. Speaker, do you know that you can go to Baddeck and you can get a lobster supper with all-you-can-eat mussels and seafood chowder and desserts and a lobster or crab? Eileen and Harold Montgomery have built that into such an operation that when you go there now, you can look forward to waiting a half-hour to three quarters of an hour just to get in. It's the hard work and the innovation of so many different Nova Scotians that have made tourism successful.

It is the groundwork that these people put in, like the people who volunteer their time at the S&L Railroad in Louisbourg. That's where you can go and see what the transportation system used to be like in that community and how it was an economic driver. It hauled coal from the Sydney coal fields to Louisbourg to be loaded on to ships to be moved around the British Commonwealth.

You can go to the Two Rivers Wildlife park. The board of directors there has worked hard to give an experience to young people how to see animals in their natural

habitat, to see what's going on and how they thrive in their own surroundings. Mr. Speaker, outside of the one in Shubenacadie, it's the only other wildlife park we have in the Province of Nova Scotia, and it's an important place to visit.

We've seen the current Minister of Natural Resources investing in parks across this province to make them a better (Applause) Yes, he deserves to be applauded because it's making the experience of visiting Cape Breton and Nova Scotia a better experience for people. People will want to come back.

Mr. Speaker, when you think of what tourism does for our economy, how it drives our economy in the Province of Nova Scotia, you can't help but ask the question, why is it that the government doesn't have a stand-alone minister of tourism in one of the most important sectors of the Province of Nova Scotia - a stand-alone minister?

Mr. Speaker, there are so many great things about . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. I would like to thank all the participants in the Adjournment debate this evening.

The House stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

[The House rose at 5:20 p.m.]

**NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER RULE 32(3)****RESOLUTION NO. 86**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas a teacher's ideal student works hard to complete her school work, participates to the best of her ability, and tries to improve in every way possible; and

Whereas Katy Crawford is quiet, shy, polite and kind, with a good sense of humour; and

Whereas Katy is a very hard worker who does not slack off when confronted by a problem but tackles it head on;

Therefore be it resolved that all Members of this House of Assembly congratulate Katy Crawford, a student at North Colchester High School in Tatamagouche, for her independence and sense of responsibility and for being chosen as the student of the month for May 2016.

**RESOLUTION NO. 87**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Megan Joudrie, a Grade 8 student at North Colchester High School in Tatamagouche, is known for her willingness to participate, her positive attitude, and the effort she puts into her school work; and

Whereas Megan's interests are varied and show the uniqueness of her talents, including her artistic abilities, shown through her artwork; her musical abilities, shown through her violin playing; and her athletic abilities, shown through her dirt-biking, horseback riding, and competitions in barrel racing; and

Whereas her school spirit and participation in school events are important to the school culture and environment; Megan's encouragement of others to get involved helps them and the school;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate this well-rounded student for being chosen as the student of the month for June 2016.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 88**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Yorke Von Kintzel, a senior at North Colchester High School, is an excellent academic student; and

Whereas athletics and physical fitness also play an important part in his life since he is both a soccer and hockey player; and

Whereas Yorke's special knack for trivia saw him dominate the competition at Reach for the Top, resulting in his being selected for the all-star team at provincials;

Therefore be it resolved that all Members of this House of Assembly congratulate Yorke Von Kintzel, who is recognized for his many contributions to North Colchester High School by being named student of the month for June 2016.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 89**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Ivan MacLeod, a resident of Valley, Colchester North, a member of the Truro Police Force for 20 years, a volunteer with the Valley Kemptown Fire Brigade for 10 years, a member of the Valley United Church for 40 years, has been a choir member for the past 30 years; and

Whereas Ivan began his career as a tractor-trailer driver in 1989, drove throughout the United States and made at least five trips from coast to coast across Canada, sometimes through major storms and even areas that were deemed unsafe for drivers; and

Whereas Ivan received a commendation from Connors Transfer, of Stellarton, and King Freight Lines, of Pictou, for driving a tractor-trailer for one million miles without an accident;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Ivan MacLeod for his many contributions to his community and for the excellent driving record that he was able to establish and maintain.

**RESOLUTION NO. 90**

By: Hon. Karen Casey (Education and Early Childhood Development)

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

Whereas Darci Cameron, winner of Colchester County Community Youth Volunteer Award, coaches soccer in summer and donates countless hours of her time at the North Shore Recreation Centre in the winter, helping with the First Shift Program and the Tatamagouche Skating Club; and

Whereas Darci is also an active member of the 4-H club, competes in throwing at track and field events, is goalie for her hockey team, and takes pictures for the yearbook; and

Whereas her understanding of the importance of inclusion and treating all people with respect and dignity is clearly evident by her many hours spent helping out in the Learning Centre;

Therefore be it resolved that all members of this House of Assembly congratulate Darci Cameron, a student at North Colchester High School in Tatamagouche, for her dedication to improving the lives of others and for being chosen as the student of the month for May 2016.