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Speaker: Honourable Scott Reid, MHA

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The House met at 10 a.m.

Resolution

MR. SPEAKER (Reid): Order, please!

“Be it resolved by the House of Assembly in Legislative Session convened, as follows:

Admit strangers.

“That it is expedient to bring in a measure respecting the imposition of taxes on carbon products.”

Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

CHAIR: Shall the resolution carry?

MR. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair recognizes the hon. the Minister of Finance.

I call from the Order Paper, Motion 1, Bill 43.

MS. COADY: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance.

It’s a pleasure to speak again this morning to *Budget 2020*. I will recognize that all Members present have voted in favour of *Budget 2020* and this is the final piece of legislation to enact the provisions within that budget. Madam Chair, I will say to everyone in the House, I thank them for their co-operation throughout the last number of weeks of moving expeditiously through the budget, through the support of the budget and for the implementation of the enacting legislation that is required for the budget.

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Government House Leader, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Ways and Means to consider certain resolutions and a bill relating to the imposition of taxes on carbon products, Bill 43.

I will say that this particular piece before us this morning has to do with the carbon tax. As the Members in this Chamber and, I’m sure, all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are aware, the federal government has brought in measures to reduce carbon emissions in the country. In November of 2018, the province passed the Greenhouse Gas Act which saw the province agree to implement the province’s own carbon tax program custom to the province’s condition, rather than see the federal implementation. I think that’s very important, Madam Chair, that we recognize that we brought in measures that would really work for our industries and the people of the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that I do now leave the Chair for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Ways and Means.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, ‘nay.’

Carried.

On motion, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, the Speaker left the Chair.

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (P. Parsons): Order, please!

As we know, carbon is a growing problem globally. It’s not Newfoundland and Labrador’s problem; it’s a global problem and we all see the effects of climate change and, of course, the chief cause of climate change and global warming has been attributed to carbon. I can say, Madam Chair, that over the last number of years there’s a growing attention to this issue globally. We all know about the Paris accord

We are now debating the resolution and Bill 43.

and other countries that are putting in place measures to ensure that we recognize and reduce the level of carbon. Now, we've done well in this country in terms of recognizing the problem but, of course, it has to be addressed.

We really wanted to ensure, in Newfoundland and Labrador, that we recognized the circumstances that we find within the province and not just simply take the federal government's imposition of a tax for carbon. We wanted to tailor make it to the provincial circumstances. So back in 2018, and brought into effect in January 2019, we did a tailor-made program. The program really helped us to maintain competitiveness in taxation and trade perspectives. It minimized the impact – actually, it really minimized the impact on consumers and vulnerable groups, recognized a very large ongoing investment to decarbonize electricity and it delivered meaningful reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

At the time there was very broad, public consultation and support, and unanimous support, Madam Chair, from industries. I think that's critical to this discussion and debate this morning. I know my colleague, the Minister of Industry, will speak later this morning on the impacts to industry and how important this program, the imposition of the made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador solution was to this particular issue.

I can say some of the exemptions include home heating fuels, including propane. So we were able to get an exemption for home heating fuels. Very important for seniors and low-income families, in particular, but all of us in terms of being able to ensure we have flexibility in our taxation of greenhouse gas emissions.

We also were able to carve out some of the prescribed activities in key economic sectors, like: agriculture; fisheries; mining; forestry; silviculture; onshore and offshore exploration activities; electrical generation, including isolated diesel generation – we were able to carve out rules and the taxation around that – municipalities; and aviation fuel. To name but a few of the carve-outs that I think are very, very important to ensuring competitiveness within the province.

I will also say, Madam Chair, that Newfoundland and Labrador is one of the first provinces in the country to agree to be net zero by 2050. I can say NEIA, Noia and many others were supportive of Newfoundland and Labrador's attention to this matter and saying that we will be net zero.

What does net zero mean? It refers to the striking of a balance within a jurisdiction, Newfoundland and Labrador, between greenhouse gas emissions produced and greenhouse gas emissions eliminated or taken out of the atmosphere, so it creates that level of net zero, that balance. It is critically important as we move forward and address the challenges of climate change and address the challenges of carbon.

I can tell you that Newfoundland and Labrador has one of the lowest carbon per barrels of oil produced, globally. I think it's very important that oil produced in Newfoundland and Labrador from our offshore is on the global supply chain, because it is that lower carbon per barrel. Having that as part of the global supply chain actually lowers overall the greenhouse gas emissions. It certainly is of benefit to have Newfoundland and Labrador because, otherwise, if we didn't have Newfoundland and Labrador's oil in the global supply chain, of course, we'd only have higher carbon per barrel.

As you well know, Madam Chair, and others in this Chamber well know, it is important for us to develop our oil. Not just from a perspective of our economy, not just for jobs and job creation and activity, but also to ensure that we are investing in lower carbon products and investing in the opportunity, I'll say, of products and services that help lower the carbon, globally. As you well know, we know that the oil and gas industry in the province is continuously and continuing to lower the carbon per barrel, so I'll say that again.

I know that this made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador approach to carbon pricing minimizes the impacts on residents and on industry of the amount of carbon, but it does address and it does help to tailor the economic realities to the province. As I mentioned, home heating fuels, fuels used by industry and fuels used in the fish processing, forestry, offshore, mineral

exploration are all exempt. I think that's positive.

What does this bill actually do? This bill actually increases the price of carbon and increases the price of gas by 0.21 of a cent, one-fifth of one cent, one-fifth of one penny. I understand somebody has done the math and consumers will see an overall increase of 10 cents added to the price of a 50 litre fill-up, 10 cents on 50 litre fill-up.

It's minimal, but it is impactful. We are moving from \$20 for carbon to \$30 per ton on carbon and that is required under the program that the federal government has imposed on the country. It meets all the recommendations and requirements of the federal government. We continue to have our own made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador solution that really does address some of the industrial concerns and some of the, what I'll call, people concerns that the carbon tax may impose.

By implementing our own made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador solution we are able to have these carve outs while we're still addressing the carbon per barrel.

Madam Chair, again, I will say that Newfoundland and Labrador has brought forward that we will be net zero by 2050. Applauded by, not just the people of the province, not just by the advocates for the environment but also by industry. They are completely supportive of ensuring that we move in this direction.

It does increase the cost of fuel, of gas by one-fifth of one cent, so minor. There is an increase of two cents, 2.68 cents per litre on diesel when the tax implications are all implemented and the revenue collected from the carbon tax helps to fund other important climate change initiatives.

Let me just talk for a moment about those climate change initiatives because they are administered under the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Municipalities, and I applaud the minister for his work in this area. The climate change funding programs, just let me run through them for the people of the province, so they're aware.

We have about \$89.4 million allocated for the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund. I think it's an important fund, Madam Chair. We have six programs that are funded under the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund. I know the minister is biting at the bit to have a few words on these particular funds.

We have the Climate Change Challenge Fund and the Energy Efficiency and Fuel Switching in Public Buildings. As you well know, we're looking at switching public buildings from burning diesel to burning electricity or even wood pellets. I know the Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture would be keen on this particular program of utilizing some of the forestry products in some of the as well. We'll be doing retrofits to existing public buildings like post-secondary institutions and other facilities.

We also have the Energy Efficiency in Oil Heated Homes Program. That provides rebates for insulation and programmable thermostats for customers who heat with oil.

We also have the Freight Transportation Fuel Efficiency Program. That's an application-based grant program that provides rebates to retrofit existing heavy-duty trucks and trailers registered and plated in Newfoundland and Labrador to reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emission. Again, another important program. We certainly encourage those that are in the industry to take advantage. Anybody with a heavy-duty truck or trailer can apply.

We also have an expansion of the Home Energy Savings Program. It's delivered through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, with repayable grants up to \$5,000 for cost-effective energy efficiency upgrades.

We also have the Nunatsiavut energy efficiency program to enable households reliant on electricity and oil heat in Nunatsiavut's communities to conduct energy efficiency retrofits.

Those are just some of the programs. We have the electric vehicle charging infrastructure. We had the adaptation initiatives. We had the Heat Pump Rebate Program and we had the Energy Efficiency Loan Program. I'm just running

through some of the programs that we are placing money in to help people address some of their concerns around the cost of oil and the increasing cost around this carbon emission.

Madam Chair, I will leave at that. I'm happy to take any questions that may be placed before me on this particular issue. I will say again for the people who may be listening, the budget has been voted upon on multiple occasions and the budget has been passed. This is one of the pieces of legislation that enables the budget to go forward. I'm asking the House for their support for this legislation as part of the budget so that Newfoundland and Labrador can keep the made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador solution.

As I've outlined, I think it's incredibly important to, not just the people of the province but also industries in the province that we do not have the federal program backstopped or implemented. Let us keep our own Newfoundland and Labrador solution, which both the people of the province and industry have been supported of, Madam Chair.

With that, I will listen to the debate. I look forward to constructive comments and happy to answer any questions that there may be.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port.

MR. WAKEHAM: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm glad to be able to speak here this morning on this particular bill. Again, as the minister has alluded to, this was part of the budget that was introduced and that we have passed, but we all remember the budget that we've passed is really an interim budget. In reality, it was a six-month budget, obviously, because of the impacts of COVID on our economy and on our lives leading up to that particular period of time. It's really a placeholder budget to get us through this fiscal year.

What we really need now is to look forward to the budget that will be presented early in the spring of 2021 and what that budget will contain

or not contain. Obviously, there are a lot of people. We know the fiscal forecast talked about the elimination of, I think it was, 11,000 jobs or something like that. Then we've had other issues since then with Come By Chance and we know we have significant challenges with our offshore and what's happening there.

Clearly, there is a lot to be done, lots of work to be done and action need to be taken to get our economy moving again. All of those items have a significant impact on the revenue of our province and our ability to continue to offer the services that we do at the present time. The budget itself, while this has passed, again, I think all of us are looking forward to the next budget and what will be contained in there and where we go from there.

The carbon tax piece of this is something – as the minister alluded to, it was a made-in-Newfoundland solution, because of a program introduced by the federal government forcing provinces to either introduce their own or have something pushed down their throats. Newfoundland and Labrador decided to do their own thing. It's unfortunate that the federal government chose to go that route.

Some of the challenges, I think, for us are getting the recognition for some of the initiatives and the significant amount of money we have already invested in trying to move to a green economy. I don't need to speak anymore about that because everybody knows exactly the kind of monies that we are on the hook for, but I think that at the end of the day, that is a significant opportunity to get ourselves away from carbon.

There are also a lot of things that can be done to reduce our carbon footprint that don't necessarily impact the lives of everyday people. Unfortunately, this carbon tax does that. It's a tax on people of our province who fill up at the pumps every day. Again, it's something that the federal government brought in and pushed down and forced provinces to do something about it. I find it ironic because can they tell us exactly how much our carbon footprint has been reduced since the carbon tax was put on the gasoline here in our province? I'm not so sure they can.

Again, in some provinces it may be something, but clearly with our geography and our lack of public transportation, it's very difficult for a lot of people to give up driving. Yes, I think people have taken the initiative. I think it's great to see more people walking to work and biking to work and the bike lanes being put in in a lot of our municipalities and a few other steps like that. I think those are all positive things. But I also think, again in our own government, our own government buildings, I know there are many buildings in my district that have these huge fuel tanks outside of the building and they remain heated based on fuel. There are ways to reduce our carbon footprint that maybe do not necessarily have to impact the lives of everyday people.

My hon. colleague from Torngat Mountains has talked about a road to the North. Imagine if we were able to do that and connect all of those communities in Northern Labrador and they were able to come off diesel generation. What kind of carbon footprint would that eliminate if we were able to do that? Voisey's Bay and those other locations and all of the communities in the North, and how much of that footprint would be reduced by moving that.

I also paid attention to the minister and her comment about our offshore oil and the fact that we have some of the lowest carbon footprint produced globally in the world and that it needs to be on the global supply chain. I only wish that the federal government saw it the same way, because I totally agree that our oil needs to be on the global supply chain. Unfortunately, our federal government just doesn't get it, and that's a shame. At a time when we have new discoveries, at a time when we're trying to move to reduce carbon footprint, we find ourselves in a situation where our own federal government doesn't step up to the plate.

As a matter of fact, Madam Chair, we'd be better off if we had to have had two casinos, because apparently a casino is worth \$200 million in Ontario for funding from the federal government. So maybe if we had to have two casinos, we would've got \$400 million. Instead, we got \$320 million for our entire offshore oil industry. It's a shame; it's a disgrace.

If you want to talk about lowering carbon footprint globally, then do as the minister says: We need to be on the global supply chain. The federal government needs to step up and put more emphasis on our offshore oil and getting our projects completed and getting them producing. The world still needs oil. We know we're moving away from it, but why would you not support the production of a cleaner fuel than you have right now? That boggles my mind and I still believe that the federal government needs to be held accountable for that.

And what's gone on in the budget is that we've reduced the tax on other gases to try to make this cost-neutral for people, and it's unfortunate, because as we were reducing the tax that was imposed in 2015 down, unfortunately, the federal government with a carbon tax kind of blocked our path. Now while we reduce that particular tax, we have to add it on a carbon tax. So again I find that somewhat ironic that that's had to happen.

This particular tax, as the minister alluded to, it's a very small amount and it will be cost-neutral because of the fact that the tax is coming off on the other end. Again, from a net-revenue point of view, we're not gaining anything in terms of our provincial coffers because we're being forced into this carbon tax. Again, when we think about this particular budget, it has passed and will continue to move forward. I think that there are lots of ways that we continue to look at how we might reduce our carbon footprint.

Some of the initiatives towards electric cars and everything. Even that, I noticed in Ontario, I think the federal government committed \$1.9 billion to refurbish an automotive plant to produce electric cars. It's a good initiative but I question why, as a province, they would not offer some additional support here to ensure that our products, our oil gets on the global supply chain. We continue to ask those questions and we'll continue to ask for support for our offshore oil.

Again, there are a significant number of taxes. The minister alluded that it would not be on home heating fuel which is good, or on home heating propane. I notice that there is propane listed here but it's probably more to do with the

barbeques and other things. There is a significant list of fuels: butane; ethane; gas liquids; gasoline; heavy fuel tax; kerosene; light fuel oil; methanol; petroleum coke. Some I don't even know; I don't know if I can even pronounce them. Marketable natural gas, high heat value coal, et cetera. It has covered off everything.

I think, overall, people will not notice a difference based on this but, of course, they do notice the difference recently when the PUB was asked to increase the price of gasoline because of the closure of the Come By Chance oil refinery. Again, another blow to our economy and something that needs to be addressed. There are discussions ongoing, I understand, with companies looking to purchase that facility. We look forward to a successful conclusion of that as soon as possible so we can get all of those workers back to work and get that refinery open. I look forward to that happening sooner than later, at least to get to the point where we actually have a sale and then move that forward.

From the overall budget perspective, this budget was, as I said earlier, a placeholder budget. It's basically getting us through this difficult year that we've had with COVID. We've seen now a rise in cases in other parts of the country as the so-called second wave takes effect. We have our challenges here in this province and we're dealing with all of that, but hopefully the work is being done nationally and internationally on finding solutions to deal with this particular virus. I know we all are looking forward to the time when we can have a solution.

I was also pleased to see the significant uptake when it relates to the vaccines and the flu vaccine with the people of our province, so all of those are positive things. This particular bill is a bill that has been passed in the budget and this will formalize the process. I want to encourage what was said, that our oil needs to be on the global supply chain and we need to make sure that the federal government steps up and does just that.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for St. John's Centre.

MR. J. DINN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm going to preface my comments with this: We have oil workers out of work and there's no two ways about it, we have to be able to help them. We can't have families that are going without. We know that families here – that people need a future in this province. We also know that Newfoundland does produce oil and it's a large part of our economy.

I look upon a tax in many ways, not only necessarily to reduce the carbon footprint – and that's a large part of it – but also as a source of revenue to invest. I drive vehicles that use gas; I heat my home with oil. I also like to think that what we need to be moving towards is an economy that is greener, but also that's going to provide an economic opportunity for Newfoundland and Labrador as well.

While we have people who depend on the oil industry, we also have a tremendous number of young people, such as those who showed up to the climate change last year, and the one that my colleague across from me attended recently this year. We have to be attentive to that.

I'm always leery about when we talk about how clean our oil is. It's sort of like the whole notion of filtered cigarettes at one time, regardless that they were healthier or the less harmful alternative. While recognizing that our economy still very much depends on it, I think somewhere along the line we have to start looking at the transition.

By definition, transition begins with an ending and ends with a beginning. It usually starts with a door closing and then a door opening. Of course, it's what we do in between. We somehow think too that, yes, we're going to be depending very much on oil for quite a while, but let's not be fooled. I would hazard to guess that the oil companies are already looking at transitioning into something else, another form of energy that they can capitalize on and keep making their profits.

I started thinking about the rapidity at which things progress. I'm old enough – I'm 60; I'll be

61 this year – to remember the first moon landing and the first heart transplant in 1967. I was about eight years old and I remember reading about that, the very first human heart transplant by Dr. Christiaan Barnard. The gentleman lived 18 days but it was proof positive that it could be done. Thinking about that as a relative of mine went up for open-heart surgery recently and the nervousness around it. I was saying to my wife about it: For a lot of these doctors, this is just like going to work at the House of Assembly. It's so routine. Think about the advances that have come about as a result, not only replacing artificial hearts, artificial valves, knee joints – you name it. That's in my lifetime.

That's a significant transition, the pace at which it picks up and a large part of it because of the use of antibiotics as well and so on and so forth. We're probably going to be going into another transition as antibiotics become less and less effective, as to how we're going to engage in these surgeries, but you know what, we will come up with something sooner rather than later.

I think also of the cellphone. It's probably more powerful than the computer that sent the first human beings to the moon, what you can do on it. I can remember staring out at Holy Heart – so I was there, that was after 2000 – looking out the window and phones were starting to come in. You could see people walking up and down, they were clunky things and they became much smaller and much more powerful. That is less than 20 years. The speed at which change occurs, Madam Chair, is significant.

How many of us here are old enough – in the times when we went to school, the first thing when you got a test or a handout from a teacher you took a smell of it. You get the smell of the spirit duplicating liquid on it? Anyone? I do.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. J. DINN: Yeah, right.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. J. DINN: That's right, the mimoids. That was it – ah, that smell. Now, I didn't know but that was it.

Think about it. They no longer exist. They disappeared a long time –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. J. DINN: Look, go back to your diapers. You're too young anyway.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. J. DINN: You're only a young boy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

CHAIR: Order, please!

MR. J. DINN: Madam Chair, I guess I say that because at one time the spirit duplicator and the Gestetner were significant, that's how we got our work out. Guess what put an end to them? The photocopier.

My first piece of wonderful technology that I bought for myself when I first started teaching to speed things up was the electric typewriter and, of course, you had to put the whiteout. Then you had the self-correcting typewriters. What put an end to them? No one uses a typewriter. I remember I wrote up all of my assignments, I wrote up tests, but the computer, the laptop, the iPad and on your phone now you don't even have to type it in, you can dictate it. I would say there are an awful lot of people right now who used to fix, at the time – who would service mimeograph machines and the spirit duplicators. They had to get out of that business real quickly.

Here's another one. At the NLTA we purchased a brand new printing press and within four years that press was obsolete – four years. No one makes them anymore. What did we buy? We purchased brand new digital processing, digital printing. Chalkboard; one of the things I always I wanted as a student was that chalk holder. But you know what, no need for a chalk holder anymore because we've gone from chalk holders to whiteboards to team boards. That's within my teaching career.

Part of what I'm looking at here is that there's always a transition. You know when the first electric lightbulb was invented it was 1879. Gas was the main way which they powered street lamps that they lit up. It was a well-established

industry. It was a mature industry but it was also an industry that was declining in profits and also had some safety issues associated with it.

It was 1910, basically, with the invention of the tungsten filament lamp by William Coolidge of GE that basically put an end to gas. Now, think about that, in that time the changes that have occurred. My grandfather's house, I remember it out in Bay Robert's, the coal room. He still had the Maid of Avalon stove which was a wood, coal stove and I'll tell you, the best baked bread, the best meals you'd ever want to have. In the basement of the floor there was a central furnace that made really – and each room, by the way, had its own little fireplace, stove. Never used because you didn't need it anymore.

I look here in Newfoundland at the things that occur here. I remember the first movie I remember seeing made in Newfoundland was *The Rowdyman* with Gordon Pinsent. I'm dating myself here, no doubt about it.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. J. DINN: That's right.

AN HON. MEMBER: Mere youngster.

MR. J. DINN: A mere youngster.

It's fascinating in that space of time I'm looking at not one but two – I've had *The Surrealtor* and *Hudson and Rex* in my neighbourhood filming. It's a major, major industry.

Here's my point: We are in the process of transition and we better be in a position to start using this. I see this money, the carbon tax, as a way to invest not only in reducing our carbon footprint, but for Newfoundland to capitalize and to get ahead on industries. To be a leader that doesn't necessarily depend on our geography or our natural resources that we take out of the ground, but the resources within in our people, Madam Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Lewisporte - Twillingate.

MR. BENNETT: Thank you, Madam Chair.

First of all, I'd like to thank the Member opposite who just spoke for the history lesson. I see my colleague for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville and also Labrador West were looking at each other wondering what he was talking about for most of the things. A lot of the items he discussed weren't invented when they were born. I'm sure we learned a little more about climate change and history this morning. I appreciate him for his comments.

Madam Chair, it's an honour to speak to Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act. Our government is focused on taking positive steps towards environmental protection and climate change, while addressing the needs of residents in municipalities. It is an honour for me to speak today as the Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Municipalities to talk about our made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador approach to carbon pricing.

Madam Chair, there's no question that climate change is having an impact in Newfoundland and Labrador. We have more flooding due to frequent storm events, such as coastal erosion, storm surges, reduced permafrost, sea ice and also more invasive species. Scientists all over the world have shown definitively that human activity is affecting global climate change. We have to do something to tackle the problem for the sake of our generation and future generations.

The federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* requires all jurisdictions in our country to put a set price on carbon. Our carbon plan was accepted by the federal government in October 2018 and it came into effect January 1, 2019.

We are implementing a made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador approach that reflects the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting efforts in our province to produce green renewable energy, while minimizing the impacts on consumers and supporting industry growth. This allows us to direct carbon tax revenues to made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador greenhouse gas reduction initiatives, while maintaining needed exemptions such as those for home heating oil,

offshore oil, mineral exploration activities and also municipal operations.

In 2019, the carbon tax rate was set by the federal government at \$20 per ton of greenhouse gas emissions and is set to rise to \$30 per ton this year. To ensure compliance with the federal regulations, this cost will continue to rise by \$10 per ton until it reaches \$50 per ton in the year 2022. Our approach is assessed on an annual basis. Non-compliance could result in a federal backstop being imposed and that would trigger taxes on current exemptions, such as those as home heating fuels.

Madam Chair, our approach to tackle climate change in Newfoundland and Labrador forms part of a collective of the Canadian and global efforts that are needed to address climate change. Our government has committed to net-zero emissions by 2050 and shares the Government of Canada's goal of environmental protection and reducing carbon emissions. It is our responsibility to safeguard our land and waters for future generations. Our government continues to support the development of a green economy and initiatives to move the province towards an environmentally and economically safe path forward.

Madam Chair, electrification of Newfoundland and Labrador's economy is a key energy priority, as 98 per cent of our province's electricity will come from renewable energy by 2021. Our five-year Climate Change Action Plan aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, stimulate clean innovation and growth and build resilience to climate change impacts.

We have announced six programs for residential, commercial and municipal energy efficiency and fuel switching, as well as industry-focused and municipal climate change adaptation initiatives. By 2030, these programs are anticipated to deliver 830,000 tons of cumulative greenhouse gas emission reductions while creating 650 direct person years of employment.

The Climate Change Action Plan guides the investment of multi-year funding commitments in the \$89.4-million Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund and \$300 million for green initiatives through the federal Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.

As of March 31, 2020, the provincial government has spent or encumbered approximately \$50 million through the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund. Of this amount, approximately \$38 million is for upgrades and fuel switching of provincial government buildings and about \$12 million is for residential, commercial and municipal upgrades and fuel switching. Of that \$12 million, approximately \$2.8 million has gone for municipalities. The Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund program has been extended to March 2024 from the original date of March 2022 to accommodate delays experienced during COVID-19.

Madam Chair, some of the projects that have been approved under the program include the Town of Gander's project to upgrade Steele Community arena and other town buildings. The Town of Grand Falls-Windsor project to upgrade Joe Byrne arena and also other town buildings within their community. Memorial University's Marine Institute also received funding to install new firefighting training infrastructure at the Foxtrap training location.

We are supporting the transition to clean energy in the future and supporting consumer choices by installing a fast-charging electric vehicle network across the Trans-Canada Highway. To that end, I'm proud to say that the province has announced \$1 million and the Government of Canada has provided \$770,000 to purchase and install 14 Level 3 high-speed electric vehicle chargers and 14 Level 2 chargers along the Trans-Canada Highway. They will extend from St. John's to Channel-Port aux Basques and also up the Northern Peninsula.

In addition to these initiatives, the province continues to implement the *Management of Greenhouse Gas Act* to reduce industrial emissions onshore and in the offshore through set reduction targets. The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Municipalities continues to work with the federal government to create jobs in a green economy and reduce the impacts of climate change and carbon emissions.

Madam Chair, I know that taxes can be challenging for residents, but it is needed as we move towards a greener environment and

economy. Working together, we can make changes to better our province for a sustainable and greener future.

Madam Chair, I've been in this role for eight or nine weeks now, and being a new grandfather – I have a grandson just a little over two years old and a granddaughter that's just a little over three months – I can honestly say that everyday I walk into this office, whether it be in my District of Lewisporte - Twillingate or here in the Confederation Building, my number one goal is to be able to look at my grandchildren to say when I left this job, we left our province in a better condition than when we found it.

We battle with a number of environmental issues and we are working to combat the effects of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions, and we will continue that.

I just wanted to say, in closing, that I am in full support of Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act. I will be supporting it, and, hopefully, our colleagues will also support it.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

It's a pleasure, as always, to speak in this House. Sometimes we take it for granted, but it is a pleasure, as usual. We don't know when we leave this House, when you come back sometimes, so you never take it for granted.

Bill 43, when we look at the increased tax on carbon products, there last week another piece went through to decrease the gas tax as an offset, which is fine. I know I was the Opposition critic for Climate Change for several years in the last session. When all this legislation went through, I was the critic and I kind of got a crash course in climate change and carbon pricing. I really didn't have a great knowledge of it, to be quite frank with you. A lot of us do when we come

into this role and take on different areas and it broadens your knowledge, so I did learn a lot.

It's a fair statement: We have to look after our climate, our environment. I get all that. I think everyone in this House, everyone in the world gets that. It's how you achieve it. As we've spoken – and I spoke many times – we were never in favour of a carbon tax, per se. The made-in-Newfoundland approach was tolerable. It was better. It was less impactful than what was the original plan but it was a top-down approach.

It was the commitment by Prime Minister Trudeau. It was a commitment he wanted to follow through on and he was doing it regardless. It was something that he committed doing, it's fine, but then they had to make some of these separate agreements with other provinces to get it through. There was the made-in-Newfoundland approach and there were other provinces that had their own approach as well.

At the end of the day, it's still a tax. Again, it's probably not as hard as it would be but it's going to continue on. The price per ton will go up to different levels. You talk about your net zero and that's the goal. That's fine, too, but there's a cost involved with all green technologies. All green energy has a cost. It's not cheap. If you look at it and you research it, green technologies are very, very expensive.

I'll just use one example: the electric vehicles. They're price prohibitive when you go to car lots. The price of most of these electric vehicles are out of the price range; they're incomparable. Beautiful cars, but the gas-powered ones, gas and diesel cars, are a lot cheaper because the technology is more proven, the manufacturer supply. We've perfected that industry and it's less costly. Electric vehicles, we have these plug-in stations all throughout, and that's what we're trying to promote, but they're out of most people's price range.

Then you're bringing in all these great ideas and that and there's a cost associated. These costs come to industry, which government ends up having to backstop a lot of this and support the investment. This costs a lot of money. You get that money from your existing industries. You can't have a green economy without having

something to pay for that green economy, even the transition. Right now in Newfoundland and Labrador, we always had the fishery as our backbone, but tourism has picked up a lot of times. Oil and gas is where we've been. We've been an oil-producing province now for the last 20-some-odd years and it's brought a lot of revenues in to our province. That's how we offset the costs for our green technologies.

You can't have one without the other. There was a commercial on one time, and I can't remember when I saw that, there was something that goes hand in hand. You can't have your green economy without having the oil and gas industry. This is the big divide. This is where I think the federal government are really missing the ship, in their focus of being green, focused on green technology, being green. That's all fine; no one disputes that. That's good. They can't be done in separation; they can't be done in isolation of one another. It has to be done together. You don't cripple an already hurting industry in oil and gas because you want to move away from the oil and gas and the coal.

We're years and years away from ever turning into any sort of a major green economy. We're getting there but we have a long ways to go. How are you going to pay for that? Who pays for it? Obviously we're going to pay for it through gas taxes and other taxes. The carbon tax is the mechanism that drives it. There's a cost and there have to be revenues. It's a simple process. It's economics as basic as it gets.

Right now we're faced with we're given \$320 million. Like my colleague for Stephenville - Port au Port said, there is \$200 million being given to a casino in Ontario. That should be offensive to every Newfoundlander and Labradorian. When your oil and gas industry, the backbone of your economy, is struggling, you give them \$320 million, but you give \$200 million to a casino in Ontario. Think about that. That's where the mass of votes are. That's the federal base. We all get that. We understand the federal government goes the colour Ontario goes. We understand that. But \$320 million and you're on your own.

Figure it out. We have to wait three months to figure out where that money is going. We don't know where that money is going. We're asked

that question every day but we don't know. Then you go up to Ottawa and our federal minister goes up looking for money for the oil and gas and the green-minded ministers and close ties to the prime minister, they don't want to hear tell of oil and gas. We're given our 8.5 equity stake, the revenues from that. That's the money that was given to us.

They're only giving back, really, what we rightfully own and what we should have and we should have been given a long time ago. That share has been long paid. If we had a proper place in Confederation, we would have that money. We would have our share, but no, that's kept for rainy-day money. I guess for them to pay the \$200 million to the casino in Ontario was coming out of that fund that they're getting off our offshore, out of our Hibernia platform. But we kicked up, we pleaded and there were rallies and that, rallying cries.

There was a lot of pressure on the federal minister, so his green friends in Ottawa decided we'll give you \$320 million. It's crumbs. In the big picture, it's crumbs. You're paying billions of dollars for pipelines because of political advantages. I don't know if that really worked out well for them up there in Alberta the last election, but it was done. It was done with some outcry but it was done. I think it was done for the right reasons. You're trying to keep the country together; that's their industry.

What makes us any different? I'll say this in this House and I'll say it again: We're all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Why do we have to go with cap in hand and be grateful for whatever we get? No one ever answers that question. We give our share to Confederation, to this country, but we've never gotten our fair share back. That's a long been debated issue. There are all kinds of figures. I'm not even going into those numbers but think about that. Why should we be so grateful that we're getting something from Ottawa?

It's almost like you got it and how wonderful are we? Up in Quebec, I was there two years ago. I was blown away. This province is on equalization. You have to go there, \$14-billion, \$15-billion equalization a year. There's construction. There are multi-billion dollar bridges going everywhere. The economy is on

fire. No one talks about financial problems. They get what they want and when they're given something, they're not beholden to the federal government. They almost think they never got enough and everyone thinks that's fine. I tip my hat to them, good for them, but what makes us any different? Why are we so wrong to fight for what we rightfully deserve?

No one can explain that and that debate has gone on forever and it will go on long after all of us are left this Legislature. There comes a time when you stand up for what you believe in and you stand up for what you rightfully deserve – and I've said this in this House over and over again; I continue to say it. Why do we have to take so little and be happy and go our own way and not be critical of it because we're afraid we might get no more? That's what it's like. We can't say anything. We have to be thankful for that because we might not get anymore.

That's not the way this works. That's not the way we're set up. That's not Confederation. We're all part of one country, and we're part of a great country when you look at what's going on down south of us. I think we need to be treated fairly, and right now I do not believe we've been treated fairly and we've never been treated fairly. It takes more than nice words to do it right. There needs to be more action than words. I keep saying actions have to match your words.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Deputy Government House Leader.

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'll take a couple of minutes to speak to Bill 43 today, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act. Madam Chair, it's a bill that would amend the *Revenue Administration Act* to increase tax rates on carbon products. It absolutely goes without saying, nobody likes to sit here and have those conversations around carbon tax. I was pleased that in *Budget 2020* we were able to coordinate to bring in a decrease to help offset the impact of the carbon tax.

I go back to, Madam Chair, the summer that I spent in Municipal Affairs and Environment. It was quite a learning experience for me to learn about carbon tax. As I would have briefings in the department, I began to put it together with knowledge that I would hear elders back in my community say: The ferry didn't go today; the ferry didn't go yesterday. Then some elderly folk would say: Well, my dear, we're getting windier weather and things than we've ever had in my day.

Then you put it together with what you hear around predictions going to warmer, windier, wetter climate and you put it all together and you see that it's not just something that –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MS. DEMPSTER: Madam Chair, I'm finding it difficult to hear myself speak in the House this morning here.

CHAIR: Order, please!

MS. DEMPSTER: A lot of side conversations and it's a little bit distracting when you're trying to speak.

Madam Chair, snowmobiling is a very – not just here on the Island. Sometimes there are groomed trails and we snowmobile for leisure, but on the Coast of Labrador snowmobiling is used to get your wood out, it's used to harvest from the land. It's a very big part of people's diet. We've seen the impacts of climate change.

I remember on my 17th birthday – now that's some time ago – heading, what we call, up the bay on snowmobile for my birthday at a cabin on the 24th of May. I can tell you in recent years you don't go up the bay on snowmobile the end of May, because probably like a month earlier the harbours are breaking out. There are all kinds of stories we could share like that.

Trevor Bell, from Memorial University, has done some really important work on the North Coast around smart ice and the impacts it's having even on Indigenous communities who live a way of life and carry out these cultural experiences. We're seeing that climate change is having an impact on all of that, so certainly real.

Then we find ourselves in a situation, Mr. Chair, where the federal government has put in place a carbon pricing regime across Canada. How do we deal with that? We're a small province here; we're spread over a very large land mass. That brings our own set of problems when it comes to a government that's bringing in only a certain amount of revenue and you have all these expenditures in all the nooks, coves and crannies around the province.

There's been a lot of back and forth. I want to commend the Deputy Premier for the work she's done in Finance and the Finance minister before her; many conversations around what do we do here. The only choice really that this province was given and this government is that the carbon tax is coming, the federal government have made that very clear. We can either look at what is the best approach that we can do for the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador or the federal backstop would come in.

We didn't have to look too deep at the federal backstop to clearly see that will impose harsher restrictions on our residents. We have to have some say here. Mr. Chair, that's where the hybrid approach came. That's where we said we need a made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador approach; we need to have some flexibility. If this is coming from the federal government, we need the flexibility to massage this a little bit and at the end of the day have the least impact on residents. That's where our approach to carbon pricing is tailored to the economic realities that are here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I have a sister that lives in Fort McMurray, and I can tell you any time when I'm visiting Alberta it's very different when you look at Newfoundland and Labrador and where we have depended on our revenue versus other provinces on the west coast.

Home heating fuels are exempt. Again, when I look at communities in my District of Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair, when I leave here now on any weekend - last night I left the Legislature and it was 14 degrees or something here in the city. We're in a winter wonderland up in Labrador already. So people rely on home heating fuel for much longer in each calendar year than they do here in places even on the Island and other parts

of the province. I'm really pleased to see that home heating fuels are exempt, because we recognize that imposing the federal tax would put undue pressure on many low-income individuals in this province.

Just yesterday, Madam Chair, one of the Members in Opposition asked a question about what are we doing for seniors. Well, I can tell you when we formed government in the spring of '16 there were not too many money trees out behind this Legislature, but we did put measures in place. Like the low-income supplement, the seniors' supplement, \$123 million put aside to protect seniors.

It was important for us that we set up the Seniors' Advocate, an independent office of this House; only the third such one in the province. Despite the tough fiscal climate - and I'm digressing a bit now, Madam Chair, but I'm passionate about these things - more than a hundred poverty reduction initiatives, \$286 million, the most ever of any government in history. It's what this government has done in a tough fiscal climate because we do care about seniors. Sometimes we get asked questions, and they forget that seniors are in our families too. The seniors are in our communities and we care a lot about them and we want to do what we can for them.

One of the other things really important to districts like I represent, Madam Chair, is our plan has exemptions in place for fish processing. I can't emphasize how important that is. Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair, we have five fish processing facilities. By making it feasible for companies to come in and do business that in turn allows our people, the people that I represent, to earn a good, honest living and to pay their own way.

Places like Black Tickle that don't have a lot of options, an island off the Coast of Labrador and we have the shrimp company doing a little more, going back year over year in there.

Community employment enhancement, when I started they would often need \$125,000 a year just to help them get enough hours for EI. This year, Madam Chair, thanks to the fishery, thanks to measures that have been put in place, they needed less than \$23,000. That's the change

we've seen. That's what happens when we make small investments to help people go out and earn their own income.

Madam Chair, I was really pleased to see the work of this government, working with what we had, always difficult any time you're discussing taxes but to see provisions put in place to protect things like home heating, fuels used by industry regulated under the management of the *Greenhouse Gas Act* are exempt from the provincial carbon tax; forestry, offshore and mineral exploration.

Madam Chair, last night, the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology, I joined him as he sat down with leadership right across Labrador, the executive of the Combined Councils of Labrador and there was much discussion on mining because as we look across the globe and the impacts on the oil and gas right now, we know that mining is going to be very important.

Really pleased to see exemptions here for mineral exploration because there are lots of positive stories around things like mining and even though we're in this difficult situation – I keep looking left, I say, Madam Chair, to the clock because I'm quickly running out of time.

There are lots to be hopeful about in this province and when it comes to Labrador, when it comes to things like mining, we have not begun to tap in to the tremendous potential that's there, Madam Chair.

I thank you for the opportunity to speak for a few minutes to Bill 43.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Always great to have an opportunity to speak in this hon. House. Of course, today, we're talking about the carbon tax. As we all know this is a money bill so it gives us the flexibility to speak about basically anything we want, but I'm going to try to, as most people have done, actually speak to the bill.

It's kind of interesting, I said to one of my colleagues: Are you sure this is a money bill? Because everybody is actually talking to the substance of the actual bill itself, which is very unusual because normally when we have a money bill, people are talking about anything but the bill. This is kind of an interesting one.

Anyway, I will be talking about stuff other than the bill when I speak again because I'm sure there will be lots of opportunity. For now, I do want to make some comments about this particular bill.

Of course, as I said, we're talking about the carbon tax. The reality of it is, this is a federal initiative. For anyone who might be out there listening and sort of trying to pin this on the provincial government of taxing people and so on. In this particular case, this is really driven by the feds, the carbon tax.

If anything, I will acknowledge and give some credit to our provincial government, in this particular case, that they're actually offsetting the carbon tax increase by decreasing the provincial gas tax. There's still a slight increase that we're going to be voting for here – a slight increase – but albeit it could've been a much bigger increase had the government decided that they would just go ahead with the federal carbon tax and leave our own provincial gas tax rates the same. I think it's important, just in fairness and in accuracy, to acknowledge that fact. This could've been much worse for people.

Whether this should be a tax or not, that's a debateable point. I always felt – and this is just my personal view – that this whole thing is nothing but a tax grab anyway, implemented by the federal government. If we're going to be dealing with climate change and so on – by the way, I am not a climate change denier. There are people out there – we have a former, well-known mayor in this city who said that climate change was foolishness and so on, at one point in time, who I've had some encounters with.

Anyway, I'm not one of those people. I don't deny climate change. I do believe that we do need to deal with climate change because right now we're reacting to climate change, but we have not been doing enough to prevent or at

least slow the progress of climate change. Action definitely has to be taken.

With that said, simply taxing people when they go to the gas tank to fill up their car, I'm not so sure that does anything to lessen the impacts of climate change. The reality of it is, if you're going to throw an extra couple of cents on the gas pump, I still need gas. I'm not going to stop driving to work because there are a couple of cents in carbon tax or whatever on the gas pumps. I'm still going to do it anyway. I think 99.9 per cent of the people are still going to carry on as they always did. They're not going to, all of a sudden, stop driving because you have to pay a few cents gas tax.

To my mind, if the federal government were totally serious about climate change and in dealing with it, then, to my mind, they should be going after the big polluters and perhaps, on the one hand, offering incentives. So if you have a big industrial plant that's spewing carbon up into the air, perhaps offer some sort of incentives for them to put in scrubbers and other technology so that that wouldn't be happening. If they didn't do it, then to nail them with taxes and let them pay for it.

To my mind, that would be much better than going to the average citizen, many people who are just struggling to survive. That doesn't apply to people in this room, of course, but there are a lot of people, a lot of our constituents, who are struggling to survive, making low wages and so on. So rather than making them pay a little extra at the pump, all you're doing is you're gouging them and taking more money from their income. They still need to drive to work regardless. They still need to drive the kids to school, whatever, regardless. I just think the whole approach by the federal government is not well thought out. That's just, of course, my opinion.

I also look at manufacturing. There was a story in, I think it was, *The Telegram*, maybe a year, maybe two years ago. It was about this Newfoundlander, actually, interestingly enough, a Newfoundlander again who had invented some sort of a – I'm going to call it a catalytic converter. That may not be exactly what it is, but it's the concept. A device, I'll say, he invented that could be attached to snow blowers and lawn mowers and all those types of garden tools and

stuff that would eliminate the carbon footprint left by those types of things, from snow blowers and all that. It was developed here in Newfoundland.

Why not the federal government say to the manufacturers of these snow blowers: Here's the technology, if you want to sell a snow blower in Canada, it must have this or we're going to ban it. If we can't ban it, we're going to jack the taxes up so that you're not competitive with the guy that does have it. In other words, force the big companies, force the manufacturers to put the technology there so that it's not having that impact on our environment. Force them to do it as opposed to going after the little guy every time you go to get a drop of gas. You're not going to change the habits; all you're doing is taking more money out of people's pockets.

I just personally am against the way the federal government has done it. With that said, they've done what they've done. They're the federal government. I can't control it; I can't stop them. They've done it now.

They would have forced their plan down our throats if the province did not do what they're doing, which they're referring to a made-in-Newfoundland solution or whatever they're calling it. If they had not done that, then there would have been something forced upon us anyway. I do agree with what the province has done.

I know there were a couple of provinces – Ontario and so on – that were going to take the federal government to court on this. I don't know whatever became of that, if they did take them to court or what the results were. Maybe I missed that in the news, I'm not sure, but there were some people saying we should have done the same. I don't know if that would have been worth our while or not.

AN HON. MEMBER: They lost.

MR. LANE: Someone said they lost. Okay, there you go. I'm told they lost. I missed that news clip, but they lost.

I think we did do the right thing. I do support the bill. Again, I support what the government is doing in terms of offsetting it by reducing the

provincial gas tax. I have no issue with supporting the bill; I have no issue with supporting our government and what they've done. I think they've made the best of the situation that they could. I appreciate that and I support that.

I just think the whole logic used by the federal government, to begin with, is the part that I have a problem with. Go after the big polluters, go after the manufacturers, go after the people that are causing the problem and leave the little guy alone. People are being taxed enough, they're paying enough and they're not the problem. The problem is the corporations, the huge industrial facilities that are causing all the problems. They're the problem. Make them solve the problem. Don't expect me as a taxpayer to solve their problems for them.

Thank you.

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

The carbon tax is a Pigouvian tax. Does anyone know what a Pigouvian tax is? According to the Internet: "A Pigouvian (Pigouvian) tax is a tax assessed against private individuals or businesses for engaging in activities that create adverse side effects for society. Adverse side effects are those costs that are not included as part of the product's market price."

What kind of adverse effects is the carbon tax going to mitigate in our province? Well, as we all know, we're subjected to the extremities of climate change and, yes, that is causing havoc within our environment and our natural resource industries. It's disrupting what we've known as the pattern of nature and life in our province.

So let's look at the activities which are being taxed. We're looking at driving. We are looking at importing and exporting products, all of which are essential to life here on an Island and on the peninsula of Labrador.

Madam Chair, while I do recognize that this is a federally imposed tax, what this has done to our province and our province's revenue stream, it has further handicapped us as a province to

expand our export industries. Not only that, we as a province have had to remove the gas tax portion on a litre of fuel so that our people can afford to drive. They can afford to drive because we are going to now replace the money that we collect through the gas tax with added debt to our provincial deficit.

Who is responsible for that? Is this government responsible for that? Do you know what? They are not responsible for that, because do you know who is responsible? Our good friends in Ottawa, so that they can impose this tax upon the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, making it more difficult to live here in the province, making it more expensive to live here in the province and adding to our provincial debt every year.

Tens, if not hundreds, of millions of dollars every year which we would normally collect with the provincial gas tax are now going to be replaced by the carbon tax. The infrastructure, the roads, the programs that are funded through the provincial gas tax are now going to be funded by additional provincial debt of which we have no plan to repay.

I support the concept of a Pigouvian tax. I support making the polluter pay, but in a position where we are so dependent on products for our everyday lives being imported into this province, largely on diesel-powered vehicles which, as mentioned, diesel will actually go up by almost five times the rate of gas in incremental price. How do we do that? How can we substantiate in this economic time in our history to increase the cost of living here in the province?

I often listen to the Member for Burgeo - La Poile, and he talks of the IT sector. While I disagree with him on most things he says, I do agree with him on the success and the, I guess, establishment of an IT sector here. IT sector is largely based on human resources. Humans like to live in places where they're comfortable. How are we going to make this province comfortable when we are continually burdening our people with additional tax? How are we going to do that?

These fantastic companies and fantastic people that have chosen to work here in the IT sector

can really pick up and move anywhere else in the world. Before they start to have that kind of inclination, we have to start to move on making our province a much more affordable place to live, and that is pushing back against the federal government and their Pigouvian tax.

Why don't they look at more avenues where they would be able to tax, such as international recreational air travel? International recreational air travel, while I do appreciate the occasional excursion down south myself, it is not necessary to the existence of our province, nor the existence of our people. So those who can afford it can afford to pay the extra tax. It's a choice they can make.

Right now, when we pull up to a gas station, whether we are on income support or whether we are the top income earners in the province, we are subjected to having to pay the tax. When we go to pick up our groceries in the store, no, food is not subject to the carbon tax, but the transportation that brings most of our food here to the province is subject to the tax. We have no choice but to buy food. We have no choice to buy gas. If we want to travel from one place to another, we have to buy gas; we have to buy diesel.

How are we ever going to be able to rise from where we are today to where we should and truly deserve to be if the way to do it is tax? As a province, we have done far more than our share of contribution to reducing the amount of carbon produced by our own footprint. Pretty soon all of our electricity will be coming from renewable, non-carbon-based generation.

Another thing I've often heard of as we discuss this is the transition of government buildings from oil heat or oil power to electrical or natural biomass. I, personally, do not see the value of changing our buildings from oil to electricity. I do see a value in changing from oil to wood pellets or some other biomass. The reason being is we need to increase the available electricity to businesses in our province; we need to increase the availability of excess power that we can sell off the province or, more specifically, use right here in our own province for industries to expand and establish.

Further to that, there will be an immense cost in changing over from oil to electricity. Right now we have many public buildings that could reduce the amount of carbon that they do produce by just installing some simple efficiencies. I'm sure everybody drives up and down Prince Philip Parkway at night and actually sees how many lights are left on in this building. How much heat is generated in this building?

As we've seen through COVID-19, many of our people have been able to work from home; many of them are still working from home. This reduces the amount of office space, reduces the amount of heating required and reduces the amount of travel back and forth. Those are things that we can look at and not burden extra tax or extra cost of living on people. That's what we have to do as a province. That's what we should be doing as leaders.

I do give the government credit for their made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador tax. But I tell you, I would almost fight to the last drop of blood within me to not have to pay that tax at all. We are doing more than our fair share. Yes, we do need to do more, but by burdening the people of our province with an extra cost of living and at the same time removing a revenue generation for our province, it's only going to make it harder for the everyday person to live here in this province.

Being a money bill, I am allowed to veer off the bill a little bit, so I think I will. Over the past month, many of the subjects of conversation here in the House have been the decimation that our oil industry is receiving through the, as the minister has said over and over again, trillion-dollar loss. I want to know if the minister and the government realize that within every challenge there's always opportunity. Yes, the demand for oil is shrinking. Yes, the demand for oil products will shrink over time, but there will still be a demand.

We need, as a province, to position ourselves to be the leaders in that. We need, as a province, not to back away from this trillion-dollar loss; we have to look for the opportunity within. I don't want to see us raising a white flag. That's my big concern.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Order, please!

The Chair recognizes the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I don't even know how to start with the white flag comment, because this government, the House on this side, is not about to raise the white flag on anything. But I am happy to speak to the hon. House about Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act with respect to carbon pricing.

I'd like to thank the hon. Members that spoke before me about some of the history lessons that I received, which was excellent. I'm going to search on the Internet now to figure out what some of those things are, which is excellent. I think I'd like to take on a point that the hon. Member for St. John's Centre actually did say that resonated with me. Things that develop over time is why we're in the situation we're in today.

The hon. Member for Conception Bay South talked about the extreme cost associated with electric vehicles. Although I do agree that they have come down quite substantially in price, they are still a little pricey, but no different than the cellphones we all carry today. When cellphones were first invented, they were cumbersome and very expensive, very few people had them, but now you'd be hard pressed to find somebody who doesn't have them. The costs have come down quite substantially. That's something that we all have to wrestle with, with respect to this.

As more people come into the technology and take on the technology, those costs will come down. The car initially came in to replace the horse and buggy. I was surprised the Member for St. John's Centre didn't address it. The car was expensive and that came down in price. It's an expensive thing to try to improve technology. We see it here in the province every day.

I do want to ask the Member for Conception Bay South: If not now, when? If not us, who? It's a simple question to ask for all of us. If we don't

start to move on this now, it's going to be too late for generations that come after us. I had the opportunity, like the hon. Minister of Environment, to attend the Fridays for Future events. I've attended a couple of them. I think they're amazing, to see the young people pushing passionately about what they believe in the future they want to see, what they want to live. They want to push us, as the decision-makers, to make the right decisions so their futures are stronger and the kids that they will have in the future will be stronger.

That's an important piece that all of us should not forget about when we sit at these vintage desks. We're here for a reason and I think the environment and – you don't have to look very far. I mean, you can see in our own environment here that it's changed.

I don't think anyone in this House, like the hon. Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands said, is a climate-change denier. I do know some, but at the end of the day, we've seen this young person movement of Fridays for Future in over 7,500 cities now, 13 million people participating. They're on all continents around the world. I think that's an important piece for us all to understand.

I'd like to address a couple of points that the hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North suggested about the tech sector and the clean tech sector. I think that's an important piece for us all to understand as well. I do like the fact that he agreed with the Minister of IET on the tech sector. He may not agree with much else but at least he's smart enough to agree on that with us for sure. Because the tech sector is a huge impact for our province – huge impact. From my standpoint –

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Point of order, section 49, I do take offence to the Member's comments in regards to my intelligence. I would request that he withdraw that comment and apologize.

Thank you.

CHAIR: I ask the Member to withdraw.

MR. DAVIS: Absolutely. I did not mean it that way. Unequivocal apology. I did not mean to say that. He would know better than that. I didn't mean it that way. But I did say that I'm glad that he agrees with the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology. It is the tech sector that's going to be the future of our province.

That tech sector is not just working with the oil and gas sector, which some of the tech firms are. They're also working in clean tech, which is something that we have a lot of opportunity for us to grow in as a province. From my standpoint, I see us very well positioned for us to move forward on how we can deliver on a tech sector. I think there's a significant amount of employment opportunity there.

We heard the hon. minister mention in the past about the number of employment that will be created by the tech sector in and of itself – some 2,000 over the next couple of years, which is impressive in and of itself. From where I sit, I think that's an important piece that we need to focus on in this province.

The changing system with respect to how we see carbon pricing and taxing, it is right. The hon. Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands was correct in saying that it's a federal initiative that's been pushed to the provinces to do. But one of the things that was unique about our approach – and I thank the hon. Member for agreeing with it in principle – the fact that we made a Newfoundland-and-Labrador approach.

Nobody likes increasing taxes on anybody, for sure. From our standpoint, what we want to do is try to increase ways in which we can increase jobs in this province, which is a thing that everyone in this House talks about almost every day in this House. I think that's an important piece to take that money that comes in from the carbon tax and invest it in clean tech as one opportunity, and invest it in our people in the province so we can support small business growth.

One of the things the Member for Mouth Pearl North talked about was maybe we should create a fee or an additional charge for recreational travel. As the Tourism Minister I would speak quite actively against that. Over 50 per cent of our tourists that use this province are from non-

resident travel. So if that was to be implemented by the hon. Member, it would devastate our already hurt industry in tourism. We all know that we've been through a very challenging time in that industry and any opportunity that we can to ensure people coming to this province – and cut down those stumbling blocks.

We're working with the federal government to create a recovery plan for the tourism section, not just in this province but right across the country. There may be initiatives that would encourage travel and that would discourage travel within the province or travel to the province. Those 20,000 jobs are an important piece. It's a \$1.14-billion industry and there are 2,700 businesses that are reflective of that. I think it's a real important thing for us not to make hasty decisions on putting a tax on recreational air travel. I think that would be a wrong move. Maybe he will clarify that in future speaking. Maybe that's not what he meant but that's what I heard.

We all know how hard the air industry has been hit, not just in this province but in the global community. We want to make sure – I know the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port would agree – that anything we can do to support airports and airlines, in particular, we should always try to do, because that's how we link our province and our country together. I think that's an investment that we should all be talking about and trying to work towards.

I won't go on for too, too much longer, Madam Chair, but I do want to say that I support this bill and I hope everyone in this hon. House does. We've done everything we can to offset most of any of the increase there. I understand any bit of tax increases is a problem. We want to try to ensure that individuals' cost of living don't increase.

One of the nice points that I want to talk about was the tech industry. I've had the opportunity to travel around a little bit and see some of the tech firms and meet many of the start-up entrepreneurs that were there and their employees. One of the things that they've been very committed in is that they always want to leave the planet a little bit better than when they received it themselves. I know that they're a very young group of entrepreneurs in this

province that are in the tech sector. I know they would be interested in what we're doing here today and be very supportive of this, just based on my talking with them over the past number of years.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I look forward to this passing very quickly through the House of Assembly.

Thank you.

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

MR. P. DINN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

It's a pleasure to speak in this House on Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act and, more specifically, this bill amending the *Revenue Administration Act* to increase taxes on carbon products. Madam Chair, carbon taxes or the tax on carbon – I guess the whole intention of this is to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, or as some people refer to it, greenhouse emissions. They reduce that by increasing the price of fossil fuels; thereby, the intent is that would decrease the demand for them.

By reducing the demand, of course, we drive people to look for more energy-efficient options, and some do and some don't. I know the extra cost on gasoline, most of us perhaps today will not even blink at that increase. It is a very small increase. As the Minister of Finance said, it's one-fifth of a cent. But we do have individuals out there – we only recently spoke to a private Member's resolution around guaranteed income, basic income. There certainly are families and individuals out there who live day to day on every cent they have. There will be some effect. Now, I do understand there are exemptions. They're going to work well on home heating fuels for seniors, for individuals with fixed incomes. It certainly will help there.

There's no argument. Most economists will tell you that the carbon tax is one of the most effective ways to reduce greenhouse emissions. Not the only way; it's one of the most effective ways. It does create more people with the ambition to look at more innovative ways of doing business. At the end of the day – and it

was already mentioned here in the House – some of these increases trickle down. They trickle down to the final consumer and I suspect they get bigger and bigger as they get passed along.

Food security is one issue here in the province that we deal with. Any taxes that affect transportation costs are going to be tacked on to food costs or anything that's transported to the province. It may not be a huge amount but, at the end of the day, some families will certainly feel the pinch on that.

We also look at some businesses for COVID. We've had some businesses close shop. We have businesses that just couldn't keep up. A big part of running a business is the fuel supply and the costs that affect their business.

One of the Members in the House mentioned about taxing the big polluters. That's perhaps, in my mind, an option here as well. Right now, this is a blanket tax that covers everyone. Again, I know it's a small amount but it covers everyone. There's an opportunity to increase on our made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador approach and perhaps look at some other taxes or larger taxes on the bigger polluters.

There's some argument over whether it actually minimizes impacts on consumers. It may in general be minimum impact on consumers but, at the end of the day, there is an impact. Some will say that it's not impeding business growth but in some instances it will. It certainly promotes innovation.

One of the Members talked about, or there was some discussion, on the recreational vehicles and the tourism industry. I agree that people come to the province and avail of a lot of activities that require gas-operated vehicles and the like. When we go to environment and looking at innovative ways, maybe the tourism sector also should start looking at more environmentally friendly activities to take the place of some of the motorized activities that take place. This won't happen overnight; we know that, but, as I said, increasing the tax does increase innovation. Having greater looks at more environmentally friendly ways of getting around or more environmentally friendly activities in tourism is certainly a way to go.

It gets mentioned here in the House of Assembly and it's always looked at in such a very negative light, and I tend to agree. It has a huge impact on residents of the province, but most of the people in this House weren't around when this came down. That is Muskrat Falls. I'm going to talk about Muskrat Falls because we talk about the electrification of Newfoundland and Labrador and that is a huge resource up there – not without any environmental impacts, because certainly there were environmental impacts due to this project.

When you look at the report and it talks about a misguided project. Yeah, there's been a lot with this project, but for me coming in as a new Member in this House – and many people in this House came in – I try not to look back. I try to look forward; I try to look at opportunity here. Yes, it's a big challenge to look at the rate mitigation. Government here had guaranteed 13.5 cents in their report that came out – per kilowatt hour. We were a little bit higher on that, looking at 15.1 cents. Actually, 15.1 cents, we took into account the regular rate changes.

I look at a quote: The hardest part about moving forward is not looking back. We do have to look back. There's no doubt about it. We have to look back. But if we're truly engaged in looking at carbon footprint reduction and looking at costs associated with our residents and that, then we really have to look forward. We have to say that Muskrat Falls is a good thing. How it was managed was not, but going forward we can be a world leader, if not already, in electricity generation – we certainly can.

That's something we have to really work on. It's a huge challenge, the rate mitigation, there's no doubt about it. But imagine, we could be totally self-sufficient in electricity and not at all burn any more fossil fuels to generate it. That would be a lovely goal to look at.

When Muskrat Falls – I was a bureaucrat, I worked in government when this first came about, was first mentioned. My first thought, before all this mismanagement, misguided happened, I said: Wow, that's good, that's great if we can use our resources up there, our green resources, and generate electricity. Hopefully, we'll keep moving forward with that file and not looking back. It's a challenge going forward.

In the minute and a half I have, I just want to also quickly speak about my district. I know we're all coming up on the Christmas season; it's not too far away, less than two months. It's going to be hard on some families. Families who are worried about their jobs, families who are currently on strike. It's going to be hard on our volunteer groups because they have the greatest demand on their resources during this time of year when it comes to food banks and the like. Our essential workers who put in such a hard year. Christmas holidays, major holidays, just thinking of them themselves have stress associated with them.

So when I think about my district, it's a young district and it has a great seniors' community. We have such a great volunteer community. I'm hoping that they have the ways and the means to do what they do every year, maybe a little differently, but just to ensure that those out there who don't have a lot, those out there who are vulnerable, those out there who need a hand up, those out there who need someone to just acknowledge them.

We've had a hard year. I know that the residents of Topsail - Paradise will answer the call and we will make sure that no one in our district, or in my district, has an unhappy Christmas.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Order, please!

The Member's time is expired.

The Chair recognizes the Member for Lake Melville.

MR. TRIMPER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I was trying to think how I was going to approach my remarks over the next 10 minutes here. It was the Member for St. John's Centre who got me thinking about his historical retrospective. I think I'm going to talk a little bit about that and put the essence of this bill and why we're here and why this is such an important debate today.

First of all, back on his comment about the Gestetner, I remember it well. I don't understand why, but our teacher made us all line up with a

jug – I was probably in Grade 6 or 7 – of that amazingly terrible chemical and we all had to line up and have a big sniff of this methyl, whatever it was that was in there. It was absolutely terrible. It just about knocked each of us out. Somehow the skull and crossbones on the side of the bottle wasn't sufficient. He felt we all had to have a big inhalation of that. Anyway, I've probably never forgotten him for that.

I wanted to speak about, again, from a historical perspective, how we got to this point and this made-in-Newfoundland-and-Labrador position that we've come about with this government. I go back to Bill 34. When I was minister at the time, in the summer of 2016 and we had just completed a four-day filibuster with all of our great friends in this House of Assembly. I remember we were wrapping up that bill, and the efforts and the intensity that was around it. That was our first bill dealing with climate change in the history of this government and it was all around the management of greenhouse gases. It was targeted, at the time, on large industrial emitters.

There was an event that happened, just a short time thereafter, that was essentially sort of a next big step, I would suggest, Madam Chair, that occurred. It was in Montreal and it was a meeting of ministers and their teams around climate change, in the entire country.

All the federal, provincial and territorial delegations were there. I still remember walking into the room. It was a very impressive setting as it always is. You're very proud to represent your province at such a table at a national level. To walk into the room, there we were. Myself – I'm going to mention them – Jackie Janes and Emily Timmins: That was the Newfoundland and Labrador delegation. When I walk into the room, I see Quebec, Alberta, Ontario and there's maybe another six behind them, these big groups of scientists, communications people, politicians all there and the three of us, from lowly Newfoundland and Labrador.

I've mentioned this before in the House but I feel I want to do it again today: When you have that opportunity to represent your province and you go in with the people of the calibre that we have in our various government departments,

and I walk in, there are the lowly three of us sitting over in the corner, and I watch the lead scientists from Quebec, Alberta, Ontario come over and ask Jackie Janes questions about this particular situation because of her background and the capability and so on. I just always like to talk about that because we should never sell ourselves short in this province. We are very proud of who we are, what we can do.

I have to tell you, when you go at a national forum and you're dealing with issues as tough as climate change – we were very well prepared. Madam Chair, we did a good job because on that particular day, that was a very important day. That's when the federal government – we were preparing the final chapters of the Pan-Canadian Framework on climate change.

We were down to probably two hours left of work to do on this. It was all around pricing carbon and so on. I remember the minister at the time, a good friend, standing up and revealing how carbon was going to be priced in this country. I was digesting it at the same time. I remember the prime minister was on his feet in the House of Commons reading the exact same speech.

I asked Jackie to go over to the federal table because I said, surely to goodness – they talked about some exemptions for communities, for example, north of 60 degrees in the country. If you're in a diesel-dependent community for energy, if you're north of 60 you'll get an exemption. I said surely to goodness that must also relate to the several dozen communities in Newfoundland and Labrador that are in a similar option; otherwise, it's just going to be more expensive for us to live there.

That was one big thing on my mind. Another was our offshore, of which we have been preoccupied for these last several months. Frankly, we are always preoccupied with it because it's such an important industrial sector.

Just a little technical detail, if somebody knows anything about carbon pricing: To find efficiencies in our offshore – given it is some of the best technology if not the best technology in the world in terms of extracting hydrocarbons, using it and getting it on to ships and so on so we could process it – you would have to move

carbon pricing. We're talking about here today moving it to \$30 a ton per ton of carbon dioxide. We'd have to get it to \$130.

I may lose you quick but just to say that we already have a very efficient, very conscientious industry extracting low-carbon oil from our offshore. I couldn't agree with the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port any more that, absolutely, this is a very important industry, not just for Newfoundland and Labrador but for the entire country.

Push just came to shove. We could not stand there by our flag on that day and support a strategy that was going to make our offshore more expensive, was going to make our food on the table more expensive, it was going to do all these things. You essentially propose a tax when you're looking at a way to move society in another direction. When you're in a diesel community on the Coast of Labrador, Madam Chair, right now you don't have an alternative. It just was going to make the price of living there all the more expensive.

We walked out of the room that day. It was a very tough day, but we got back to the table and we kept working on it. After I left that position of the minister responsible, I know successive ministers, and some of them that are in the room here today, they all worked on it. This was a collective series of small battles that got us to this point where we are here today talking about moving this to \$30 a ton and what that will mean.

I did want to jump on a couple of my colleagues, however lightly and slightly. I know the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands was indicating he felt that we should really be focusing on the big emitters and put the cost of pollution on them. Absolutely, I agree, that's an important source. I would remind him that one-third of the emissions in this province come from transportation. I'm not sure what vehicle he drives, but if it's an internal combustion engine, like most of the people in the parking lots around Confederation Building, you're probably burning some four to five tons or emitting four to five tons of greenhouse gas emissions a year.

To put that in perspective, at 20,000 kilometres you are – for example, I think it's the community of Makkovik, Hopedale, some of those sized communities, they emit around 500 to 600 tons of greenhouse gases a year. That's like a hundred cars. Yes, on an individual basis you're not a big contributor, but when you look at all the people around you, all the people in this room and so on, we are probably equivalent to a community that's dependent on diesel. We need to get this figured out and we need to recognize that we can all make a contribution.

My final thing I wanted to put out there, my final point, and it's one that I've been working on recently and I'm very proud that it's getting started in a robust way. There are three crises facing this province right now: our fiscal situation, which is very much of a dominant force; COVID-19 has become a new crisis that's affecting the future and where we're going; but frankly, the most serious, bar none, is that of climate change. I just think about myself and the community that I live in, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, and the projections over the next couple of decades. We're going to see a sum like a 6.5-degree increase in our average temperature. That is a shocking situation. This does require fast action and we require it now.

Finally, I want to go back to my former critic, the Member for Conception Bay South. He and I worked very closely as we were working through some of these issues on climate change. I want to refer him and his colleagues to the whole strategy –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

CHAIR: Order, please!

MR. TRIMPER: – the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This is where anybody who has any question about carbon pricing needs to go, because this document just came out and I'll quote from them: "Putting a price on carbon is widely seen as the most cost-effective and flexible way to achieve emission reduction" bar none.

These are hundreds of scientists, dozens of jurisdictions all around the world. This is what we need to do. Yes, it's going to be a little painful, but you know what? We're going to

incent ourselves to go to some of these other strategies that each and every one of us can avail of and get it done.

With that, Madam Chair, I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak on this very important bill and to reflect back on how we got here.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for Ferryland.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'll just take a few minutes to touch on that subject as well. As you know, I came from the car industry and dealing with vehicles, electric vehicles and hybrid vehicles. There wasn't a big call for electric vehicles when I was selling vehicles; we'd have one or two on the lot at a time. There was some competition out there and they're all trying to see which one is best, which one goes the furthest and all that stuff.

When I look back when they first started at electric vehicles, Ontario had a \$10,000 credit for anyone that was interested in buying an electric car at the time or a hybrid car, before Doug Ford came in and took the tax and wiped it out. They were promoting electric vehicles in Ontario at that time. With people here in Newfoundland and Labrador, we didn't promote it like that. Anyone who wanted to buy one, they would come in test drive it, take it out. It would be a great vehicle, no question; they're always high end. The lowest priced one we had at the time when we were in there was \$42,000 to \$45,000.

If you're going to buy an electric vehicle you have to weigh that out over a car that's \$30,000 – and it was a car. It wasn't a truck; it was a car. If you weigh out \$10,000, \$12,000 over a period of time – if you're financing five, six or seven years, then when you weighed out \$10,000 or \$12,000, how much were you saving on fuel over that five or 10 years and was it \$10,000 or \$12,000 that was extra or worth that money?

You really had to have all your ducks in a row to know where your budget was in regard to how

much fuel you're going to spend and based on your average kilometres a year when you look back at it. A lot of people looked at it; they'd love to have them but could they afford \$10,000 or \$12,000 on their payment over that period of time. That was the big issue.

The other issue that I would look at – and I'd never bring it up because I was trying to sell it, obviously. If you had an issue with an electric vehicle or you kept the car for six or seven years and in five years' time the battery goes in your electric vehicle, they only have so much warranty. It's like any car has a three-year, 60,000-kilometre warranty, get a powertrain for five-year, 100,000 and they might put a warranty on the battery. When the battery goes, that's \$4,000 or \$5,000.

When you're going to get a car five or six years old there has to be thought put into that. You have ATVs and you have cars and the batteries go in them after three or four years at times, or you get a faulty battery through no fault of the customer and the battery goes. Five thousand dollars or \$6,000 is not easy to come up with when you're trying to look at that, so it was always a thought that I had in the back of my mind. Again, I was trying to sell a vehicle. I'd never try to talk someone out of it because most times when people are coming in to buy electric vehicles, they know what they're looking for, they have their homework done and most likely they knew more about the vehicle than I did.

We had two vehicles on our lot and you'd go and do training on it. The customer definitely knew more about electric vehicles than we did even though we did some training. They really had it scoped out on the Internet and how it all worked and how it all regenerated. There's a lot of technology that goes into that.

Also, I remember one year we had two hybrid trucks. When it comes to after December the programs are gone on vehicles. If you're selling vehicles you would know that programs are good until December, lease prices are good until November. Right now you have 2021s on the inventory. The incentives for leasing would be on the 2021s because they're starting to go on the 2020s. When we got to December or January in the car industry the two vehicles or two trucks we had left were hybrids, so they're \$10,000

more at the time. Yes, they'd power down or they'd shut off the way most vehicles do now, but it was hard to convince the customer to buy one of those for \$10,000 extra unless there was something in it that he was going to do.

Now, we did have people that were trying to be green and trying to represent their companies to be green, so they'd come in and buy them because they were company vehicles. They basically weren't paying for it; the company was paying for it. They tried to push forward the green initiative. I could see it but we really didn't get behind it as, I'm going to say, a federal government or a provincial government. If it's going to change then that has to happen. That's one of the incentives I see going forward in the car industry. They need to incentivise buying those electric vehicles. If not, then most people can't afford them.

I just want to touch on a couple of other little topics in my area. I'm trying to touch all the communities again. I apologize for anyone that I missed but I'm trying to touch most areas. I was speaking to a gentleman yesterday in my district. He asked me how do we fight for a recreation centre in our area. That's in Goulds.

They have a recreation centre in the Goulds that if you go in to play basketball you can't play it in this because the ceiling is not high enough. It's good for kids that are seven or eight years old, but when you have a recreation area like – you'd use a school or a gymnasium in a school. That's the kind of gym that you need if you're going to have a recreation facility in your town. Right now, with the way the schools are going – and people can't use the gyms the way they could previously in the schools.

This community in the Goulds does not have, I'm going to say, a satisfactory recreation facility. I'll give you an example. In the minor hockey systems between Southern Shore and the Goulds, there are 500 kids, probably 520 kids. Half of those kids are below the ages of eight and nine years old. It's a very growing area. It's a young area, and it's good for minor hockey that they're below the age of nine. The IP program, I think it's called, kids that are – half the registration is more than 250 kids. So it's good for the area and good for the district as well that we have that many kids at that age.

Some of the infrastructure that we have in our area definitely needs to be upgraded. It's a growing area and it's something that we definitely need to look at as a group. I spoke to him yesterday and it's a concern. He has a kid that's seven years old. He's going to start at that now. By the time he gets a recreation centre in that area, the kid is going to be 10 or 11. By the time his kid grows up, he's probably not going to be involved in it at all, other than he's going to be instrumental in trying to get it there. I hope he keeps pushing, and I'll keep pushing on my end. It's something that we definitely need in the area. Like I said, it's great for the area.

Also, I'd like to, this time of the year and Christmas coming up, touch on all the volunteers in the area and all the 50-plus clubs that try to do everything to raise money for the food banks or for Christmas hampers. Our schools do that as well. I'd like to thank them in advance before they start this. They have some ticket drives and some fundraisers they try to do as well.

We have the Goulds Lions Club there in the Goulds. We have the Kinsmen in Witless Bay. Again, I hate mentioning it because I might miss one along the way. We have some legions along the way as well, one in Ferryland, one in Trepassey. I'm trying to make sure I'm not missing one here, but they do such great work in the area in regard to fundraising. I'd really like to thank them in advance, and if you can support them in your areas, I know you will. By all means, we'd certainly like to thank the volunteers.

I'll pass on my time now, just to give someone else a chance to speak on this before the bill is up.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIR: Order, please!

Shall the resolution carry?

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report progress.

CHAIR: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, the Speaker returned to the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Reid): Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave.

MS. P. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Committee of Ways and Means have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report that they have made progress and ask leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair reports that the Committee of the Whole on Ways and Means have considered the matters before them, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, report received and adopted. Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

We'll now take our recess for lunch, according to the *Standing Orders*.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: This House stands recessed until 2 o'clock today, when we will proceed with Orders of the Day.

Recess

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Reid): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: Today we will hear Members' statements from the hon. Members for the Districts of Ferryland, Conception Bay South, St. John's Centre, Topsail - Paradise and Placentia West - Bellevue.

The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm honoured to have the opportunity to recognize Mayor Harold Mullowney as a member of Bay Bulls town council for 30 years.

First elected in 1990, he served as a councillor for four years. In the last 26 years, Harold has served as deputy mayor for 12 years and mayor for 16 years. Under his leadership, the Town of Bay Bulls has won six Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL) Torngat Awards, including three for Excellence in Governance.

Harold's commitment to his community goes beyond his years in municipal service. He is the current chair of the Eastern Regional Service Board, the Bay Bulls Regional Lifestyle Centre board and the Southern Shore Joint Council. Harold is a member of the East Coast Trail Association Board of Directors and former Chair of the Irish Loop Development Board and former member of the Harris Centre board of directors.

In recognition of his community contributions, Harold was awarded the Community Economic Development award for Outstanding Individual Achievement in 2004 and Memorial University's Tribute Award for Outstanding Community Service in 2009.

I ask all colleagues to join me in congratulating Mayor Harold Mullowney on 30 years as a member of Bay Bulls town council.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Bright Business Achievement Awards recognize businesses in Conception Bay South that go above and beyond. This year the 9th Annual Bright Business Awards were held on October 20 as a part of Small Business Week.

The annual event is hosted by the Town of Conception Bay South and it is a great opportunity for local entrepreneurs to network and showcase their individual businesses in our community. Since 2012, the town has recognized the achievements of 399 local businesses.

The Bright Business Achievement Awards help recognize the contributions of local businesses that have gone above and beyond. This year's award winners are: Beautiful Business, Multi-Tenant Award, Around the Block Quilting and Fabric; Single-Tenant Award, Heritage Square Retirement Living; Downtown CBS Member of the Year, The Hangout; Community Pride and Partnership, Funky Junk Home Decor; Dave Murphy Chamber Leadership Award, Taylor's Fish, Fruit and Vegetable Market; Noseworthy Award, Bob Wiseman, Musically Inclined; Established Business, Taylor's Fish, Fruit and Vegetable Market; New Start Up of the Year, Frida's Riverside Cafe.

I would like to extend my congratulations to the award winners, nominees and sponsors. The COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly hard for local businesses this year and I wish them well and encourage everyone to support locally.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MR. J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Salvation Army Ches Penney Centre of Hope recently moved from a 2,000-square-foot temporary location, and now operates out of its new 40,000-square-foot location on 18 Springdale Street.

Captain Tony Brushett and his team currently serve close to 600 hot meals for lunch each week and help some 100 to 150 families a week with emergency groceries and clothing. Starting this Friday, and every Friday until December 11, volunteers and staff are registering families for Christmas hampers and toys for their children.

One of the key reasons The Salvation Army opened this new facility was not only to look after those who are struggling with issues during a pandemic or Snowmageddon or Christmas, but to be here, to be present to help those struggling with food insecurity, homelessness, medical care, addictions and so much more every week of the year. They are a mission-minded team, dedicated to serving all in need, completely without any judgment.

They love what they do and those they serve, but they cannot do it alone. If you are able to help in any way, please feel free to reach out by calling 237-0273 or emailing Captain Tony Brushett at tony.brushett@salavationarmy.ca

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

MR. P. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this past year I had the pleasure of attending the Conception Bay South Lions Club Charter Night, the anniversary of their official charter. This group was formed 49 years ago when 25 community-minded citizens got together to provide programs and services within the community.

Known to be some of the most active volunteers across the province, the Conception Bay South Lions Club have done so much over the past 49 years helping those in need. The club has become something of a household name, thanks to its members' constant efforts to better the

community. They can be found at an array of events, preparing hot breakfasts at local schools, supporting the local food banks, fundraising, sponsoring junior and senior speak outs, providing high school scholarships and Scout groups, and they also support a blind hockey program which helps visually impaired children participate in a hockey program tailored to meet their needs.

Mr. Speaker, their motto is: We Serve – and they certainly do that.

I ask all hon. Members to please join me in congratulating the Conception Bay South Lions Club for their endless contributions to their community.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

MR. DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today I would like to take the time in this House to acknowledge a very talented man from my District of Placentia West - Bellevue, Mr. Earl Pardy Jr. This year on November 9, Mr. Pardy celebrates his 50th birthday.

Mr. Pardy is a great entertainer. With his accordion he'll play you a show like no other. Mr. Pardy is very community minded and gives back to the many organizations and events in the great Town of Marystown. You will see, and most likely hear, Mr. Pardy's music at any festival on the Burin Peninsula, and I hope I can help fulfill his lifelong dream of playing in the Newfoundland and Labrador Folk Festival.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Pardy is a very humble man, and when asked where he learned how to play so well, he will always accredit his mentor, the late John Joe Pidgeon of Shoal Point, Marystown.

I ask all hon. Members of this House to join me in wishing Mr. Earl Pardy Jr. a very happy 50th birthday. Happy birthday, Earle, enjoy your next trip around the sun.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm pleased to inform my hon. colleagues today of a new reading bursary of \$500 per successfully completed course for Newfoundland and Labrador public school teachers pursuing the Graduate Diploma in Education – Reading Development and Instruction at Memorial University.

The initiative stems from a recommendation of the Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes to explore options with Memorial for a graduate level specialization program to prepare reading specialists.

The department immediately began discussions with Memorial and the Faculty of Education decided to develop both a diploma program and a master's degree program providing teachers the opportunity to develop a specialization in reading.

The intent of the reading bursary is to provide financial assistance for eligible candidates and to encourage teachers to pursue this new opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, reading specialists are leaders who build and sustain a culture of literacy in schools. They advocate for students by providing reading instruction that is engaging and responsive to the needs of all learners. They do this by working collaboratively with other educators within our schools.

The new diploma program will be available in winter 2021. Information about the reading bursary is available to teachers on the K-12 Professional Learning website. We encourage teachers pursuing the graduate diploma to apply for the bursary.

I commend Memorial for their work to fulfill this recommendation of the Premier's Task Force. The new programs, and the reading

bursary, are important initiatives to enhance learning for students across the province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Bonavista.

MR. PARDY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement.

Mr. Speaker, I join the minister in welcoming any investment we can make to further professional development amongst our teachers. Continuing education is often very expensive with tuition, textbooks and other material. Anything we can do to help is indeed good news.

As a former educator and principal myself, I can personally attest to the challenges students are facing in the classroom learning the fundamentals. Reading is a basic and fundamental skill students absolutely need to go on and do almost anything in their lives. Teachers must have the latest skills and knowledge to help all children excel in this area. I hope this small step will help in that regard.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MR. J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the Minister of Education for the advance copy of his statement and applaud the \$500 reading bursary for teachers pursuing a graduate diploma in education – reading development and instruction at Memorial. It is indeed a positive investment.

However, if we are to sustain a culture of literacy in schools and respond to the needs of learners, then government must also address the serious issue of child poverty and establish class sizes that allow time for more teachers to interact with students one-on-one.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

MR. BRAGG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to provide this hon. House with an update on a very important construction project being led by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure.

In August of 2019 we awarded a \$6.1-million contract to Brook Construction to construct a protective care unit extension at the Dr. Hugh Twomey Health Care Centre in Botwood. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that construction is nearing completion and we anticipate the extension opening in early 2021.

The new extension has room for 20 residents, a lounge and a nursing station. Work also included a wander garden, new asphalt and landscaping around the extension. This work is also being completed by local workers, Mr. Speaker. Our loved ones and family members sometimes require protective care residences at our health care facilities and our government is proud to be able to provide that space so residents in Central Newfoundland can receive the care they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, last winter we were happy to see the construction of the long-term care home completed in Corner Brook, and the long-term care homes in Gander and Grand Falls are also on schedule to be completed next spring. These long-term care homes, combined with the protective care unit, the mental health care unit in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, of course, the new hospital in Corner Brook and the new adult mental health and addictions hospital in St. John's, are resulting in Newfoundlanders and Labradorians receiving excellent care in excellent facilities in this province.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Terra Nova.

MR. PARROTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to thank the hon. minister for an advance copy of his statement.

Mr. Speaker, I join the minister in marking the progress on the Botwood protective care unit. This will be an important addition to provide specialized care for the residents in that area.

However, as my colleague the Member for Exploits has noted numerous times, this government has turned its back on the residents in that region when they arbitrarily stripped away 24-hour emergency room service in 2016. Worse still, full reinstatement was promised by the former premier during the election campaign last year. They reneged on that again. What an insult.

Mr. Speaker, I must also note that the minister boasts about local employment in various projects. Again, we continue to see outside workers from Quebec and other provinces who immediately go to work on jobs in Newfoundland and Labrador when Newfoundlanders can be doing this work. When is this minister going to stand up for Newfoundlanders and get them work?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. We are glad to see that these integral projects are coming along, but health care facilities are only a part of the equation. We are still facing shortages of health care workers, home care workers and family doctors.

As these projects wind down, a staffing plan is required to meet the needs of these regions and other regions in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Skills and Labour.

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, it is a true pleasure to highlight the success of the summer's student employment program.

Each year, we help create employment opportunities for students, providing valuable work experience while supporting employers from the private, not-for-profit and municipal sectors. Despite the constraints of a public health emergency, this year we enabled approximately 900 employers to provide employment and experience for over 1,000 students.

Mr. Speaker, we all understand that, while important, measures such as physical distancing and isolation can, indeed, take a toll on mental health, especially for seniors and other vulnerable members of our community, those who are already at heightened risk of loneliness and sometimes feelings of depression.

Making the best out of a difficult situation, our government established the new Students Supporting Communities program to help address these concerns. I am very proud to say that this new program enabled 73 employers to create student-driven projects to assist people in and throughout the province, helping them stay connected to family, friends and their communities during this very difficult period. Their innovative ideas included a broad range of initiatives, such as technology support, virtual tutorials, community gardens and even help gathering groceries and prescriptions.

Mr. Speaker, our government also continues to work with community partners to ensure students get summer employment opportunities that are very valuable. The Department of Immigration, Skills and Labour –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. BYRNE: – which I can hear my fellow colleague behind me expressing so loudly – is again providing funding for the AMPLIFY

program, which stands for Assisting My Potential – Labour Market Initiative for Youth.

This program combines an enriched summer employment experience with skill development opportunities for resilient youth. The Community Sector Council of Newfoundland and Labrador – and my friend Penny Rowe – aimed to help over 100 youth. I am pleased to report they have far exceeded this goal, helping 130 youth from throughout the province with employment and career development opportunities. Mr. Speaker, this is so exciting to so many Members I can hear the applause all around me.

I invite all Members of this hon. House to join me in thanking the employers who provided students with opportunities, as well as the students who took initiative to help their communities this summer.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

MR. P. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. P. DINN: – for his very short and succinct statement.

Mr. Speaker, today I join with the minister as well to acknowledge the approximately 900 employers that helped provide employment and experience to over 1,024 students in our province this past summer. Leveraging the dedication of our province from our business community is key to training our students for opportunities to come and, as well, providing much-needed community programs and services to our seniors.

I also wish to acknowledge the Community Sector Council for their part in helping 130 youth throughout the province receive employment and career development

opportunities. Since 1976, the Community Sector Council has been a pillar of strength for Newfoundland and Labrador. Their dedication to our communities deserve both our praise and our applause.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

MS. COFFIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would also like to thank the hon. minister for an advance copy of his statement. We are always thrilled to support initiatives that provide our youth with employment opportunities and experience.

On a related note, my niece, Karlee, is shadowing me today and having a great time as part of the bring your kids to work day. This is an event that many Grade 9 students will be taking part in across Newfoundland and Canada.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to all of the employers involved in these activities. We extend our congratulations to the youth taking part.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the PC caucus had a Zoom call with national Conservative Opposition Leader Erin O’Toole who told us he would repeal Bill C-69 and remove the threat of overregulation of the offshore and the attack on our joint management rights.

Given that the Premier's government strongly opposed the federal legislation, will the Premier join us in endorsing Mr. O'Toole's commitment to our offshore?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The federal government has made great progress in diminishing the time that's required for these regulations. Our federal colleagues, Minister O'Regan, in particular, and Minister Coady have worked hard to diminish the regulations from three years, under former Progressive Conservative regulation standards in Ottawa, to what is it, 30 days now, 90 days?

AN HON. MEMBER: Ninety days.

PREMIER FUREY: Ninety days. From three years to 90 days, Mr. Speaker.

I think that's significant progress. I'm interested in moving forward, not going backwards.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: Actually, Mr. Speaker, moving forward would be repealing the bill and its incursion into our offshore joint management rights.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CROSBIE: The Premier told the jobs rally he talks to Ottawa twice a day. Yesterday, he said he talked to Trudeau two weeks ago along with other premiers.

When did the Premier realize Trudeau has turned his back on the jobs crisis in this province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Perhaps we should introduce a math course in the Legislature. Yesterday, I was in here for six months, instead of two months. I never said I

talked to them twice a day, I said I talk to them daily, so the math is different. Regardless, I'll attempt to answer the question if allowed.

We've made good progress. The \$320 million, that was done in two months, Mr. Speaker, and we're looking at using that to ensure that we're well positioned with the offshore in terms of exercising our value when this valuable commodity rebounds. That's just one example of how we've worked with the federal government, together in concert in this great federation that is Canada, to ensure that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are well represented moving forward, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, by my count, the Premier's government has been publicly pleading with the Trudeau government for some aid for the offshore since March, that's not two months.

Unemployed workers are anxiously awaiting news of how the federal money will be used to support the offshore. When will the Premier inform the industry about how to apply for the funding?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think we're all very fortunate that we have such a task force that involves such a lengthy and diverse area of expertise within our offshore. We're very fortunate that they are going to provide recommendations in a timely fashion to ensure that this \$320 million is well executed and well exercised to protect the industry moving forward.

That's most important and it's paramount to us as a government to protect the women and men and the families who work in this industry. But we need to do so based on evidence and we will gather that evidence from the expertise of the panel that's been assembled. I'm very confident that they will deliver something in short order, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, these platitudes are not going to help unemployed workers get through Christmas.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CROSBIE: Workers in Argentia at West White Rose are sitting home waiting; workers in Terra Nova FPSO are sitting home waiting, while former workers of the multinational Astaldi go to court for wages and benefits owed after the Liberal government turned its back on them.

Is this the consideration workers across the province can expect from the Premier when dealing with big companies?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm happy to have an opportunity – if I can get an opportunity to answer questions.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm happy to speak to any question regarding the workers in this province because I can tell you that we're spending every waking moment trying to deal with this global pandemic and the disruption that it has caused and working towards getting them back to work.

That's why we've had conversations and we've had scopes of work put forward to us by Husky and by other groups. That's what we're doing; we're actually working through that process now on these scopes of work to try to figure out the best way to allocate, not only the \$320 million that was provided by the federal government but find out what else can we do as a provincial government. We continue to do that.

Maybe I can speak to Astaldi on the next question.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: I doubt that reply is going to satisfy the workers who are going to court over pay owed by Astaldi.

Mr. Speaker, Irving was 4½ months after making its offer to buy Come By Chance and then it pulled out. This morning we learned that Origin has made an offer.

Is there a date to get workers back to work, and will the Premier and his ministers take a personal interest, unlike the last time, in making sure this deal does not fall apart?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There are so many points that I'd like to address in the question. Perhaps I could lead off by talking about the comment the Member made about Astaldi workers being owed by Astaldi. I don't want to get into a lengthy diatribe about how exactly we got into that mess but, again, that's just one issue.

Going to the current question, which is Come By Chance, I find it offensive when the Member opposite questions our personal involvement, when I can look at some of his caucus who've been on the phone calls with me where I talked to these mayors, when I talked to the union, when I talked to the companies that are interested. I'll tell you who's not on these calls and that's the Leader of the Opposition.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

MR. DWYER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I was the one that organized those calls and, like I said, if the Premier was interested in being on them, he could've been on them, too.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DWYER: Mr. Speaker, the province is reeling from media reports concerning severe staffing shortages among social workers, specifically on the Great Northern Peninsula. A single social worker was left responsible for 167 clients, the majority of which are children and many of those Indigenous with complex needs. The ratio is 1-20, not 1-167.

How can the minister defend his government's abysmal failure to protect these children?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development.

MR. WARR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I'd like to hear the minister's response.

MR. WARR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly appreciate the question from the hon. Member.

The safety of our social workers here and families and children that they work with is paramount.

Mr. Speaker, we've recognized that we had a staff shortage in Roddickton, as the Member had alluded to. We took steps to fix those issues as soon as we could. Right now I can report that there are three workers presently in Roddickton and we are about to hire one more. We'll have a shortage of two there, Mr. Speaker. The case ratio there right now would be 1-32. We're looking to improve that. I'm looking forward to working with NAPE and I will be visiting Roddickton and St. Anthony next week.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

MR. DWYER: Mr. Speaker, I remind the hon. Member that if he needs a hand on the committee, the Minister of Education was the chair of the last committee.

Mr. Speaker, NAPE, which represents these social workers, has called the situation a revolving door and cites high mental health issues, workplace fatigue, burnout and PTSD.

Mr. Speaker, we have had successive reports from the Child and Youth Advocate that outline years of failures and deaths of our children at the hands of this government. We don't need more committees. It is time for action.

When are we going to see some?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development.

MR. WARR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I really did not appreciate the comment, Mr. Speaker. We're talking about deaths of children in our government's care.

What we're talking about here now is a shortage of social workers. Mr. Speaker, we recognize that. We are doing things to alleviate the concerns. I've reached out to the president of NAPE. We have a working group. It started back some months ago. We're continuing to work with NAPE, Mr. Speaker. We will ensure that if we can fill those positions. Listen, there are no social workers in this province that are presently out of work. If they're not working, they choose to do that. We will ensure that these placements are filled.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Innu of Labrador are Indigenous people speaking English as a second language.

Unfortunately, many of them have slipped through the cracks of the education system. Now they see opportunities pass them by. For the last four years this government has refused to assist the Innu Nation to secure adult basic education for the community of Natuashish. In their latest letter to the Liberal government, the Innu say that Natuashish is being discriminated against.

So I ask the Premier: Will this government step up and assist Innu access ABE programs in Natuashish?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the hon. Member for her question. She raises a very important topic. As someone who was a career and employment counsellor for 23 years, I saw first-hand the benefit of adult basic education in many of our communities.

I am aware of the situation. I recently became aware that they are looking for ABE, and right now that's something that we're working with the federal government to see where that responsibility lies. I can assure this hon. House that we value the relationship that we have within Innu Nation, that we have with all of our Indigenous groups and we will continue to work collaboratively to move forward on our shared goals, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MS. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, four years the Innu have been requesting. I've actually seen copies of the letters back from the department of Indigenous Affairs denying them.

The Innu leadership states that they feel the Liberal government is – I quote – once more failing to seriously consider the needs of the community – unquote – and cite their – quote – emphatic lack of support.

I ask the Premier again: Will his Liberal government continue to ignore the concerns of the Innu?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What I will say to this hon. House is that I feel we have a positive relationship with Innu Nation. We work very closely with them. I mean, Sunday morning the Premier was on a call with Innu that I joined him on. We have an open door, whether it was the former premier, the current Premier. We've already sat down and met with the Innu and gone through their issues, as we have with other Indigenous groups.

We are currently working on a number of files with this group that the hon. Member mentions in particular and we'll continue to move forward together working on our shared goals, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MS. EVANS: Four years of requests for an Indigenous group that speaks their own language and is suffering, struggling with English asking for ABE.

I ask the Premier: Will you commit this Liberal government to help the Natuashish community secure ABE?

Will you do that, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What I can commit to the hon. Member – this falls somewhat, some of this, under the mandate of Immigration, Skills and Labour. I'm happy to facilitate, to get involved in my role as Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation Minister, to see if there's anything there and what can be provided to the community, more than what

we're proving right now. I'm happy to do that, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: I guess by the Premier's lack of response, that's a no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Mr. Speaker, we're getting calls from desperate landlords and tenants who are waiting for up to four months for hearings with Residential Tenancies.

Minister, we were told in budget Estimates that the caseloads of residential tenancies has decreased.

What explains these three- or four-month wait times for hearings?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL.

MS. STOODLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Absolutely, when tenants and landlords have issues they can apply to the Residential Tenancies Board. Since COVID-19 we've seen applications reduced, actually. There is a slight delay in hearing times. That's primarily due to the physical restrictions of where the hearings are located and the physical distancing, so right now we can't hold as many hearings as we used to at once. We're certainly looking at how we can expedite that process for tenants and landlords.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: We'll hopefully be able to do them soon on Skype calls so that we can get through this problem a lot quicker, hopefully.

Minister, in one of these cases a landlord has not gotten any rent payments for months. He has been trying to sell his home but the tenant has refused access. He has lost out on the potential sale of his home.

Minister: Why are people in such situations having to wait four months to get these issues addressed?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL.

MS. STOODLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The residential tenancies appeal process and that review process is an independent process. We have very professional adjudicators and we don't get involved in the resolution of those disputes. We are looking at how we can expedite those hearings so that the COVID-19 space restrictions aren't limiting resolutions for tenants or landlords. I apologize for anyone who is experiencing a delay. We are working to improve that, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Minister, a delay for three or four months could cause this person \$250,000 or \$300,000 if they're trying to sell their house, and it could be destroyed by the time they get it done. We should act on this and should get at it right away.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'DRISCOLL: There is a lack of resources being provided to Residential Tenancies to address the complaints that are being received. People's lives, homes and well-being are severely impacted and completely on hold as they are forced to wait for hearings and decisions.

Will the minister immediately address the inadequate resources at Residential Tenancies so people won't be waiting months for action on their landlord and tenant issues?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL.

MS. STOODLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Since becoming Minister of Digital Government and Service NL, I have received a few complaints from members of the public about the wait time, so I apologize for that. We are working through the physical space restrictions as a result of COVID-19. It is not a simple, quick process. As you know, there is gathering of information; we have to hear both sides, the scheduling. Then this very independent process that happens which we have full confidence in.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are working to reduce the wait times and I apologize for the delay that that's caused for landlords and tenants. I encourage any of them who have complaints to reach out to my office, and we hopefully can reduce those wait times for people in the near future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Time is of the essence for these people because you don't get a person to come in and look at your house every day, so they lose an opportunity; then the opportunity is gone to sell this house.

Consultations finished five weeks ago, last week, and the minister stated that they were looking at expediting this process.

Does the minister have any recommendation regarding unlocking pensions?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL.

MS. STOODLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Putting forward a recommendation to this House around unlocking pensions is a top priority for our department. We've been expediting it, as I

mentioned and the hon. Member also mentioned. We are hoping to have a package ready to go through the Cabinet process in the coming weeks. I hope that the House can reconvene before Christmas. The House Leader has already committed that we can do that and I've heard the Opposition also say that they're happy to do that. We just have to let it go through our process and I hope to see everyone back in December.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hopefully, these people can get an answer to their questions because they are waiting for their money and they're in dire need, so, hopefully, we can get to that.

Last week, Minister, the government said they will certainly bring back the House.

Is there a specific date that we can lock down?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I meet weekly, when the House is open, with the Opposition House Leaders and this was a topic of our discussion. I think we came to an agreement that we would certainly do this at the first available opportunity. Obviously, we have to follow through the processes, but we do have an agreement and we do have an agreement in place that would actually expedite the process here in the House. I would thank the Members opposite.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Bonavista.

MR. PARDY: Mr. Speaker, we all agree with the approach of wellness over illness.

School buildings are an integral part of our communities, especially in rural Newfoundland. Many community groups and non-profit organizations utilize school buildings after hours for meetings and events, ranging from Girl Guides and Brownies to volleyball and karate. This has been stopped under COVID-19.

Mr. Speaker, I ask: What is the plan to begin to reopen our schools to the community?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member for his question.

Schools have always been an important part of community and community groups and having access to schools. I have had discussions with the English School District, Mr. Speaker. I know that sports have started in schools. I believe volleyball and basketball are scheduled to start. They've taken a gradual approach to bringing activities back to school gyms and sports. Once they do that on a measured approach, they will start looking at other activities within the schools as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Bonavista.

MR. PARDY: Mr. Speaker, the measured approach is an obvious one and that's one that we would certainly concur with, no doubt.

In many of these communities there are no other public buildings available. Community access to our schools is an important social component for people and a source of revenue for the schools themselves.

Again, we would ask: What would the plan be to allow groups and individuals to use these buildings?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again, I agree with the Member on the importance of the usage of schools for community groups. We are in uncertain times, Mr. Speaker. I know that the English School District have taken direction from Public Health on what activities and how and cleaning processes.

I will continue to dialogue with the English School District because I believe it is a valid question that the Member raises, even in terms of revenue for the schools, the value to communities of having access to schools. I agree with the Member on this topic and as we are able to, we certainly will.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In 2016, the Liberal government cut dental care for our most vulnerable seniors.

I ask the Premier: Will he reinstate senior dental care coverage?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you very much for the question, Mr. Speaker.

The issue of dental care is that we do actually, as I've said on other occasions, have a seniors program. It is within that band that corresponds to about five other provincial jurisdictions, so it's neither better than them nor worse than them. We have a fiscal challenge in expanding program growth; we are certainly looking at dental care. At the moment, we have a program that we can afford, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island, time for a quick question and a quick answer.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There are thousands of seniors who are falling through the cracks who deserve this health care. Mr. Speaker, vulnerable seniors are not asking for luxuries, they're asking for dignity and respect.

I ask the Premier: Does he believe that the Liberal government made the right decision by cutting dental care for seniors who deserve the respect of government with proper health care?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Again, I would repeat my answer. We have a program that compares favourably with at least five other jurisdictions in Canada. We are better than some and not as good as others. With time and an improvement in our fiscal situation, we will be able to do more, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Jurisdictions across Canada have capped arbitration fees, which allow smaller bargaining units a level playing field when it comes to arbitration cases. In our province, arbitration fees are not capped, which puts smaller bargaining units at a disadvantage.

Will the minister introduce caps on arbitration fees?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Skills and Labour.

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. Member for the question.

We have a very nimble labour relations environment in Newfoundland and Labrador through the Labour Relations Board. Not only are we served well by an expert staff there, but our Labour Relations Board itself, which is a quasi-judicial panel, does indeed provide solid guidance to adjudicate important decisions related to labour relations issues.

One of the things we always try to emphasize – and have been very successful, Mr. Speaker, as we have seen by the evidence of recent settlements at the collective bargaining table – that our conciliation officers are doing an incredible job of making sure the labour disputes are solved at the location where they are best solved, and that's at the collective bargaining table.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MR. J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, according to the Minister of Education, the province spent over \$10 million to purchase, through private contractors, over 100 additional buses to accommodate all students eligible for busing, but we're hearing that not all buses are actually on the road.

Will the minister confirm if all contracted school buses are actually on the road and being used to transport students?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just as a point of clarification, it was actually 145 buses additional through contractors and the English School District.

Mr. Speaker, I have not been made aware by the English School District of any busing issues at this particular time. If the Member knows of an issue where eligible students are not being bused, I encourage him to bring it to my attention and I'll certainly look into it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MR. J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that 5,100 laptops were ordered for teachers, yet I'm hearing that not all teachers will get one. Teachers with less than a 75 per cent position will have to do without.

Will the Minister of Education please confirm if this is the case and how the numbers of laptops were determined?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The individuals who are getting laptops were determined through the English School District. I am prepared, again, to sit down with the Member and dialogue with the English School District to bring him up to speed on how that was determined and who are actually getting the laptops.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Humber - Bay of Islands.

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, Dominion workers on strike were our heroes during the pandemic. This strike has been ongoing for over 12 weeks and I'm sure we all want to see a settlement as this dispute is hurting many families across our province.

I ask the minister: Has your department considered an industrial inquiry, which helped to settle a labour dispute in Curling in the past? This would help resolve this lengthy strike so these brave men and women can carry out their great service to the residents of the province and receive a decent wage to provide for their families.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Skills and Labour.

MR. BYRNE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

To the hon. Member for Humber - Bay of Islands, for an important question. The labour dispute at Dominion between Loblaws Canada and Unifor Canada and their bargaining units here at home has indeed gone on for several weeks. It is of concern to this government. We are deeply concerned for the 1,400 individuals that currently are affected and impacted by this labour dispute but, as well, the footprint of 11 stores across the province.

This is an issue. It's one of the reasons why I personally contacted not only the president of Loblaws Canada but as well the president of Unifor Canada to encourage them to get back to the table. I've done so on two separate occasions. Most recently was to inform them that given the circumstances, I have appointed an official mediator to get involved in this situation to get the parties back to the table and seek a resolution. This is an important step. We all, I'm confident in this House, hope for the greatest success for the mediator but, most importantly, those at the bargaining –

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member's time has expired.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Humber - Bay of Islands.

MR. JOYCE: Like other Members, I continue to receive calls from constituents who are suffering financially, at the risk of losing their homes, trying to pay their regular monthly bills and support their families. People need to be able to access their money now more than ever.

Last week, questions were asked to the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL regarding locked-in pensions. She committed, at that time, to bring this legislation to the House of Assembly this fall regarding a recommendation around the unlocking of pensions, specifically LIRA funds.

I ask the minister: Can you give us a date as to when this House will be open to approve this much-needed legislation and guarantee that it will be this fall?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. CROCKER: Again, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the question.

In my earlier response, I did say with the co-operation of all Members of this House, when legislation would be prepared we would come in and we would deal with it expeditiously. That will be a chore for everybody in this House to deal with that legislation as quickly as possible at that time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further questions? We have about a minute left.

The hon. the Member for Humber - Bay of Islands, time for a quick question and quick answer.

MR. JOYCE: A great day to be an independent.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, I asked a question about cellphone coverage in Lark Harbour and York Harbour.

I ask the minister: Is there any further update? Because it's supposed to be done this week. I'm hoping this week it will be done and it's on schedule.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology, time for a quick answer.

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I believe previously when asked the question, I indicated three weeks. I can't remember if that was two weeks ago. What I can say to the House is that I have had no update contrary to that provided. So I would assume everything is going ahead as scheduled.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The time for Question period has expired.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Petitions

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port.

MR. WAKEHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This petition today is one that I've presented before. The maintenance and upkeep of the roadway through the community of Cold Brook is the responsibility of the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure. Sections of the roadway have been in deplorable condition for the last five years and need repairs and resurfacing.

Children are required to ride school buses twice daily over roadways where sections of the paved road are missing. There have been a number of close calls where vehicles have had to swerve in order to avoid driving over a section of roadway where the pavement is totally missing. The residents of Cold Brook deserve better.

Therefore, we petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to consider repairing, upgrading and maintaining the paved road through the community of Cold Brook in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I've presented this in the House before. When I hear of the millions of dollars in paving contracts that are being awarded and have gone – and people, I'm sure, are very happy to receive them. I have been told by officials within the Department of

Transportation and Infrastructure that the cost to do this one kilometre of road is perhaps in the \$200,000 range. Again, I would hope that the minister could find \$200,000 in a budget of millions to take care of this problem once and for all.

As I said, it's been on the list for more than five years and no action has been taken. I just want to highlight some of the words: the maintenance and upkeep; responsibility of the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure; deplorable condition; school buses twice daily; sections of the paved road missing; children going over the road and close calls. These are the types of issues and concerns that the people of Cold Brook have. I would ask that serious consideration be given to getting this work done.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure with a response to the petition.

MR. BRAGG: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity to respond to that.

I guess I should start by saying today we had a substantial snowfall in Central Newfoundland. I'd like to thank the over a hundred men and women who have gone out on the roads this morning to keep our roads safe.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAGG: I think that should well be noted today.

It is the season that people should pay attention and take care when driving. If it's not perfect conditions, don't drive to the speed limit, drive below the speed limit.

I'd like to also remind the Member for Mount Pearl North, when he often mentions about how we over paved and how urgent it is for us to get pavement outside the Northeast Avalon, the many stretches of this province that make up the great rural communities that give us our culture. We look forward to doing it.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this summer we have over 10,000 kilometres of pavement in our

province and we try our best to get to it. Hopefully, in the coming months we will get to it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BRAGG: I thank the people once again, who go out on our snow plows, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BRAGG: I can't thank them enough.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

MR. DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I present this petition on behalf of the citizens of Sunnyside in my beautiful District of Placentia West - Bellevue. It gives me great honour to represent the Town of Sunnyside with this petition.

The Town of Sunnyside was awarded, by motion of council, on October 18, 2018, to have a consulting firm to conduct a feasibility study report and submit it to the provincial government, as requested by government under section 3 and 9 of the *Municipalities Act, 1999*. This study cost the taxpayers of Sunnyside several thousand dollars in following the process as outlined by the department.

Since submitting the feasibility study, the department has neglected to respond to the citizens of Sunnyside, although several requests through letters, text and phone calls have been made to Environment, Climate Change and Municipalities. The town has asked on many occasions where the process presently stands and when we could expect a reply.

The boundary extension has multiple interests to the town and would enable the town to maintain fiscal stability, preserve and protect significant landmarks, inclusion of our existing watershed area and includes lands and coves with historical attachments. The approval of this boundary will provide for increased recreation areas and potential infrastructure development. This process has taken way too long.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we, the citizens of Sunnyside, in the great District of Placentia West - Bellevue, petition this hon. House of Assembly as follows: We, the citizens of Sunnyside, urge the government to approve the boundary extension for the Town of Sunnyside.

There are many different reasons for the town to want to expand their boundaries; one is fiscal stability. It's to obtain reasonable and additional revenue from construction activities and less dependence on provincial and federal taxpayers for infrastructure development.

It's also on the preservation of landmarks, the ability to implement appropriate policies and regulations contained within the town's municipal plan, like the archaeological site at Stock Cove. This site was occupied some 5,000 years ago, with evidence of housing to the Dorset culture or the paleo-Eskimo culture. Many artifacts have been found dating back to 4,800 and 5,700 years ago.

Also, it's to protect the watershed. It protects domestic water supply. Historical ties include many of the coves and inlets in Bull Arm that were historically used by the residents of Sunnyside, including a controversy about the laying of the cable going across the Atlantic.

The physical petition that I have signed today actually has the mayor of Sunnyside's name on it. I wanted to bring that forward because I think this is the time that we finally get an answer and find out where this boundary extension is going.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Municipalities with a response.

MR. BENNETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to, first of all, thank the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue for bringing this petition forward for the second time. He did bring it to my attention on Thursday as a petition and after we adjourned Thursday afternoon we did have a discussion about it.

I just want to inform him that I have met with my officials in the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Municipalities. We do see the value and the rationale to why they're moving forward. Obviously, it does have significant historical recreation, residential development and long-term economic development.

I just want to inform the Member and members of Sunnyside that we are in the final stages of that boundary change. They should be ready to expect something in the not-too-long future. I thank him for his petition again. If he'd like to further discuss, I'd be more than willing to meet with him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: We have time for a quick petition. I don't think we have time for the full three minutes.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MS. EVANS: I'll be brief I promise. This petition is for Internet infrastructure upgrades required for essential Internet service.

We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador who urge our leaders to ensure that the Internet infrastructure be upgraded in the Northern Labrador Indigenous communities of Nain, Natuashish, Hopedale, Makkovik, Postville and Rigolet. Our Northern Labrador communities have broadband, but the required high speeds essential for online courses are not available on a consistent basis, causing systems to be locked up or boot students off the system.

The aging and inadequate infrastructure does not support broadband bandwidth required for online post-secondary and secondary courses. Therefore, students are now handicapped at the critical time in their education path, impacting their ability to succeed.

If the Internet system in each community is not upgraded to provide adequate speeds and reliability we can't stand idly by and watch our students be burdened by this unfair reality of current circumstance. Therefore, we provide you with this petition asking you to help ensure the upgrades will be done so our students can have the same access to Internet services as the rest of the province.

Therefore we petition this hon. House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to provide adequate upgrades to the Internet infrastructure in Northern Labrador Indigenous communities of Nain, Natuashish, Makkovik, Postville and Rigolet so our students can have the same access to Internet services as the rest of the Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I won't take much time but I'll quickly say the speeds on the North Coast still remain at 0.2 to (inaudible) megabits per second, which is significantly lower. What I'm saying is nothing has been done over the summer, no significant upgrades and our students are still faced with being booted off the system and not being able to access their share of online courses.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Orders of the Day

Private Members' Day

MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to our *Standing Orders*, I'm now going to call on the Member for Burin - Grand Bank to present her motion as she gave notice.

MS. HALEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm very pleased to introduce the following private Member's resolution, seconded by the Member for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune:

WHEREAS Wednesday, November 11, 2020, is Remembrance Day; and

WHEREAS Remembrance Day is a day to honour and remember the people who have served and continue to serve Canada during times of war, conflict and peace; and

WHEREAS Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have an illustrious history of service and have suffered great tragedies in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will restrict many annual commemorative ceremonies;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the House supports veterans in Newfoundland and Labrador and recognizes the sacrifices made by all members of the Canadian Armed Forces; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the House urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to work with the Royal Canadian Legion, and other partners, to rehabilitate the Newfoundland National Memorial in time for the Memorial's centennial on July 1, 2024.

Mr. Speaker, I'm excited and, at the same time, sombre in being able to bring forward this motion to the House of Assembly today. Remembrance Day is upon us; in fact, close at hand, so the resolution we will debate is especially poignant at this time.

Every year at the same time we gather, every year we express the sentiments of a world that has lost many sons and daughters through conflict. Mr. Speaker, November 11 was chosen to remember those we have lost through our history, symbolic of the moment when the guns fell silent on the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918, the end of the war to end all wars, or so they said.

In the context of years, it has been 400-plus years for our own existence as a colony, a country and province. Almost every single generation of our population has experienced the loss of family through conflicts of the time.

Those who survive the conflicts, those who went to fight on the ground as a member of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Field Artillery or volunteered with the Forestry Units in Scotland, served in the air with the Royal Air Force's 125th night fighter squadron, on the oceans in

allied navies or the merchant marine, all sacrificed so much, Mr. Speaker.

For some who took part in the most recent conflicts, such as the Afghanistan mission, the memories of the horror still vivid, though they have come home a long time ago. They all took the memories of conflict home with them. I know, in fact, my first cousin, Scott King, spent some time in Afghanistan. I'm sure that Scott has memories of horror as well. We remember them and we respect them. We honour them in every single town and cove, through every bay.

This November, we will see reverent ceremonies that this time will be different, Mr. Speaker. COVID-19 has presented us all with a battle to be fought and won this year. We may not assemble in large groups at those sacred memorials, but when done with conviction, the two minutes we are asked to stand in silence in our front doorsteps will nonetheless show a resolve that though we are separated by a pandemic, we are indeed together in spirit and thoughts of those who allowed us the freedoms we so cherish.

Again, Mr. Speaker, though not there in person, our thoughts will be at one of our cenotaphs, memorials, markers noting history's passing, where we so often listen to the words of our leaders, our faith leadership, where we listen to the stories of horrors of war and how peace was won.

Mr. Speaker, in Grand Bank, Fortune, Lamaline, Garnish, Burin, Lawn, St. Lawrence and so many other communities in this province, people of my district have gathered in the past at those monuments and memorials to the ones we lost in World Wars I and II, monuments largely vacated this year but still standing vigil to the memories of valour they honour.

Mr. Speaker, in St. John's, where the provincial memorial is erected, the National War Memorial on Duckworth Street stands, statue looking toward The Narrows, looking east to where our lost lay in foreign soil. It is this memorial to all who were lost. Our memories harken back to ceremonies and parades of the distant and not so distant past, with one reoccurring theme: We will honour and we will remember.

It is here that over solemn waters we remember the loss on the ocean in the longest battle of World War II, the Battle of the Atlantic, Mr. Speaker; where sometimes under sunny skies, sometime under grey skies we remember those lost in the fighting in the air over Britain or in the skies over Europe, where so many were lost to the night, Mr. Speaker.

It is this memorial on which we all reflect in ceremonies we have attended in person or on radio or TV, for those who are shut in, Mr. Speaker. It is this memorial our hearts are tied to. It is this memorial that brings us all together as one. This National War Memorial was official dedicated and opened to the public in a huge ceremony on July 1, 1924, just a few short years after losing so many of our sons and daughters in Beaumont-Hamel.

It was two associations of the day that began the project of remembrance on the King's Beach area of Water Street. The Great War Veterans' Association and the Newfoundland Patriotic Association worked hard to put together a committee for design and fundraising.

This is a place where we gather, Mr. Speaker, five times a year, to gather and to remember: on April 25, the date of commemoration of the Gallipoli offensive in World War I; the first Sunday in May, when the Battle of the Atlantic is commemorated; on July 1, Memorial Day, when we remember the horror of the Battle of the Somme at Beaumont-Hamel; the third Sunday in September, Mr. Speaker, when we commemorate the anniversary of the Battle of Britain; on November 11, again, Armistice Day, the anniversary of the official end of World War I.

The importance of the memorial is ingrained in the memories we have of sombre days past, Mr. Speaker. It is a testament to the sacrifice for others and always will be a cornerstone of our being. For it is here we come together as a province to remember our past and show our appreciation for their sacrifices for the future they wanted us to have all at a cost.

The War Memorial, as we know it, is tired. It still stands, reverently facing to the eastern passage of the Atlantic; still guards the entrance to our capital. One lasting landmark dedicated to

the remembrance of those who gave so much, Mr. Speaker. This monument has weathered the storms that have blown in through The Narrows, as our own sons and daughters weather the storms of aggression thrust upon them in so many conflicts.

This monument needs to be well looked after. It needs our help as a people to make it last another hundred years, Mr. Speaker, to hold up high the torch, that torch that was handed down to us years ago. We believe in the strength of those who served and serve today, those who continue to serve. We believe in recommending the government help preserve a piece of our memorabilia for future generations and to work with groups such as the Royal Canadian Legion in rehabilitating what we know as the National War Memorial on Water and Duckworth streets. To help us preserve the memory of those who went before us who gave the ultimate sacrifice for us, for those who follow in their footsteps.

We recommend the government help in getting these groups together to do the work on behalf of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians as a project to pull this province closer together in time for the 2024 centennial celebration of the memorial.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

MR. PARROTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member for Burin - Grand Bank for such great words.

1991 was the first time I actually did a parade as a soldier. I did an honour guard. We were part of the gun salute and stuff and it was very touching to be on the inside of it, versus on the outside watching.

As a young boy I can remember in Wabush going down to the cenotaph and watching sea cadets and the veterans and not really understanding why you see a veteran with a tear rolling down his cheek.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PARROTT: As a boy you don't always understand. The tradition would be to always go the Legion after. You go to the Legion and as a young private you look around and you look at one of the veterans sitting over in the corner telling stories. I'll never forget Sergeant Major at the time, a gentleman by the name of Greg Power, said to me, you don't need to go to this guy. He said don't go to him, these guys don't want to talk about what they've seen and what they did. He said the ones that are sitting there silently, they are the ones that need you to sit down, have a beer. It's so true. Why would you want to speak about it?

You often hear people ask about what a veteran is. There are lots of definitions. People ask is a veteran someone who served in a time or war or a peacekeeping mission or whatever. A veteran to me is anyone who joined the military, anybody who went through basic training, maybe served in Op LENTUS here in Newfoundland this year, helping us out with Snowmageddon, a reservist or a regular force person.

What a veteran really is, is somebody who signed a blank cheque to the Government of Canada up to and including the value of their life. Just think about that: a blank cheque up to and including the value of their life. They deserve our respect; there's no question. I proudly prayed to that cenotaph down on Water Street. I had the privilege to do that as a soldier and as a civilian.

We don't all understand, 365 days of the year, what these people do for us or what they have done, the sacrifices that they've made personally and professionally so that we can be here. Make no mistake about it: We're here because of them. It's not just Remembrance Day or Canada Day or it's not the Battle of the Somme or Beaumont-Hamel; it's every day that we need to remember what veterans have done for us. The sacrifice that they have made, not just for us, but the sacrifices they've made with their own families.

You take a soldier who goes to Alert for a three-month stint or goes to Afghanistan for a six-month stint or goes to sea for six or eight months. Whatever they do, they make a huge sacrifice that affects not only them personally but their family. They put their health and their

mental health on the line and certainly they put their life on the line. We often talk about soldiers and the scars they bear and the wounds they have, and there's a big difference between a scar and a wound. I will tell you, I don't know many soldiers that aren't proud of their scars. They wear them with great pride. I also don't know many that reveal their wounds. We don't see that.

It's very hard to understand what they do, why they hide things away and why they don't ask for help. It's happened for years. In World War I it was shell shock and World War II, now it comes by way of PTSD. We all have family and friends who either know or have been affected by PTSD, be it through the military or through other facets of life: nurses or ambulance attendants or police officers or victims of crime. For some reason, soldiers hide it away. That is probably harder on them and their families than anything.

Mr. Speaker, the Newfoundlanders – and not just the Newfoundlanders but all soldiers right across this country – deserve the respect and honour from not only this House, but all of the public in this province. This PMR today is pretty simple. As a matter of fact, I argued with my caucus this morning I don't think it goes far enough. I think we have lots of cenotaphs in this province that are in disrepair that ought to be looked at.

I look at other provinces where there are provincial ministers that are appointed in a position to deal with veterans' issues. We all know that Veterans Affairs is a federal department, but there is a lot of help provincially that governments can provide to veterans. Veterans slip through the cracks for funding on lots of different things. If you don't know, I'm sure you've heard the stories that Veterans Affairs is – it's a fight. It all sounds good but I can tell you from first-hand experience, if you don't have any fight in you you're not going to be looked after. A lot of soldiers have their fight gone when they leave the military for medical reasons.

I would suggest that our government could probably step up and have a minister here in this great House that could help people or guide people, for provincial programs that could help

soldiers that they don't know exist, anything from medical programs to opening doors. It's pretty simple.

I do know Helmets to Hardhats was a big success here in this province during the Hebron build. I was involved in that and it was a very successful initiative that the union pushed. I also know that there was a big push back in those days from government – and I'll give the government credit – so that soldiers coming out of the military, their credentials could be upheld and utilized. As an example, an MSE op could go to work as a transport truck driver here in this province, which prior to 2015 they couldn't, but it doesn't go far enough.

We sit here and we fight back and forth. We're doing it for honourable reasons and it kind of reminds me of my time in the military. We always bickered and bantered with each other – the army was better than the navy and the navy was better than the air force. It was a part of what you did –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. PARROTT: I never heard you, sorry.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. PARROTT: Not true. No, not true. Not true.

The best way to put it was they would always say that the navy would eat their young, the air force would send their officers to war and in the army the officers and the men went together. It's a big deal, right?

I could go on for 15 minutes but I think there are a lot of people who would like to have a conversation on this topic. There is one thing that I would really, really like to say, not just on the 11th, but specifically on the 11th: We need to keep our fallen and injured brothers and sisters in our minds, and remember that since World War I thousands and thousands of men and women that have come back from conflict regions aren't with us anymore. They died through disease or self-harm or age.

Regardless of what happened we need to remember them, but we also need to remember

the thousands and thousands that serve today and that are still with us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PARROTT: We need to understand that both the young and old suffer daily with mental illness, physical disabilities, chronic pain, financial instability and not knowing what tomorrow brings. There are a lot of people in that situation today, not just soldiers. Specifically on the 11th I think it's important that we remember the men and women who sacrificed their lives for us so that we could have a better tomorrow.

I said the other day, one of the nicest things I've ever seen was a poster where there was a World War II veteran saying: Remember that we gave our today so you could have your tomorrow. Those are very true words.

On that note, I'd just like to say there's more than military men and women that go off in times of conflict. We have RCMP officers, reservists and civilians that travel sometimes into these areas and they're all affected, but the other people that are affected are the ones we don't see. It's the children and the wives that are left behind. It's important we keep them in our minds too.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Justice and Public Safety.

MR. CROCKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I won't use my full 15 minutes because I do realize there are a lot of people that want to have an opportunity this afternoon to enter their remarks into the record. It's very important and I think timely. I won't call it a debate; I'll call it a conversation. First of all, I want to thank the Member for Burin - Grand Bank for bringing forward this private Member's motion today. Very, very thoughtful.

Mr. Speaker, I'm just going to do a couple of things. I'm going to relate my few moments towards people in my district and just some of the stories and some of the feelings that I feel

today. In listening to the Member for Terra Nova who is a veteran – and is to be commended for such – it gives you cold shivers realizing what he has done and so many have done. They're why we have the opportunity to be here and bicker back and forth sometimes. We're only bickering because they fought for us and gave us the ability to do that. That should never be forgotten.

About 13 years ago I started working in politics, as a staff person in the beginning. I can remember my first Remembrance Day ceremony as a young political staffer; it was in Spaniard's Bay. It was cold, it was wet and I can tell you it was windy. If anybody is familiar with where the war memorial is in Spaniard's Bay, it's right in the bottom of the harbour.

As I stood there shivering in the cold and wet, I thought I should not at all today think about how I feel, because you think about the people that actually served, the young men and women that, actually, really were only children. In today's world they would be 16, 17 years old. They were only children that served. I've never been cold or wet again at a Remembrance Day ceremony because I quickly remind myself of what these young people went through.

I'm going to talk now about a couple of veterans. Earlier this week, I had the opportunity to bring some greetings for Mr. John Pinhorn of Winterton who turned 99 years old on Monday. He went overseas as a young man and fought in the 166th Royal Newfoundland and Labrador Artillery. He served in North Africa and went on to fight in Italy in the Battle of Monte Cassino. There are very few left. Actually, I did a quick search this morning and as of the numbers that I could find, as of June of this year, there are about 24 World War II veterans left in our province; but, as the Member for Terra Nova just acknowledged, there are many, many, many more veterans in our province in my community.

The Member for Terra Nova came over after the debate, after we concluded on Monday afternoon, and he said to me: Mr. Pinhorn, would he have a son that served? I did some research on that and it was actually a grandson. How many families have we found in our province over the years that it became a tradition? Newfoundlanders and Labradorians,

we gave, for our small numbers as a people, gave more or equally to anybody I would say in this world when it came to service. Again, Mr. Pinhorn is one of very few World War II veterans left right now in our province and even in our country.

In my time as MHA and working closely – I've always enjoyed events at Legion Carbonear Branch 23. It's the only Legion in my district and it represents, pretty much, the entirety of the district. The current president of that Legion is a man, Mr. Hal Evely. Hal is from Carbonear. He resides in Small Point right now.

As a young man, Hal left as a tradesman and went to the United States. While there, early into the Vietnam War, he enlisted and fought as an American in Vietnam and actually has the Bronze Star for bravery from the US Military. This young man went to the United States and enlisted and served and fought in Vietnam. His story, to me – the first time I noticed his medal, I said: You're Mr. Evely, you're from Carbonear or Victoria, and he told me the story of how he ended up fighting in Vietnam as a young Newfoundlander. That's just one of the stories.

One of the things in the conversation, I think, with the Member for Burin - Grand Bank about today's PMR was about the War Memorial. In 2017 – I think it would've been November 11, 2017 – I was in Carbonear at the Remembrance Day ceremony. After the ceremony, the then president, Berkley Lawrence, hauled me to a side. He was president of Branch 23 in Carbonear; he hauled me to a side. He said: We need to get some work done on the National War Memorial. At the same time, he was vice-president of provincial command and went on to be president of provincial command the following year.

I was a little intrigued, because I sort of didn't realize at that point in time that the National War Memorial was an asset of the Department of Transportation and Works. He pulled me aside and I said, absolutely. I came back to the department the next day that we were back sitting or I was back in St. John's, and I got the staff together and I said: The National War Memorial, it's ours. They said: Yes, it is. I said: We need now to commit to start the engineering. This War Memorial needs to be rehabilitated.

I took the opportunity, along with Minister O'Regan, shortly thereafter – he was minister of Veterans Affairs at the time – to actually visit the War Memorial with Mr. Berkley Lawrence. He pointed out some of the things that have happened to that War Memorial over its hundred years. It really needs work done, and I think it's incumbent on us as a government, Members of this House, to make sure that over the next three years that War Memorial is restored to the splendour that it was in 1924.

In 1924, it was funded by the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. I can tell you what the provincial command is asking for right now, is for governments to come on side and be a facilitator of restoring that memorial. I can tell you, it's going to take a lot of work. The engineers have told me it's structurally sound, but I think it's very important that we do that.

By the way, Berkley and his wife, Sarah, are both retired from careers in the Canadian Armed Forces. They're veterans as well. So thank you to them as well.

I'm going to conclude my remarks, but I look forward to the conversation this afternoon. I look forward to working whatever we can do as a government and as a House of Assembly to promote the rehabilitation of the National War Memorial in downtown St. John's, one of two National War Memorials in Canada: one in St. John's and one in Ottawa.

Again, thank you to everybody who serves. Thank you for all you've done for us, whether you're a World War II veteran, a veteran of Korea or Vietnam or Afghanistan or if you're a veteran that actually served last winter during Snowmageddon. These are people that gave of themselves to come in here in what was a time of need and do that.

Again, Mr. Speaker, thank you and lest we forget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

MR. J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to, first of all, thank the Member for Burin - Grand Bank for bringing this motion forward.

Certainly, one comment that the Member for Terra Nova made that struck a deep chord was certainly the fact that as a member of the Armed Forces you sign a blank cheque, up to and including the value of your own life. Every now and again I walk out here in the lobby, there are a number of sculptures, but there's also the Book of Remembrance. I'm assuming the pages are turned each day and you get to see Newfoundlanders and Labradorians – Newfoundlanders, I guess, they would've been at one time, the term for those young men and women, but mostly men in this case – who gave their lives in the service of their country. It's important to remember, too, with Newfoundland, we were our own country, as such. We weren't part of Canada at that time.

Certainly, I want to come back to why this motion is important to me as well, because I've had my own personal involvement in it. I know that when I was at Holy Heart we would have these services. Every school I was in the Remembrance Day ceremonies were a big part of it. At Holy Heart, too, it had a special significance because when we planned them, a lot of the children that we had, a lot of the students, the whole experience of war was close to home. They'd just escaped from where they saw families – there were families killed. They lived it. For them, going through that ceremony was particularly traumatic. They stayed away from it.

It puts a whole new perspective on it because so many of us today look at ourselves, our children, we can look at the pictures and look at them objectively without realizing that these were real people. To the children who've lived it, people who lived it, it's very real. To those who served in the armed forces, it's very real.

When I was NLTA president I got the opportunity to visit schools. One school I remember was in Harbour Grace, Holy Redeemer – Holy Redeemer in Spaniard's Bay, sorry. They had a project, a Wall of Honour. Basically, the students had done up a biography of relatives who had – distant family members – served in one of the World War I, World War II

and other wars and their family members who currently were serving. What a beautiful way to honour those for their service.

I think of in my own district, if you go to Victoria Park, you have the 100 Portraits of the Great War. It's a sculpture and, basically, it damasks those faces, if you look at them, they were moulded from the decedents of those who were a part of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. It's a pretty impressive display; it's on the Water Street end of it.

If I remember correctly up by the Royal Canadian Legion, Alcock and Brown that was the place where they took off for the Trans-Atlantic flight. There's a memorial to Tommy Ricketts down in my district. When you look at it, it has an awful lot of history in that area.

When I was at Holy Heart, too, we did a service. R. H. Thomson had it. Basically, it was: The World Remembers. At that time, it projected – I forget the anniversary, but they projected the names of all those who had died in the Great World. They were projected through the window that we had set up and it was very minimalist, very simple but very powerful when you look at names scrolled through. It took a full week or more just to go through the names. It gives you a sense of the enormity of sacrifice.

I was fortunate, certainly, to have visited Vimy Ridge. It is sombre, when you stand next to that monument and you see the trenches that are still around there, but at the monument, I guess just the sheer size of the monument and the names inscribed. You can touch those names; you can have that physical contact. It's moving beyond words.

In my own district, it's interesting, we do have a Field of Honour; it's in Mount Pleasant Cemetery. I first got to know it through the Royal Canadian Legion when I went up there with them to present a wreath there. What stands out, the Field of Honour, you have countless numbers – a very impressive Field of Honour, but the monument is in a terrible state of disrepair.

It's interesting, to get the money from Veterans Affairs – I will concur with the Member for Terra Nova – it is very difficult to get the money

for it, but we've applied for funding and, hopefully, we'll get that, and this will be a monument that, I think, it should be. Regardless of how you feel about war, the fact is you have young men and women – and everyone in that cemetery died because of the war, whether they died during the war or following it. One way or the other, they're veterans; they gave their lives for their country.

I will tell you that it was the help of the MP for St. John's South–Mount Pearl and St. John's East that we were able to get the funding. I will say this: If there's anything, it should not only be the Legion, because trying to find who owned the monument was an interesting exercise. It was very difficult to find out who owned the monument. I think not just the National War Memorial but all these memorials deserve the treatment and deserve to be treated and maintained with respect because of what they represent, not just people but the people who gave their lives in the service of their country.

If I could add anything to this statement, I think we need to look at all monuments. We've managed to put in an application to my colleague across the floor here. I think we need to look at all these monuments and to make sure that they are brought up to scratch, that they are presentable and that it shouldn't just fall to the Legion alone to do this. I think there's a federal component that has to be part of this and there should be some maintenance projects, because otherwise we're leaving it to volunteers. There has to be funding for that.

I will support this motion but, I think, if anything else, let's look at how we can expand it to maintain all such monuments.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation.

MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd be remiss if I didn't say thank you to the hon. Member for bringing forward this private Member's resolution and thank you to the Members for the great words they've said. I'm

going to try my best not to repeat what others have because I know how important it is for everyone that wants to have the opportunity to say a few words.

The First World War, in particular, was an influential moment in the history of Newfoundland and Labrador. I don't need to tell anybody in this House that. The role in the Great War and the participation of battles that we both won and lost became the stuff of legend.

I ask all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians: What significant event has defined us as a people? The majority will have replied the Battle of the Somme, Beaumont-Hamel and the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. Which is why in 2014 the government saw fit to start the Honour 100 program and launch it.

The Honour 100 initiative was a four-year commemorative program that was designed to reconnect Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with the past and highlight the First World War story that needs to be told and always remembered. Communities came together to commemorate their ancestors. There was a significant enhancement to the curriculum and material within the school systems and a flurry of artistic creation. Exhibits were created and history preserved and shared. It is because of people in our province that we still feel that deep connection to the First World War; that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador remains committed to honouring our veterans, past and present.

Mr. Speaker, we do continue to support this legacy project, such as the annual Trail of the Caribou pilgrimage to the battlefields in France and Belgium. Each year there's an expedition. Due to COVID-19 this past year, we didn't get the opportunity to do that unfortunately. But 35 youth retraced the footsteps of our beloved Royal Newfoundland Regiment, at the time the Newfoundland Regiment, and visited the sites where the caribou monuments exist as a tribute to those brave men who fought and died for us.

It has become a connection to the First World War history that three years after the final anniversary of the centennial year has passed, the government still remains committed to completing the one final Honour 100

commitment, and that's the placement of the bronze caribou monument in Gallipoli Peninsula. I'm glad that I happen to be the minister responsible for that at this point, but there's a thanks that goes out to a lot of people over the number of years, on both sides of the House, that had a hand in ensuring that this monument was there to complete that Trail of the Caribou.

The Trail of the Caribou extends through northern France and Belgium, located at sites significant to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment and their accomplishments, contributions and sacrifices, including Beaumont-Hamel, Masnières, Gueudecourt, Monchy-le-Preux and Courtrai.

I agree with the hon. Member that mentioned earlier about attending Vimy Ridge and seeing how it's so hard to describe what you're feeling at those sites. I can attest to that personally at all of those caribous. It's amazing, the very small piece of ground that people were fighting over and dying for over that time period for each of the armed conflicts. It's amazing to see.

This past July, Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to say that our partners with the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Advisory Council awarded the contract to a local engineering company, InnovativeNL, to undertake the construction of a caribou monument on a piece of land near Hill 10 in the cemetery in Gallipoli.

One of the good things about this is it's an actual exact replica taken from the caribou that sits in Bowring Park. This will be the instillation of the sixth caribou in Europe completing the Trail of the Caribou and honouring those brave men in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment for their time on the eastern front in Gallipoli campaign, 1915 and '16, the only regiment in North America to do so.

Mr. Speaker, our military history and heritage is strong and I'm proud of the role our people played in the First World War. We will be forever reminded of the sacrifices made during the First World War and will always be enshrined in our hearts of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I've had the pleasure of parading to the National War Memorial, one of only two national war memorials by the way, in the country, since 1989, almost every year in uniform as a cadet and as a member of the CLB and I'll never forget looking at the monument and I think the Minister of Justice mentioned the feeling of being on parade and it being so cold and everything and we'd always be saying to each other at the time, it's really cold but this is nothing compared to what those individuals faced in those trenches.

In 2007, it became very real to me as a personal connection because I'll never forget on Easter Sunday, April 8, at 31 years of age, one of my good friends passed away to a roadside bomb, Don Lucas, while he was serving in Afghanistan. I'll never forget that call. The monument meant something significantly more to me at that point than it ever did before, although I always understood the importance of it, but I think it really hits home when you know somebody. I know that the hon. Member for Terra Nova spoke about that and I know how important that is, to have some monuments to at least do our little part to try to remember those individuals that provided why we are able to sit here today.

Mr. Speaker, I fully support the motion and encourage all Members in the House, and I think we will get that today, to rehabilitate the National War Memorial here in Newfoundland and Labrador. It was built for the people and by the people of this province, so I'm very happy that we could do that here in this House.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, I know there are other Members that want to have a few words to say.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MS. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honour that I speak to this private Member's resolution today and support it fully.

There are many reasons that I'm very grateful to speak on this and to be given the opportunity to, first of all, thank our own soldier who is in our midst who is one of my colleagues here, the Member for Terra Nova. I would like to thank him on behalf of district, of all of us –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: – for his service to his country and for the sacrifices he and his family have made for all of us so that we can live in peace and freedom. Mr. Speaker, he is one of many of our soldiers and veterans that we have to remember and recognize.

This last few number of days ago, I attended an unveiling of a memorial sign in the Town of Brigus that was hosted by the Brigus Recreation Committee. I mentioned this in the House of Assembly previously, but this memorial sign was in memory of a young soldier, a young man originally from Brigus who passed away in Ontario at the young age of 33 years. He had passed away in October. His name was Sergeant Herman Williams. He was a member of our Canadian Armed Forces.

He served in four missions overseas, three front-line combat mission tours in Afghanistan. He joined when he was the young age of 18. He served three combat mission tours in Afghanistan and one in Latvia, which was peacekeeping, in his 14-year career. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important, as the Member for Terra Nova mentioned, that we have to remember the toll that this takes, how hard and mentally draining these deployments can be on our young servicemen and women.

As well, Mr. Speaker, just this past Saturday I also had the privilege of attending the launching of the Poppy Campaign at the Royal Canadian Legion in Brigus, Branch 65. I think it's important that we remember how significant the poppy sales are. The Legion, we know, is one of the largest veteran supports in our country. These Legions mostly operate from poppy sales. My district, the District of Harbour Main, has two Legions: Branch 64 in Holyrood and Branch 65 in Brigus.

It was interesting, when I was at the launching of poppy campaign; it was a very small

ceremony that took place and it also reminds us that all of our ceremonies this year coming up on November 11 are going to be much smaller. I think they still can be quite heartfelt and quite intimate; nevertheless, they will be different. It will be a different experience for everyone. There will be no parades and there is only going to be limited public laying of wreaths.

Mr. Speaker, that does not diminish the importance of recognizing how we have to remember, how it is incumbent upon us. It is our responsibility to remember the sacrifices of those people, those men and women who have served in various wars. Really, we have to try to better understand this history. We have to commit to tell these stories, like our Member for Terra Nova was speaking of. We have to tell stories to each other about this, to our children and our grandchildren. We must ask ourselves how it came to pass that we had such conflict, such loss of millions of human lives in the wars that we have seen.

As this private Member's resolution points out, Mr. Speaker, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have an illustrious history of service, but as well we have suffered great tragedies in the line of duty. We are all aware of that. Mr. Speaker, memorials and symbols are critical because they remind us. They serve as a reminder to us of what our soldiers and what our veterans have sacrificed for us.

The last thing I just want to mention is poppies – speaking about poppies and that important little flower that each of us have on our lapels – and note how it's close to our hearts. There's a reason for that: It's because it's going to remind us always of those people who died for our peace and freedom. It's a symbol but it's an important symbol that we continue to honour, lest we forget.

Finally, I just want to close with this quote. It is probably the most quoted poem from the war. It was written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae. I'd like to conclude with this poem, "In Flanders Fields."

"In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly

Scarce heard amid the guns below.

“We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

“Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.”

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Premier.

MS. COADY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It was wonderful to hear that recitation. I appreciate the comments that you’ve made and I want to, again, acknowledge and thank the Member for Terra Nova for his service and his duty.

Like many others in this House today, my family has a long history of service in the military. My sister, Renee, currently serves in the navy, albeit she’s currently in Ottawa. It’s interesting she serves in the navy but in Ottawa. She’s currently stationed in Ottawa. She has been stationed in Europe and, of course, she is also a blue beret having served in peacekeeping duties in the Middle East.

My uncle served in the Second World War. My father was a bit too young but my grandfather served as Blue Puttees in the First World War. Like many people in this House of Assembly today, and many people in Newfoundland and Labrador, we’ve all been touched by the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

My father’s first cousin, Samuel Gillespie – and for those who’ve had the chance to visit beautiful Fortune Harbour and have had a chance to see his monument – died in 1918. He enlisted in 1916 and as his brother – and I had the opportunity to know his brother. His brother enlisted in 1916, he was 19 years of age and he

was first wounded – I say first wounded, Mr. Speaker, because he was wounded on multiple occasions – I think on November 21 of 1916.

I completely thank the Member for Burin - Grand Bank for bringing forward this. I think it’s incumbent upon us to refurbish and hold dear the National War Memorial that we have downtown, and continue to honour and respect those that gave so much. For our well-being and our futures, they gave so much. I don’t think it can be contested that we are all indebted to them.

I did have the opportunity to do the Trail of the Caribou in places where Newfoundlanders and Labradorians fought during the First World War. There are statues of caribous in significant locations where there was loss of life. I did happen to do the Trail of the Caribou.

Now we’re going to have the seventh caribou. I want to honour and thank the Member for Lake Melville for his work in ensuring that we do have a monument that will be placed in Turkey on the battlegrounds of Gallipoli, where members of many, many regiments fought, but so did Newfoundland and Labrador contribute and have the chance to visit again in Europe, the Flanders Field.

I think all of us in Newfoundland and Labrador often say to people who are trying to understand why Newfoundland and Labrador defaulted in the 1930s and kind of had a financial crisis that led then to our moving towards Confederation in 1949, but the uncertainty and the financial uncertainty that came from repaying the war debt. Newfoundland was one of the few countries in that time to repay its war debt. Think of the impact to the Island of Newfoundland at the time, and Labrador as well, to the portion that – so many people served from Labrador, so many people served from the Island, and so many lives lost and the impact of families.

I can tell you that Mrs. Gillespie, who lived in Fortune Harbour – I read some of her correspondence to the war office having lost one son, Samuel, and having had Patrick who was injured multiple times. I remember him as a young child. You could see the injuries he had. He was shot in the head in his final injury, but

you could see – and she had many young children. She had lost her husband and she had many young children. So you could imagine how difficult it had to be for families during that period of time, and the impact on the future of Newfoundland and Labrador and the impact today on many families that still have members who are serving, who have put themselves in harm's way. We can't thank them enough, nor recognize them enough.

Therefore, I speak sincerely to everyone who's served, who has had family members who served, to say thank you for what they do and what they've done. We are all the better for their service and all the better for their gift to us of our freedom and our future.

I am very supportive of this private Member's resolution.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port.

MR. WAKEHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, again, will just take a few minutes to have something to say. I again want to thank the hon. Member for Burin - Grand Bank for bringing forward this PMR.

It's afternoons like this that give us a chance to reflect on the fact of why we're all here, why we're all trying to make things different. Listening to the people talk and the emotion that my colleague from Terra Nova had when he spoke about his experiences, and every other speaker here has had, it makes you really proud to be a Newfoundlander and Labradorian and the tremendous effort that people from our province made to serve others.

I wanted to take the time today to just tell you a little story. It's a true story. Some of it may be a bit funny. It starts with my uncle Vince Wakeham. Vince Wakeham served in the Royal Navy. I don't want to talk about at the beginning of his career; I want to talk about something that happened towards the end of his life. He found himself, of course, needing care and wound up

in the Veterans Pavilion down at the Miller Centre where he received excellent care.

One day his son, Peter, got a call from a nurse and said: Peter, we're concerned about your father. Peter said: Why? They said, well, we think he has dementia. Peter said: Why would you think that? They said: Well, he's talking about his trip to Buckingham Palace. So Peter said: No, it's true. My dad did go to Buckingham Palace. Then he told her the story, that as a young sailor he was at Dunkirk, and him and another sailor actually got aboard an old drifter and four times they left their ship and went into the shore and pulled British soldiers out and evacuated them under enemy fire.

At the time he was on the *Berwick*, and it was only after that, that he was back on board his ship a while later when he got a message that he had to go to Buckingham Palace. When he found himself going to Buckingham Palace he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal by the King of England, who actually presented it to him at that time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WAKEHAM: My uncle was a man of few words. I remember one time somebody asked him: What was Buckingham Palace like? His comment was simply: Well, b'y, there was a couch there and a chair and a couple of other things, and that was the extent of it. But he actually rose to the rank of chief petty officer, which at the time was the highest rank that a non-British citizen could rise to in the British navy.

Again, it's one of those stories that afternoons like this remind you of, and my dad used to always say: No one ever dies as long as someone remembers. I think that's so true. All of us have family, friends and neighbours who have fought in wars and served our country and continue to serve our country.

There are lots of great people in my own District of Stephenville - Port au Port. Today it's an honour and a privilege to remember the people who have served in my district and all over the province and continue to serve our country, whether it's during times of war, conflict or peace. So today I, again, thank the Member for

bringing forward the motion and I certainly will support it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I know there are a lot of people who want to speak to this important motion today, so I'm going to try and keep my comments, as well, to three or four minutes.

There is a quote, Mr. Speaker, that says: "The living owe it to those who no longer can speak to tell their story for them." That's why we remember every year on November 11. Remembrance Day, or sometimes known as Poppy Day, is a memorial day that's observed in the Commonwealth since the end of the First World War to remember the members of our Armed Forces who died in the line of duty.

My mind goes back to my district where I've been the representative since 2013, and I think of the services that are faithfully held each year in places like: L'Anse au Clair, on the hill, a lovely little memorial there; down in West St. Modeste where we have the rangers that get involved; in Lodge Bay there are a number of women that came together because all of their sons served. Actually, it's thought that Lodge Bay, that little community, may have the highest number per capita of people in uniform in the country.

There are a number of communities. People come from Charlottetown, Port Hope Simpson, Mary's Harbour and St. Lewis to attend and to remember. Then, as we go further north, there's always a service in Cartwright. I always wish that I could be at each of them.

I remember growing up – raised by my grandparents, Mr. Speaker – and my grandfather would talk about how the neighbours would come in our homes back in yesteryear, very large kitchens and people would gather around the radio. It would be lots of static and not clear but they'd be trying to get word of what was

happening with the war because in Coastal Labrador, all these years ago, there were not a lot of the amenities, but I remember those stories.

It's very important, Mr. Speaker, that we remember. The Member for Terra Nova spoke with emotion because he has experiences, obviously, that's a part of his journey that we can't relate to and while things like pain and grief and various things are universal, everybody's journey is a very private and personal one, so no doubt the war have had different impacts, Mr. Speaker.

When you look up memory in the dictionary it says: "The faculty by which the mind stores and remembers information."

I've no doubt – I had the tremendous privilege one year to lay a wreath on behalf of the province down at the War Memorial. As I looked around at some of the elderly faces, I thought their experience that day would be different than mine, Mr. Speaker. When you think about it, two minutes are scarcely enough time really for thought and reflection, but as we pause each year and we bow our heads, we remember those brave men and women who courageously volunteered for our freedom and for our peace.

I think the important thing for all of us to remember, Mr. Speaker, is they fought to preserve a way of life. We are all such proud Canadians, everyone I meet. Even with this pandemic that we're going through now, we're just so proud to be in Canada where we seem to be fairing better. The Canadian values, the freedom that we enjoy today and often take for granted. We remember that the silence is to honour their sacrifice and memory.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, one day every year, we pay special homage to those who died in service to their country and we remember the brave men and women. For one brief moment of our lives, each year, Mr. Speaker, we remember why we must work for peace every day of the year.

I think it was the Government House Leader that alluded to, this House is often filled with lively, spirited debate, a democracy that we are able to

appreciate and enjoy because of the sacrifice that others gave, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, like others, would just close with a quote and then I will pass the clock over to someone else who would like to speak.

“They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.”

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

MR. P. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I certainly appreciate the motion being put forward by the Member for Burin - Grand Bank.

I look at Remembrance Day and I look at a quote straight from the motion here: “... Remembrance Day is a day to honour and remember the people who have served, and continue to serve Canada during times of war, conflict and peace”

I’ve attended many Remembrance Day ceremonies over the number of years, and participated as a member of council up in Paradise and, of course, as an MHA for Topsail - Paradise. I always – I don’t know the word – respect, certainly, but marvelled at the veterans that showed up for these events.

You look at the weather out there today when we came in; there are many of the Remembrance Day ceremonies, the weather was not always co-operating. Some of these veterans would show up in their, I guess, uniforms or outfits and the beret on their heads. I’m thinking of the Blue Puttees. We’re there in the best of clothes. I could only think to when they fought and when they went to war with the woolen jackets and cotton puttees on their feet, and laid down with wet snow and cold and frozen. I can’t imagine it. I really can’t imagine it. Yet, here they were at

these ceremonies, in their 80s and that, and still standing tall for what they’ve done for us.

Maybe I wasn’t educated enough, I don’t know, but you always learn from your veterans and you always learn from your seniors. I talked to a gentleman; he was a member of the Blue Puttees. I asked him a simple question – we have a ferry named the *Blue Puttees* – I said: What’s a Blue Puttee? I didn’t know what a puttee was. Of course, he told the story.

When the Newfoundland Regiment was quickly formed back in – I think it was August when the war started – August 1914, part of the uniform was their outfit and they had khaki wraps around their leg. That was the puttee. It was wrapped around their legs and it kept debris out of their shoes and mud out of their shoes and actually provided some added ankle support. That was the puttee. But why blue?

When the call went out for recruits in 1914 here in Newfoundland, which we were a dominion at the time, big uptake, over 565 recruits were accepted to go in and go overseas, all for a dollar a day in rations. That’s what they were offered. This is a story this gentleman was telling me. They required you had to be somewhere between the ages of 19 and 35, you had to be in good health, had to be at least 120 pounds and I think five foot, four inches tall, minimum. Good for you (inaudible).

Anyway, there was an enthusiastic response and 565 showed up. Anyway, they didn’t have enough khaki material so it was actually the Church Lads’ Brigade that provided the blue wrappings. That’s how they became known as the Blue Puttees.

I tell that because there have been many stories told here today. I just found that so interesting because I didn’t know why blue and why not.

I go back to what I started off with. It has been mentioned here already by some as well. I just can’t imagine out in the trenches, out in the weather, out in the mud, out in the slush with the outfits that they wore back then. We’re going around with lightweight thermal jackets and gloves and hats and pants and we’re still standing out on November 11 and we’re still freezing.

I really, really, really think this motion forward is – I can't even talk more about it, but it's very necessary that we move forward with this and continue to make sure our monuments are kept up for longer terms than we'll ever know. It also helps remember not just the soldiers that went to war but also the families that were left behind. The families and the children.

I listened to a radio show the other day coming in. I listened to one of the veterans talk on the radio and talk about the poppies and the meaning of the poppies, but also they don't sell poppies. That was the point this gentleman made. He said: We don't sell poppies. He was with the Legion. He said: We give them away but we ask for donations back. Those donations go to help veterans who have hardships throughout the year that they cannot deal with. It could be anything from a new fridge, replacing a roof, grocery cards, whatever, because some of them don't have the pensions that others have.

On November 11, I hope we all are out and about – I know we will be – and remember the sacrifices made, past, present and future for us and take the time, purchase a poppy and make a donation. Lest we forget.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave.

MS. P. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, want to join in the support, of course, for this very important PMR. Thank you to my colleague who introduced this. I also want to thank my friend and colleague across the way, the Member for Terra Nova. Thank you very much for everything that you've done, and everyone who has served and who continues to serve.

I won't take a long time either; I know a lot of people want to speak to this. I will say, Mr. Speaker, this is probably the most respectful day that we've had in the House of Assembly this fall. We're all on the same page, of course, when it comes to this very important topic.

I want to recognize the efforts of the people in my district as well who have served in all the great conflicts. I have a number of Legions in Harbour Grace, Upper Island Cove, Spaniard's Bay, Tilton, as well as Bay Roberts, and, Mr. Speaker, they're very dedicated out there. I want to recognize Mr. John Pauls. He's a World War II veteran in the Merchant Navy of Spaniard's Bay. God love him, every time there's an event, no matter the weather, he is there. He is there with his cane; he's there with the people who assist him in getting around. His dedication is just very inspiring and heartwarming and I want to thank him from the bottom of my heart.

Also, Bill Tetford of Spaniard's Bay, Tilton has served and he has done many tours. He still contributes today. I don't want to miss anyone because there are just so many, Mr. Speaker, to name. I want to also recognize my good friend Paulette Morrisey, who is currently the Legion president for the branch in Harbour Grace, who had served in the navy for 21 years. She was honourably retired and off on medical, but to this day she still serves. As a matter of fact, I had a call from her earlier asking me if I wanted to come and sit with her while she sells poppies. I said: My friend, I'm in the House of Assembly today but I will support you when I can.

I want to recognize those people and the efforts and everything that they do. As we know, the memorial services will be different this year. They all happen at the same time, so what I do as an MHA: I take a turn and I kind of rotate each community. That said, I have representatives go and, of course, represent the provincial government at these ceremonies. I will be in Bay Roberts this year. I just wanted to say thank you and to add my voice to it.

I remember as a child, way back when we first started recognizing these ceremonies, I didn't know why but there was always a sombre feeling. It was a holiday, we got a day off school, but for some reason you always felt sombre. Today, when I attend ceremonies, I have a job to fight back the tears because I feel emotional and I can't help it. I'm there and just sitting there and just letting your imagination, your thoughts go to what those people experienced.

As my colleague, my neighbouring MHA, mentioned in Spaniard's Bay, yes, it's right on the water, that war memorial. Even on Memorial Day it's enough to freeze you there on July 1. As cold as it is on some days, I always say again – and what my colleagues have said here – this is nothing in comparison to what they did for us. Every time I speak to students at services or in schools I always say the privileges that we celebrate today, the blessings that we have, the way of life, the quality of life that we have in Newfoundland and Labrador as well as Canada, is because of what they did for us, the ultimate sacrifice.

Anything that we can do to support them – anything that we can do to support them – is not enough. We have to do more. I just again want to say thank you very much for the life that they have been able to allow us to have in our beautiful province and great country.

I will take my seat again, Mr. Speaker, because I know a lot of people want to contribute and give thanks. Lest we forget.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

MS. COFFIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This is truly an honour. It makes me reflect back a very long time ago when I was playing glockenspiel in sea cadets and commemorating Remembrance Day. This is worlds from now. I have matured and my sense of Remembrance Day has been expanded.

I think I have a greater depth of understanding, but it is a far cry from the hon. Member for Terra Nova. I'm greatly appreciative of your service, Sir, as we all are. You brought me to tears as well. I do appreciate that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. COFFIN: It is hard to speak to something new when we all feel so passionately about this, but a little piece that I can add is a while ago I did some research on Newfoundlanders serving

in the military. Newfoundland and Labrador is disproportionately represented in the Canadian military and that's for a variety of reasons, some of which are economic.

Growing up in Newfoundland, there aren't a lot of other job prospects. Quite often the military is a very viable option. Far beyond that, Mr. Speaker, is our undeniable call to service and the love of our country and our province. That is one of the reasons we see such a high proportion of individuals from Newfoundland and Labrador serving in all aspects of Newfoundland and Labrador military.

Mr. Speaker, that reminds me of a very interesting story. A dear, dear friend of mine by the name of Mr. Bill Miles from Grand Bank, who joined the military right out of high school. He would've done Grade 11, went and signed on. When this gentleman signed on, I'm not sure how he managed to do this but somehow, somewhere he convinced the Canadian military to bring him home for every single Christmas and every single Grand Bank Day. I could almost set my clock to know that Bill is showing up; I have to go to the airport and pick this man up.

I remember one year he came home from, I'm pretty sure, the opposite side of the earth and flew home for two days just to get home for Christmas. That is this gentleman's dedication to his service, but also to his home. I think that's an interesting parallel. He has long since retired and since then we've had some incredible conversations about some of the struggles of retired members.

Too often we talk about struggles with mental health, struggles to get access to the physical supports that they need, to the mental supports that they need, to even get access to pensions. That is an absolute shame. Too often he has told me of friends committing suicide because they do not have the supports they need to process what they have experienced, Mr. Speaker. That also brings a tear to my eye and it makes me say that even though we are remembering, perhaps we are not doing enough.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take a moment to reflect on what one of the other Members had said. The Member for Paradise –

MR. P. DINN: Topsail.

MS. COFFIN: – Topsail - Paradise, who did say that the requirements at the time to get into the military were you had to be five foot two and 120 pounds. Well, my Grandfather Coffin was incredibly dedicated to the country or the Dominion of Newfoundland and Labrador. When the call went out, Pop ran out and he went to get enlisted. He was 5-2, barely, but 5-2. Bow legged made him a little bit shorter, I think, but they wouldn't accept him. They did not accept him because he had flat feet. Now, without those flat feet, I may not have been here today.

That's an interesting little perspective, because I remember after that when we were looking to recruit more, I think the requirements became somewhat reduced. Then you just simply needed – and I do believe this is a joke – you simply needed two teeth to be able to hold on to the pack of gunpowder and be able to open that while in your battle. So our criterion for serving certainly varies but our dedication to it is undeniable.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take a moment to mention someone who is quite an exceptional veteran, Mr. Rod Deon. Mr. Deon, I have a note here that says: Last year when he was volunteering for the Poppy campaign, he was 97 years old. If you look up a picture of him, this gentleman has more medals on his chest than he has fabric on his shirt. This gentleman is so dedicated to the cause and, in fact, I believe he went back to Beaumont-Hamel just last year to commemorate. Mr. Deon is an incredible veteran and a fascinating, absolutely fascinating individual to have a chat with. So if anyone is ever given an opportunity to speak with him, I strongly recommend that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to thank, also, the Member for Harbour Main for mentioning Sgt. Williams, it is very important. I noticed when I was in Brigus just recently, there were yellow ribbons around flagpoles and telephone poles and flags were about. That was a community in mourning. This gentleman was beloved and he served above and beyond. That was quite an impressive showing of dedication for his service.

I don't have the same relationship as many others here do, and I can't speak as personally about some of the things many people have seen or experienced, whether personally or with close family members or friends, but I did happen to read a little while ago, and it was a repeat of something I had known when this first came out, the beach invasion scene of *Saving Private Ryan*. I remember when it came out, it was said to be such a realistic depiction of what had happened during that invasion that there were support services set up in the movie theatres for veterans for when they came out, they would be able to recollect and be supported and just help them cope with the memories that triggered.

Mr. Speaker, I am incredibly pleased to hear that we are looking forward to and advocating for the restoration of the national monument that rests in my district. From time to time I do sit in the monument and I try and remember and reflect upon much of what was said, but also the things I know of the sacrifices that have been made.

So I encourage all Members to do much the same, to take time to think about the sacrifices made and the long-standing effects of individuals, but also on our society for all those who have served.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be able to speak.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

MR. BRAGG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the hon. Member for Burin - Grand Bank for this private Member's motion here today.

Mr. Speaker, on July 24, 2024, will mark the 100th anniversary of the dedication of the National War Memorial here in St. John's. In 2019, it was designated as a National Historic Site.

The National War Memorial in St. John's was actually opened 15 years before the National War Memorial in Ottawa. One of two in this province is the one that was opened 15 years earlier.

Mr. Speaker, our department, I guess we're the ones who would tend to that building. We've met with the Legion; we know their current needs. We're looking forward to meeting their needs because we would like to see that memorial presented in 2024. I will look forward to that 100 year anniversary.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to take a lot of time, but the War Memorial is very close and personal to a lot of people. I'm going to read you 14 names: Daniel Barrow, S. George Burry, George B. Carter, Reginald Chaytor, J. Charley Chaytor, Joseph Dewey, Harry G. Dominy, Edwin Edgar, L. Duncan Hoddinott, Edgar Hoskins, John H. House, Harold Hutchins, Harry L. Young and Frederick Wicks. That's 14 young men who gave their life up in the Great War from my small community.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAGG: I can feel my cheeks flush up here now, Mr. Speaker, because as long as I can remember, going to the War Memorial on November 11 has been a part of life, I say, from when I was this high. I know people off camera can't see how high this is, but I can remember Uncle Reg, as a little boy, taking me down there. He was a vet from the Second World War. He would say: Dexter, you're coming with me. I remember that like it was yesterday. He died, I suppose, close to 50 years ago now. It was a long history for my family.

The War Memorial, I'll give you a quick history, was built by the sealers. They came back after the Great War. They went to ice; they saw the need. They raised over \$1,200, Mr. Speaker, and the invoice for that stone was in the Anglican Church rectory for years and still there now. My uncle lives there. He's the keeper of that invoice. It's around \$1,200. The stone was shipped from England with the names carved in it, Mr. Speaker. Can you imagine what \$1,200 was back in the 1920s? It was a lot of money. It was a big effort.

It's been a pride of our community. The town now has dwindled to around 300 people. November 11, you'll see over a hundred people parade from the church to the memorial, to the cenotaph, to pay their respects, and where these

names are read out of people who died in the Second World War, Mr. Speaker.

It's with great pride that we stand throughout this great province of ours and respect the people who've fallen and the past members who served. My dad was a member of the Black Watch, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure if anybody is familiar with what the Black Watch is, but apparently they were a pretty rough bunch and he didn't encourage me to join. I think they were actually disbanded after he got out.

Mr. Speaker, it's close for me. My cousin only retired a couple of years ago from the military. All I can say to that is lest we forget. Let's wear our poppies proudly. Let's spend our November 11 – I know some communities will probably lay a wreath or observe a moment of silence. The latest I heard is they're asking people to stand outside their door for a moment of silence. Do whatever you need to do, but do something on November 11 to remember these great men and women who gave so much so that we could have what we have today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

MR. TIBBS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Everybody's words here today are very impactful. It's absolutely a fantastic thing to see coming up on November 11.

When it comes to soldiers, we send them off to different countries, different wars over the years, fully equipped, fully trained. They know what they take on and they do such a great job keeping us safe at home, but I think the responsibility on us is for when they do get back home; make sure that when they do get back home they're honoured and they are not forgotten about. That's why the Legions are so important throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, throughout Canada, and the people that are in them.

Everybody thinks sometimes – not everybody, some people think that you have to be a veteran to be part of the Legion. Anybody can join the Legion and give their time whatnot. I encourage anybody to check that out.

The hon. Member for Terra Nova, who is also a very close friend of mine, he knows better than anybody that the fight doesn't stop when they leave the military. Sometimes the battle just begins for a lot of these veterans that come back home or leave the military. You don't have to be an older gentleman or older lady, you can be young as well, but the battle continues as they get home. A lot of people don't realize this, but the Member for Terra Nova, also, he's counselled veterans, amputees throughout the years and he's given lots of his service well after he left the service. That's absolutely fantastic.

I will only take a moment, because I want to talk about the result and the impact these veterans have. We talk about what they've done, but the result of it back home is extraordinary, and I have a case in point: This summer my oldest son Declan, who's 15 years old, made a very courageous move in coming out to myself and my wife and told us that he's gay.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TIBBS: I tell you what, he was given that freedom and he was given that right because of people like the Member for Terra Nova and all the veterans across this country. I'm one very proud dad of my son Declan and I'm one very proud man of our veterans. It's because of these people that we can all walk the streets; that my son can walk the street with his head held very, very high and know that he will never come under any prosecution. He will never be badgered. He will always have me on his side and he will be able to live his life with the peace and serenity like these young men and women are supposed to live their life. We thank our veterans for that because they gave us this country which is absolutely magnificent.

Mr. Speaker, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention Captain Forrest Thompson. He's the adjutant for the Royal Newfoundland Regiment and he's from Grand Falls-Windsor. An absolutely fantastic man. I think he's done two or three tours as well. I love speaking with him and I

love talking to him and I just thank him for his service. I thank all veterans for their service.

I encourage everybody, guys, yes, November 11 is one day but there are 364 days out of the year where if you see a veteran, you can buy them a coffee; you can say hello. You can just thank him for his service, or her for her service.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, have a great day.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I won't take long either, out of respect for all Members here who want to pay respect to our veterans.

I just want to mention a few names: Gallipoli, Beaumont, Hamel, The Dardanelles, Suave, Cypress, Monchy, Monument, Blue Puttee, and Regiment. All of these names mean a lot to every one of us here. They're all names – and there are others – of streets in the St. John's area. They're named for places that the Royal Newfoundland Regiment fought. I think those are standing memories. Unfortunately, generations older than us probably won't think of or know what the names of those streets are for. I think it's important for us and our generation to teach our children every time we pass one of those streets why they were named.

I've been here 25 years and I can honestly say three of the things that I am most proud of during my time here. One was getting the peacekeepers' monument built in downtown St. John's. I was proud of that. The other was when I was Speaker. For the new Members of the Legislature who weren't here and probably don't remember, for those of us who were here, we all read, each, 40 names of people who had served from the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in World War I to remember them so that they would be read into *Hansard* and kept forever as a memory for anybody who has ever gone back to look at *Hansard* and to remember that.

The peacekeepers' monument, by the way, the miniature of that is actually in our lobby – the same one that's downtown St. John's.

That brings me to the third item: Myself – and following me as Speaker, my colleague from Lake Melville – I had spent a number of evenings in the residence of the ambassador to Canada from Turkey in Ottawa and spoken with the Turkish government in trying to get the Trail of the Caribou complete, and they agreed. As a province, we had been working on that for almost 100 years. They'd agreed and they contacted me when I was Speaker, the Turkish government, and invited me.

One of the only sad parts about leaving the Speaker's Chair to go into Cabinet was I didn't get to go on that trip. I thank the Member for Lake Melville, who picked up the torch, went to Gallipoli in Turkey and picked the spot that that monument is going to be placed. I would say, just as the miniature for the peacekeepers' monument is in our lobby, we should have the miniature of the last caribou to complete the Trail of the Caribou placed in our lobby as well. I think it would be fitting.

One other small story, and I think of it because we have two remembrance days in this province: July 1 was our remembrance day before we became a part of Canada, and November 11 is the Canadian Remembrance Day. Both are very, very important to this province and to the people of the province. Elinor Gill Ratcliffe, Fortis and a number of other contributors contributed a great deal of money to put, down at The Rooms, a permanent reminder, exhibit to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. It's so important to the people of this province that our children and our children's children remember what our Royal Newfoundland Regiment contributed to the people of Canada, to the people of the Commonwealth and the sacrifice made in this province.

I remember on July 1 on the 100th anniversary, I still can't believe, but I brought in some soil to work on the back of my garden – we have some waterfront and just building it up – and I never completed it because in that soil, for some reason, the seeds of forget-me-nots were there. I remember going down on July 1 before I went to The Rooms and much to my surprise where I

placed the soil it was filled with forget-me-nots. It was on July 1 and I said: That's the way it's going to stay, just like it is. Those forget-me-nots come back every year. I couldn't believe when I went down there on July 1 that they were there. But it is a constant reminder to me of our Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

Lest we forget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

MR. DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'll just take a couple of minutes to recognize the veterans in my beautiful District of Placentia West - Bellevue.

I find that Newfoundland is really built on our veterans. You don't have to go very far to recognize how things happened here and how we got to where we are. It's because of the people that gave, not only the ultimate sacrifice but came back with probably some issues and still carried on. Again, I would like to say thank you to the veteran in the House. He's a good friend of mine as well. He has a kind heart that he will reach out to you if you're having your own issues, I guess.

In my campaign, when I ran for the District of Placentia West - Bellevue, I never asked, Mr. Speaker, anybody to vote for me; I asked people to get out and vote. The reason why is because I figure if I'm a good enough person, the numbers will fall where they may. But we don't take votes off. That shouldn't be something that we should even consider. We should have a hundred per cent of people that are eligible to vote, voting, for the simple fact that there are people in this world that would still love to have this opportunity. It's the most expensive and the most valuable thing we have in our wallets. It's an opportunity to have a say in what goes on around us and how our tax dollars are spent.

With that being said, we had all these people that went before that gave the ultimate sacrifice and, to me, Newfoundland and Labrador is very ritualistic in memorializing that effort. I appreciate that. I really do appreciate that. What

I say to people is get out and vote because that's what they fought for and that's what they gave us the opportunity to do. Like I said, the numbers will straighten themselves out if you're a good enough person and you're running for the right reasons. For that, I'm going to say a great appreciation.

I have several cenotaphs in my district: one in Norman's Cove-Long Cove, Arnold's Cove and Sunnyside. I have one in Come By Chance that was actually repatriated from the islands. I always say a prayer to that one each time I get a chance, because he's been brought in just to be close to his family. I have one in Terrenceville. They don't have a monument yet, but they do a really nice ceremony that I had an opportunity to attend. I will keep fighting to get some funding for them to actually get a cenotaph. English Harbour East and Marystown, which does a big, robust ceremony each year.

On July 1st because of COVID, I know that we never had any ceremonies or anything, but I took it upon myself to visit every one of these cenotaphs on July 1, myself. It wasn't for photo ops, it wasn't for any reason other than to show the respects that these guys deserve and these ladies deserve.

On behalf of the great District of Placentia West - Bellevue, I want to say thank you to all our veterans.

Lest we forget.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

MR. TRIMPER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I'm going to go rather quickly given the time. I do want to point out and give a special tip of the hat to the Trail of the Caribou research group. I look across the floor at my friends from Conception Bay East - Bell Island and from the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis, were regulars at this annual fundraiser.

This is a special group of people from the province who travel all over the world looking for gravesites of people from this great province, this former country, who had given their lives and are buried in far, flung places in the world. It's quite special what they do. The money goes in to fixing up those site and saying a prayer and remembering them and inventorying this kind of information.

You go to places like (inaudible), all the different sites in the Trail of the Caribou and the special tribute that Speaker 43, I like to call him, and the effort he and I and so many others in this room were involved in, it's so exciting.

We've been reading some prayers; I just want to bring to this House the situation that happened to us in Gallipoli when we realized that Turkey was very much, after a century, going to allow us to finally put up that final caribou monument. It was this prayer, this poem that really struck home for us because there were two sites that we talked about. One was on British soil, that had been seated to the UK and it was at a cemetery called ANZAC Cemetery. The other was next to where Hugh McWhirter, the very first casualty of the First World War from the Regiment that lost his life in battle, where he's buried at this Hill 10 cemetery.

The site, we all need to go there. It's a special place and guess what? It is Turkish soil. The Turks said to myself and Larry Weatherbie who was with me, at the time, they said: We will take care of your monument. We will take care of you. This is where it comes from. This is from Ataturk Mustafa Kemal who was a big hero and it's from this poem that we all thought about this.

"Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives ... You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehments to us where they lie side by side in this country of ours ... You, the mothers who sent their sons from faraway countries, wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to our *Standing Orders*, I'm going to call on the Member for Burin - Grand Bank to conclude the debate now.

MS. HALEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank all Members who spoke to today's resolution, in particular my colleague, the Member for Terra Nova.

It's been a very emotional afternoon in this hon. House. There is no doubt that we all share a common respect for those that have put themselves forward to be the protectors of their fellow citizens, Mr. Speaker; to be the protectors of the values that we hold dear; to be the peacekeepers in far-flung lands, when we see the helpless and vulnerable being terrorized and oppressed.

The memorials and cenotaphs that we find in so many towns and communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador stand as a promise to those who have served and continue to serve; to those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice or came home scarred, Mr. Speaker, physically or emotionally. They stand as a promise that we will never forget.

It is our duty to ensure that those silent sentries stand for generations to come. Like those they commemorate, they, too, age. It's incumbent, Mr. Speaker, on those who know freedoms and liberties, the envy of the world, to ensure they never slide into oblivion.

The National War Memorial here in St. John's, our capital city, represents all who have been members of our Armed Forces. It's very fitting that we call on our provincial government to allot the resources needed to ensure its rehabilitation by the year 2024, Mr. Speaker, the centennial year of its dedication.

Once again, I thank all hon. Members for their contribution here today.

Lest we forget.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TRIMPER: I just wonder if it's possible to seek leave while we still have a few minutes. There were some other Members who wanted to speak. I wonder if that's possible; just seek out my colleagues.

MR. SPEAKER: There were some other Members who wanted to speak, I believe.

The hon. the Member for Labrador West, I'm assuming he has leave.

AN HON. MEMBER: Leave.

MR. BROWN: Thank you for that and I appreciate that.

I just wanted to take a quick moment – obviously, we support this – because I have a lot of interesting connections to a lot of things. My wife's biological father was a blue beret. He served in Bosnia and the supports weren't there when he came back. Unfortunately, my wife has never been able to actually have her father, so she grew up without her dad. It was very interesting because her family goes back to even the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

Her great-great-uncle was an Inuit man from one of the islands off of Cartwright. He went away, and while he was away most of his family was wiped out by the Spanish flu and he himself was killed in the last month of the conflict. He was killed in Belgium. Actually, his death penny is now part of the permanent exhibit at The Rooms. So if anyone goes to The Rooms, they can see the death penny of George Toumishey, an Inuit man from Labrador.

A lot of Labradorians did serve in that thing. A lot of Indigenous people from Labrador did serve in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, and stop and remember all those individuals. To most Newfoundlanders at the time, Labrador was a far away place that was part of the province. Even then it was interesting.

It's a very solemn thing to think about remembrance. Even if you stand by a war memorial, you always feel that solemnness. It's like the world gets quiet around you and you're just there with your thoughts and thinking about others and the sacrifices that they made for

yourself and your people around you in your community.

The Member for Terra Nova, to think about that, he's originally from my district and himself and so many people of his age actually went away and served. We're very proud of them. We think about them often, and those who've come back and those who do not.

This Remembrance Day is going to look a little different and it's going to feel a little different as we're in a different situation in time. No matter where you are or where you're standing, take that moment at 11 o'clock and stop and think about them, because there might be a veteran around in your community that you might not even know is there. Sometimes they don't want to talk about it. Just think about them even if you don't know their name, because you don't know what struggles they brought home with them, or a family who may have lost somebody, the struggles that they deal with after that too.

So take this moment to remember all those people and all the people that are around you as we remember this Remembrance Day. This one will be a bit different, but it doesn't make it any less important.

So thank you for leave to give me time to let me speak on that, too.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Fascinating and moving to hear everyone's stories. We all have a connection, each of us, with the military. I have my own. They go back three generations from my own and my own personal experience, all the way back to my great-uncles. Those are the members of my family with whom I've spoken, and that's the men and women of the family. It's not just been a male preoccupation with the war in Europe.

What I would like to do, though, is to focus on my own district for a minute. We have the busiest search and rescue unit in Gander. My recently moved next-door neighbour seemed to think that jumping out of a helicopter or a Hercules in the pitch dark into the Arctic with a dinghy strapped to his leg was just the way you spent the evening. He was a SAR Tech, and they are the most unique of the many unique, I think, in many respects, in the military. It is a very active base; it's been a great help to the Department of Health and Community Services because they do provide services, and we've heard some of the Members opposite allude to those as well. Not just looking after folk on the water and folk at sea.

I think it's just worth taking a moment on Wednesday of next week. We have what is the only official Commonwealth War Graves site, run from the UK, in North America, in Gander. It is at the side of Runway 21. So I'll be there at five to 8, and then with the rest of the community a little bit later on.

I won't belabour the point, but thank you for the chance to speak, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Bonavista.

MR. PARDY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member for Lake Melville for allowing the opportunity to just have a few moments to speak.

Just a reflection and a couple of anecdotes. I attended, as a MHA, my first memorial service on July 1 in Bonavista. It was my first. But I stood and it was a gentleman by the name of Doug Strickland who read the roll call. You stood still, you listened and you remembered each and every name from the Bonavista area that were read. One thing that I will never forget is the length of time it took to read the list of names that Mr. Strickland had read and he had read for years in the memorial service in Bonavista. Mr. Strickland was a Korean vet and he always read it.

This past year, unfortunately, we lost Mr. Strickland and we lost him during COVID, but I

know that we did make accommodations in the health care system that he did have visitations during COVID that his grandchildren could go in and spend some time with him.

I think of two other short little anecdotes: Hayward Lodge from Port Union was a bus driver of the school when I used to go on it, but one thing I'll never forget is what he had stated because he also served in the Korean War and he was up there in age, at the time, but one thing we always knew that Hayward Lodge had told us is that he never had a full night's sleep since coming back from the Korean War. The longer from that point in time, the more it resonates with me of the hardship that he had.

The third little anecdote: I had a gentleman by the name – I was blessed and fortunate that he moved in across the street from me in Milton – a gentleman, a World War II vet, by the name of George Rogers, but I didn't know George served in the war. The relationship that we had, when I spent so much time in his house, there was nothing, memorabilia, to reflect on the war. It was only when, as a street, we were looking after him in his final years, at the ripe age of 96, when he mentioned that he had served in the war.

He'd wait for me to get home, inside of his front door. When I'd back my truck in across the street, I knew if he was stood in front of his storm door, that it was time for me to go in and sit down with him and that might have been 10, 10:30 at night and we sit down and then at that late stage he would talk about it.

If you think about it, why don't people talk about it more? I sat around the table with the Member for Terra Nova, I really haven't heard him talk about his experiences of what he had, those experiences. In fact, I now acknowledge that I even had to phone Veterans Affairs to check to see whether my good friend was a veteran because he needed help and he was on the registry.

When I think, and to conclude, I think back of me being principal of Clarendville Middle School. We had a great Remembrance Day ceremony. We had many parents that would come into the gymnasium and that were there. The veterans would come in and it was great that

the veterans would mingle with the children after. What a learning experience it was.

I hear all the anecdotes we have. I hear the Member for Terra Nova speak and then I look back and say while I take great pride that was a wonderful day, it was one day a year. The only thing I would say: not enough.

Thank you very much for the time. Like I said, everyone spoke well and it's been a great afternoon listening to everyone remember about this very important time that we have coming up next Wednesday.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: We have a couple of other Members that want to speak in the House. With leave, I'm going to recognize those Members.

AN HON. MEMBER: Leave.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to be very brief and I mean it this time.

September 3, 2006, the City of Mount Pearl lost one of its very own in Kandahar, Afghanistan. He was 39 years of age. He was in the army, Royal Canadian Regiment, 1st Battalion. His name was Warrant Officer Richard Francis Nolan.

We're very proud of him in our community, in Mount Pearl. There's actually a street named Richard Nolan Drive in his honour. On his behalf today, I will gladly be supporting – or I should say in his memory today – this private Member's motion.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Municipalities.

MR. BENNETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm only going to take a quick minute. Like everyone in the House of Assembly here today, I will be supporting this private Member's motion.

As a young boy, I grew up in Lewisporte and I remember November 11 quite vividly because I lived pretty well next door to the War Memorial in Lewisporte. I can still remember the sirens and the parades that took place as the air cadets led everyone towards the War Memorial, where I would think probably hundreds and hundreds of people from our community would gather to recognize and to remember those who have served and those who continue to serve. From that, as a little boy, that's probably a good reason why I got involved in the air cadet movement and also joined in those parades over the years.

Throughout my district there are four war memorials right now: one in Lewisporte, Summerford, Cottlesville and Twillingate. Each year, unfortunately you cannot attend every ceremony but I do always take the opportunity to visit all four memorials to lay a wreath. Whether it's at 11 a.m., when traditionally they're being held, or any time during the day, I do always make that effort to get down to those communities to, again, show my respect.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask leave from the House tomorrow to deliver a Member's statement. While we were discussing this PMR this afternoon, I was following on Twitter and I learned of a veteran from my district that is 100 years old that just recently passed away. With leave of the House I will like to honour that veteran tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I know it's past our time but I thank everybody for giving me the opportunity to have a few minutes. I could go on for much longer, but like everyone I just want to show my respect to all those veterans that have served and continue to serve.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Skills and Labour as well.

MR. BYRNE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It would be gentle and fair to say that the act of remembrance is not a glorification of the failure of reason of war. It is the celebration, the bittersweet commemoration of those who either paid or were prepared to pay the ultimate sacrifice in the defence of freedom and the values of democracy.

It is essential that each and every one of us differentiate and understand – and we pass that knowledge and wisdom on to younger generations – that really what we do at the 11th day of the 11th hour of the 11th month, we are really celebrating, in a very bittersweet way, that the act of war is an act of the failure of reason. But those who stand prepared to pay the ultimate sacrifice are the bridge and the only divide between what could be either the continuation or the failure of democracy.

Mr. Speaker, when each and every one of us assemble in our own quiet way in different circumstances on November 11th of this coming year, always remember it is our responsibility, especially given the fact that the number of veterans, those who served overseas in the Second World War and indeed in the Korean conflict, the Korean War, their numbers are diminishing. The mentors and those that can provide that education to younger people are becoming fewer and far between, but we still have those who served with the Canadian Armed Forces, served in uniform, served in peacekeeping and served in other roles. We always need to reach out to those incredible heroes, those incredible veterans to understand exactly what it is that we are celebrating in such a bittersweet way.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, if I am to be the last speaker of the day, perhaps I can offer –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. BYRNE: Is there more? Understood.

Well, with that said, I'm delighted to have more, because the more voices, the more thoughts, the more perspectives of this the more powerful it becomes.

Allow me to recite, if it has not been done yet in the House yet this afternoon already, “In Flanders Fields.”

“In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

“We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

“Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.”

I wish everyone a very thoughtful, a very reflective and a community-based Remembrance Day on November 11.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I’ll be very brief. I guess when we celebrate all the contributions made to Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador, I think what it is, it really is a celebration, because we have to respect the greatest gift that they gave to us and why they gave it to us.

I’d also like to recognize all the Indigenous soldiers that didn’t make it home and the ones that did come home to less than what they expected on their return home. It’s very important for us all to be together and for us to respect the contribution made. It didn’t matter if it was a Canadian soldier, a Newfoundland and Labrador soldier or an Indigenous soldier, the thing about it is a lot of people paid the ultimate sacrifice.

One name I’d like to recognize is the name of John Shiwak. His role was as a sniper and a scout in World War I. Actually, he had a reputation by his commanding officers that he served under, as probably the best sniper in the British Army – which I think is a huge acknowledgement of his ability. Also, there were many other Indigenous soldiers that fought alongside of him. Many of them didn’t come home.

I think it’s important for us to realize that as Canadians now we are very, very honoured and, as my fellow MHA talked about, we have a lot of rights and civil liberties that are not afforded to other people in this world.

I would like to thank everybody who made the ultimate sacrifice. I think that we, as MHAs, should work to ensure that the civil liberties continue and that we respect everybody who serves and everybody who comes home.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

MR. O’DRISCOLL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It’s an honour here just to say a few words on this. When you go through your district – I have four areas that I go through, that you try to get to every year and, obviously, you can only do one on Remembrance Day, so you try to go on July 1 as well. There’s one in Petty Harbour, one in Bay Bulls, one in Ferryland, one in Trepassey. I am attending one next Tuesday in the school and the church in Trepassey. They invited me up, so I get to do two. They did one in school, or they’ll do one in school, I should say. It’s an honour to do that and I’d just like to say thank you to them.

Also, I’ve been named after my uncle who was in the Forces. I never met him, obviously, but I’m named after him. He was in the Forces at 18 years old. He had to come home, and he died of cancer. So he never got to really serve. I guess he served but he never finished. I’d just like to put that in *Hansard* so it’s on record.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just a short story. In one of my recent election campaigns, I happened to knock on the door of a couple, one of which, the gentleman, was a veteran of the Second World War.

Unfortunately, he was unable to come to the door because he was only given a couple of days left to be in this world. I managed to go in, and he said to me: fighting for the freedom of choice and to vote almost killed me a million times over when I was 19. He said if he could vote one last time he'd rest easy. I was able to arrange a special ballot for the gentleman and he got to exercise his right for which we all enjoy and take for granted.

I would like to thank all of those who have served and those who continue to serve to protect the rights and freedoms that we all now enjoy.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development.

MR. WARR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again, I just want to take an opportunity, and like the Member for Lewisporte - Twillingate, I, too, became involved in the Air Cadets program at age 13. My father was actually the commanding officer of 837 Northeast Squadron in Springdale. Like my colleague and good friend from Terra Nova, who I have a lot of respect for, I, too, could have chosen to go into the Armed Forces. It was something that I was intrigued with as a young air cadet. I wanted to go into the Air Force, but I chose the police force instead.

I'm glad you recognized members of the RCMP today in your remarks. I spoke to this House of Assembly just four or five weeks ago about an

RCMP – my best friend, actually, who lost his life just a little while ago and he, too, served in Afghanistan as part of the Canadian membership there.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity twice in this House of Assembly to honour war veterans. Herb Pike, who actually is my really good friend, who passed away during COVID as well, and I will say the honourable Tommy Ricketts, who the Member had spoken about today as well, who actually hails from my district. So, Mr. Speaker, I, too, will tip my hat to the veterans.

One thing I have noticed over the many, many parades that I've been a part of on November 11 is having the involvement of youth. If I can say anything to the Members here today and to the people who are listening: Continue to have your children, your grandchildren, your friends, young and old, engaged in the act of remembrance. Mr. Speaker, it is so important that we continue to educate our children on exactly what went on way back when.

Thank you for the time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As everyone else here in this House of Assembly, I have 14 war memorials in my district and I, too, would just like to pay tribute. As the sister of a veteran, as the great-niece of two great-uncles and as the granddaughter of a veteran, I just wish to say lest we forget.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Like everybody here, we have a storied past when it comes to commitment to the military

and our respect for it. I do respect my hon. colleague here from the District of Terra Nova for his service and all those who serve.

Mr. Speaker, I'll just quickly note a few things: service number, 1358; occupation, miner; religion, Roman Catholic; service date, April 1, 1915; retirement date, March 31, 1990; hometown, Spaniard's Bay; name, Matthew Brazil. My uncle was a dedicated member of the military and the Newfoundland Regiment, so much so that his hometown community of Spaniard's Bay named the Legion after him. That's an honour.

He was a miner on Bell Island. When the call came out in 1915 he was one of the first to enlist. He left Bell Island, went to the Portugal Cove side, walked with a group of other men from Portugal Cove and other areas into the enlisting office and signed up at the time.

We talked about another great hero, Tommy Ricketts. My uncle was fortunate to be Tommy Ricketts's commanding officer in a number of battles, particularly the one where he won the Victoria Cross. He, like my uncle and another gentleman from Newfoundland and Labrador, were heroes at a number of battles and saved not only their regiment but, in some cases, probably a major battle that changed some of the things that happened for the Newfoundland Regiment.

Mr. Speaker, we are all very proud of our heritage here. We're very proud of the people who served in the past; we're very proud of those who serve presently and, no doubt, we will be very proud of those who serve in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: It's been a very different day in the House, I think a very emotional day in the House as we remember and we hear other people's reflections and thoughts. It's very fitting, as we're a week away from Remembrance Day, a Remembrance Day that's going to be very different than what we've had in the past.

I want to thank the Member for bringing forth her motion. I want to thank the Members of the

House for having the kind of discussion, the debate – more of a discussion that we've had here today – because I think it's a way of us showing our respect and remembering.

I'm going to call the vote now.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to our *Standing Orders*, the House is now adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow.