



Province of Newfoundland and Labrador

FIFTIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Volume L

FIRST SESSION

Number 28

HANSARD

Speaker: Honourable Derek Bennett, MHA

Wednesday

October 27, 2021

The House met at 10 a.m.

SPEAKER (Bennett): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Orders of the Day

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you, Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Motion 1.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: WHEREAS section 7 of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* prescribes that, upon nomination by the House of Assembly, the Sergeant-at-Arms shall be appointed by Lieutenant-Governor in Council by Commission under the Great Seal;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Mr. Robert Escott be appointed Sergeant-at-Arms.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER A. FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm pleased to take a few moments to welcome Mr. Robert Escott or, as we all know him, of course, Bob –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

We need a mover and a seconder for that motion, please.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Sorry, my apologies, Mr. Speaker. I think I had to do a redo last Wednesday morning so I guess I do again. Wednesday mornings are not my time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

That motion would be moved by myself and seconded by the Premier.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER A. FUREY: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased to take a few moments to welcome Mr. Robert Escott, or as we all, of course, know him affectionately as Bob, to the position of Sergeant-at-Arms in the House of Assembly. The Sergeant-at-Arms is the officer responsible for, as we know, the security in the Chamber, for protecting all of us as MHAs and the custodian of the mace.

Mr. Speaker, I know all of us are used to seeing Mr. Escott outside the Chamber as director of security services for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and he has done a remarkable job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER A. FUREY: Over the years he has done such an exceptional job of overseeing the security team for all of our buildings and assisting with special guests to the Confederation Building. Most recently, he received glowing reviews about the great work he did in assisting the prime minister's team on their recent visit to the province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER A. FUREY: Mr. Escott's role as director of security services also saw him work alongside the Sergeant-as-Arms and the staff for the House of Assembly so that the Legislature remained a safe, secure and accessible environment, especially during these times of COVID-19; a very fitting experience for this new role.

Mr. Escott's history with the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary makes him the perfect fit as well. During more than two decades with the police force, Mr. Escott has many years of experience in the patrol division and was promoted to sergeant in 1989.

Mr. Escott epitomizes the motto to protect and serve, and I know he's certainly up to the challenge as Sergeant-at-Arms for the House of Assembly. We are very fortunate to have someone of his calibre and credentials with us. On behalf of the government caucus, I want to congratulate him and officially welcome him here to the House of Assembly.

Well done, Sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

D. BRAZIL: Speaker, thank you for this opportunity.

I congratulate Robert Hiscock – Escott. Sorry, Bob, I apologize for that.

I thank the Government House Leader and the Premier for putting this forward. I've had the privilege of knowing Bob, going back some 30 years, in my days when I rode with the RNC and Bob was a young officer there. We crossed paths a number of times and in sporting events and parts of his storied career with the RNC.

I had more of an opportunity to get to know him a number of years ago when I had the privilege of authorizing his hiring to come in here as part of the administration and management of our security in the Confederation Building. They were times when we were going through transitions around how we keep the employees in this building safe, how we keep staff in the House of Assembly safe and how we ensure that the MHAs are kept safe here, while at the same time respecting the citizens of this provinces because it is their House and their access to here. Finding ways that would be less intrusive for people to still be able to be engaged in the Confederation Building, but at the same time, ensuring that everybody follows proper protocols.

With Bob's knowledge and his background in security and police enforcement and safety, he brought a new approach to things, a new knowledge. A very relaxed, engaging ability to get the other staff and senior members of the bureaucracy to make some changes that were in

the best interests of everybody. Bob brings that very engaging, easy set of skills that made this transition very easy.

We've noticed how we've now changed to one point of entry into Confederation Building where it's much easier for everyone to understand who's coming to the building, who they're coming to see and the individuals coming in would know exactly their roles and responsibilities as part of that. He brought that knowledge.

Now, we elevate him to this level, as Sergeant-at-Arms for our security and for our protection but, particularly, for the dignity that that role and that responsibility brings to the House of Assembly. Bob, obviously, as a professional all his life, brings that skill set, but brings that acknowledgement that the House of Assembly is a place of importance for the people of this province and should be seen and respected for that.

No doubt, he made a decision to want to come to do that, coming into a role that he was familiar with by seeing his former colleague partaking in that and taking that responsibility on.

On behalf of the PC caucus, I thank him for taking on that role. I thank him for his career serving the people of this province. I thank him for his most recent career in ensuring security in this building and for keeping all of us safe. But I particularly thank him for taking on his new role. We look forward to him helping guide us and keep us all safe as we go through the next number of years sitting in the House of Assembly.

So congratulations to Bob and welcome aboard.

Thank you, Sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

It's certainly my honour to say a few words about Bob and my relationship with him goes way back before yours, Leader of the Official

Opposition. We're of the same vintage: Went to Holy Cross and graduated from Brother Rice at the same time. So we're both Crusaders and Celtics. That's going back to 1976, by the way, so that'll give you the length of it.

But we went our own different ways: teaching university, and Bob went into the RNC, and he's had a fine career in the process. But we're connected in other ways – I'll get back to that. I did have the pleasure of teaching his son Daniel. I worked with Daniel and his wife to start a radio station at Holy Heart, basically Daniel and Helen's project. I was just there as the – what do you even call it – arm candy, because I basically found a room for them. So there's a long connection. It's interesting how we come back now after this, so many years later here we are, we're back sort of in this Chamber and it's interesting how life works out.

However, Bob has had an extremely interesting career, when you look at it, with the Canadian Armed Forces, a lieutenant; attended the Atlantic Police Academy in Holland College; the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary; security with the Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland and here in government. Certainly we do feel safe with him when he was with the security. Always friendly, always personable, always professional and, as I said, the fact that he's a former Celtic and a Crusader, even more so.

He's heavily involved in volunteer activities with cadets. He's also a saxophone player, as I understand, with the Church Lads' Brigade and a classically trained pianist.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

J. DINN: So this is a man who brings to this job skill sets that are beyond the requirements, but it shows the depth and breadth of his interest in education and so on and so forth. Always approachable, always friendly and certainly when in walks in the door and says "all rise," there is no mistaking it. There's no confusing his "all rise" with the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands as well. But I'll say that he's outdone that Member as well.

So congratulations, a well-deserved promotion, and I'm sure we'll enjoy your time here working together over the few months, years, whatever.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

P. TRIMPER: Thank you, Speaker.

I certainly wanted to say a few words. My history doesn't go back as far as my previous colleague's, but it has been an interesting six years. I would like to personally thank this gentleman for his support both inside this very room, inside the precinct and back in my district. There are all kinds of issues that arise. I've always found Bob to be very approachable, very responsive and very professional.

Security is an issue and we all have to realize that – I think back to my own community where, when I first moved there, we never locked our doors. Well, we do now. Times have changed, but this man has demonstrated in the capacities I've known him and hearing my colleagues speak about his illustrious career; he's obviously done an extremely good job. I was very pleased to see this appointment.

On behalf of my family and I, Sir, congratulations very much.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question?

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

I call from the Order Paper, Order 10, second reading of Bill 12, An Act Respecting The Renaming Of Red Indian Lake.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

L. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Speaker.

I'll just take a few minutes here at the opening.

SPEAKER: We need a mover and a seconder, please

L. DEMPSTER: I move, seconded by the Government House Leader, that Bill 12 be now read a second time.

SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that Bill 12, An Act Respecting The Renaming Of Indian Lake, be now read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act Respecting The Renaming Of Red Indian Lake." (Bill 12)

SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

L. DEMPSTER: Thank you.

We're all having trouble on this Wednesday morning. That's three of us now, so maybe that's it for the day.

I'd like to take a few moments, Speaker, to speak to Bill 12, An Act Respecting the Renaming of Red Indian Lake. This is an important piece of legislation for our government, Indigenous peoples and I might say, Speaker, all residents of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Renaming Red Indian Lake is one several significant topics that we are discussing and taking action on as a part of our journey towards

reconciliation. I would like to emphasize the point that reconciliation is not something we do for Indigenous people. Reconciliation represents a belief in atoning for our past mistakes and making good on our promise to listen, to learn and to do better. It is something that every one of us must do.

Our government, together with Indigenous leadership in this province, strongly believe that conversations about history, places, discrimination and injustices contribute to a greater understanding and awareness.

When we commit to learning from our past and reflecting on having respectful conversations, we are moving towards fulfilling our collective responsibility as a people, and as a province to create, Speaker, a better future for everyone.

Speaker, we are having those conversations with the Indigenous leadership in this province. You've heard me say in this House on numerous occasions the Premier and I meet weekly with the Indigenous leadership. We're extremely pleased with the discussions that are taking place each and every week. We are sharing information, learning from one another and gaining a greater understanding of what it means to apply our efforts towards achieving reconciliation.

It was during one of those meetings – with the passing of time they all blur together – there was a discussion a few months ago where the topic of Red Indian Lake first came up. We have been having conversations about options for coming up with a respectful place for the remains of the two last known Beothuk in this province, Demasduit and Nonosabasut. As a part of that process, many people discussed that Central Newfoundland would be the ideal place for the final resting place. Specifically, Speaker, the Red Indian Lake area.

The reasoning for that is that the Beothuk inhabited several campsites on the shores of that beautiful lake. I can say that with some first-hand experience after visiting that area in May. It truly is a beautiful lake and a beautiful area.

Questions in that process around that time were raised about whether it is proper to return the remains to a place which carries a name that is

derogatory and disrespectful to Indigenous people. The answer, Speaker, is a resounding no.

While we continue to have discussions with Indigenous leadership on determining a resting place for the Beothuk remains, our government is committed, together with Indigenous leaders, to honour the legacy and history of a proud and resourceful people.

With the support of Indigenous leaders, earlier this year our government served notice in the House of Assembly of plans to change the name of Red Indian Lake. I will say, while our intentions were well meaning, we certainly came under criticism and perhaps justifiably so, Speaker.

So we returned to the table with Indigenous leaders. We heard the desire clearly for consultation and there was a collective resolve to pause and reflect. Most here would know that a joint statement from the Indigenous leaders and government committed to a process where we would seek the views of interested organizations and members of the general public who had an interest in the name of Red Indian Lake.

Our government carried out a consultation process to receive feedback and they were comprised of a – there was a number of mechanisms whereby people were able to have input. In-person public sessions were held back in May in the communities of Buchans, Millertown and Buchans Junction. Myself, my deputy, my comms and a number of people travelled out. The MHA for that area was present at all of those sessions. A dedicated email address to receive written submissions was set up. An online questionnaire was available from engageNL from May 18 to June 11.

I think I'll share with the House a little bit, Speaker, of the feedback that we received at that time. I will say, as I said earlier, I thoroughly enjoyed travelling to those three communities, meeting with the people who live alongside that lake. Although, I will confess, in hindsight, I probably would not have gone in bare feet and sandals in May to spend several hours in a stadium in Buchans. The next time I'll dress a little warmer.

Approximately 150 residents attended those four sessions over the two-day period. So, clearly, there was a strong interest by the people who live in that area. The lake is very important to the residents of that area and there is no doubt that residents are attached to the name.

I can appreciate that and I may have shared with some having a cottage of my own that's on a lake where my grandfather put his first camp in 1936 and we built next to it; we have an attachment. So I do respect peoples' attachment to a place and a name.

There were many residents, as the MHA would know, that had no interest in changing the name of the lake, as it currently is now.

Our goal, Speaker, with the consultation process was to ensure that everyone who had a viewpoint on this question had an opportunity to share their thoughts. The portal on the engageNL website provided that opportunity, and we did receive more than 500 responses, so clearly there was a lot of interest in the topic.

So there was, as I mentioned earlier, a lot of people that said: If it's not broken, don't fix it; leave it as is. That was their view and we respect that, but a considerable number of respondents also told us that the name Red Indian Lake is colonial and carries racist overtones. They said the name represents negative connotations for Indigenous peoples and that it is no longer acceptable.

Their review was that a new name – if the name of the lake were to change – should honour the Beothuk. Ranking second on the preference list of names was Beothuk Lake and many also suggested Lake Beothuk, which I personally really like but this was not about what I personally like. A range of other suggestions was also received which linked the lake to the Beothuk in some form.

The next step in our consultation process was to share the results of the feedback with Indigenous leaders. I can tell you that the Premier and I, during more than one meeting, has fulsome discussion with the Indigenous leaders. The Indigenous leadership, in collaboration with government, carefully considered the number of suggested names. There was an agreement

among those folks that the name should change. Some of the leaders were of the view that a name change was absolutely necessary. Together, we arrived at the conclusion that Beothuk Lake should be the new name for the lake.

Speaker, this is the place where we have now arrived. Bill 12 proposes to rename Red Indian Lake as Beothuk Lake.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

L. DEMPSTER: Our government is not alone in its pursuit to atone for past actions. We note that the professional football team in Washington, Speaker, after considerable pressure from the public dropped its name, Redskins. In Canada, the owners of a football team in Edmonton engaged with Inuit governments and organizations and Inuk from Northern Canada and they decided to part ways with the team's familiar, the Eskimos.

It is important to state clearly that government and Indigenous leaders share the view that Indigenous place names do contribute, Speaker, to reconciliation. Place names are also integral to promoting diversity, inclusion, revitalization and strengthening Indigenous histories, languages and cultures.

It is important for everyone to understand that renaming the lake is part of a broader commitment to work toward achieving reconciliation. I thought it would be important that I take a couple of moments here this morning to outline some of the other things, Speaker, for this House, what we are doing because this is not just about let's go choose a lake and let's change a name.

Our government is proceeding with plans to procure and erect a Beothuk statute. It will be placed near the front entrance of Confederation Building, near the front and a little to the right, if people want to spend time there and reflect, et cetera.

We announced a short time ago that we would observe a day for truth and reconciliation. We've just had that day, Speaker, on September 30, where we honoured survivors and we raised awareness about the terrible legacy of residential

schools in Canada, a legacy that is still being felt and impacted and we see the effects of that even today.

In the House of Assembly last week, we passed legislation to change the coat of arms. We have rewritten the text of the centuries-old coat of arms to add Labrador to the name and to remove the racist and disparaging references to savages.

Our government is collaborating with Indigenous governments and organizations to furnish a set of new murals for the lobby of Confederation Building. I will have more to say on this later, but I'm excited. When I walk in now and I look up and there are many panels that are just blank. We're working on a project with our Indigenous leaders where the lobby is going to be much more inviting. When Indigenous peoples visit this place, this seat of government, they will see themselves when they come in.

We're working in partnership again, Speaker, on this project. There's a lot of dialogue happening between government and the Indigenous governments and organizations. Each group will have their own mural out in the lobby.

I have a great interest, Speaker, in the work that is under way to update the current curriculum and devise new teachings on the culture, history and traditions of Indigenous peoples in our province. I'll pause and say during my travels and meetings around this province, it's been refreshing the number of non-Indigenous people that have approached me and said: I want my children to learn, but there's so little right now in the curriculum in a way of opportunity.

There's a lot of work with this government. It's important, as my tone throughout, as I've been speaking – I've tried – it's about educating people and it's only when we understand some of the past that we can atone and move forward. There's a lot of work that's happening around curriculum. Again, working closely with our Indigenous peoples, governments and organizations.

We are building on advances that have been made in describing the way of life of Indigenous peoples in present-day Atlantic Canada, as well as exploring how national policies, treaties and

the Indian Act impacted the Indigenous peoples of present-day Atlantic Canada.

In keeping with Call 57, Speaker, of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission I am working to develop and deliver training on Indigenous perspectives to elected representatives, their staff and the public service. This will help again foster deeper understanding and cultural awareness of the unique history and perspectives of each community, and support the maintenance of respectful relationships with Indigenous people in this province.

As my colleagues sitting around me will know, First Light has already provided training to Members on this side of the House. We had a wonderful day. It was encouraging me to see my non-Indigenous colleagues very engaged and asking questions and sometimes you could see revelations: I wasn't aware of that. So it just drives home to me why so it's so important that we continue to build on the work that we've already done in this area.

Chief Joe – Saqamaw Misel Joe, recently, at one of our Cabinet meetings, began with a prayer. Again, that was a first and just one of a number of initiatives that we're going to embark on going forward.

An interdepartmental committee made up of several departments of government is reviewing historical monuments and observances. This comes from a belief that all monuments and observances must be culturally appropriate, representative and inclusive. If you follow the news at all, Speaker, not just this province but across the country, we've heard much about statues and monuments and some that have a very negative history attached and there's a lot of conversation happening around that whole piece about: Do we remove them? Do we leave them there? Do we add more information to the panels, et cetera?

An example of this commitment can be found in the collaborative effort presently under way and it's being led, Speaker, by The Rooms to change the name of the Mary March Provincial Museum in Grand Falls-Windsor. Consultative discussions will ensure that a new name is reflective of the content of the museum, its history as a community museum and is

respectful of efforts towards healing and commemoration of Indigenous people's histories in this province.

Speaker, this government not only wishes to advance reconciliation, but we intend to combat and defeat racism in all its forms and manifestations. That is why this government has established a Ministerial Committee on Anti-Racism. I'm very pleased to sit on that committee, Mr. Speaker, along with my colleague, the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, the Minister of Education sits on that committee and also my minister of – I'm forgetting the name of his department. The MHA for Corner Brook, since I can't say his name.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

L. DEMPSTER: Yes, he's a fantastic guy, he is.

We recently introduced the work of that committee at the Premier's Indigenous Leaders Roundtable, Speaker –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

I remind the minister to stay relevant to the bill, please.

L. DEMPSTER: After the round table, Speaker, the MHA for Corner Brook and myself met with Qalipu First Nation and the Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network to discuss racism, and we are well on the way with our plan to meet with each of the 13 governments and organizations that participated in the round table. I also note we are in the process of organizing with the Innu in Labrador. The first meeting of the Innu government anti-racism working group.

As I prepare, Speaker, to wrap up my remarks, it is my sincere hope that I have been able to outline – I took some extra time because there's been some controversy, there's been lots of dialogue and there's been lots of discussion since May. So that's why I wanted to take a little bit of extra time upfront to outline the rationale to establish Beothuk Lake as the new name for Red Indian Lake. This is what we need to do and this is what we are doing.

If we truly believe, Speaker, that we have a responsibility to respect Indigenous histories and strengthen our understanding of Indigenous languages and cultures, there can be no other conclusion than to embrace the name of Beothuk Lake.

I have a lot of respect and admiration for Murray Sinclair and I've been reading about a lot of his work over the last number of weeks. Murray Sinclair, as most here would know, led the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He continues to remind us where we have come from, where we must go and how to get there.

I'd like to recite a quote, as I always do when I'm speaking or closing, that was published – and my colleague the Minister for Health says we know, but sometimes I've seen him recently pick up and follow as well. It was published by CBC during an informative and wide-ranging interview.

So this was what Murray Sinclair said, and it's powerful. He said: I did say at the end of the Truth and Reconciliation report that we will not achieve reconciliation in my lifetime. We will probably not achieve it in the lifetime of my children. We may not even achieve it in the lifetime of my grandchildren. But if we make a concerted effort then, eventually, we will be able someday to wake up and, to our surprise, find that we are treating each other in a way that was intended when contact was first made.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

D. BRAZIL: Thank you, Speaker.

It's indeed an honour to speak in this House again, particularly around an important issue that's directly connected to reconciliation and acknowledging our Indigenous communities.

An important role that we all play in this Legislature but that every citizen in this province plays in acknowledging our past, learning from it and ensuring that we rectify things from the past and that we put the supports in place that it

can never be duplicated again. We have to ensure that all citizens in this province are accepted as equals and all are respected for their culture, their particular past, but particularly, that they are all equal when looking for a prosperous future.

I want to take a moment, this past week I have taken on a different role as the Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation critic, but I want to acknowledge our former critic very diligently outlined to our caucus and to the House of Assembly a number of issues relevant to Indigenous communities and around reconciliation and what real reconciliation is all about.

As I heard those stories and reflected on my minimal knowledge of what has happened in the past in our province, what's still continuing to happen but, more importantly, what we need to do, as a society, to ensure it doesn't continue into the future. It made me realize that, while changing names and symbols is very important, because it's important to acknowledge what in the past hasn't been in the right respect for individuals, particularly Indigenous communities, and was disrespectful of their culture and their heritage and them as the original settlers of this great province of ours, it made me think it's important to acknowledge that, but there is a bigger picture here. We've heard it in this House of Assembly; we've heard it from our Indigenous leaders: we need to take action.

It's one to be respectful of what has happened; it's one to get an understanding; it's another to educate everyone about it. But all of it means very little if we don't take the appropriate action to address, to solve and to ensure that there's a better quality of life for all involved. Particularly, as we look at the Indigenous communities in our province and as we look towards reconciliation.

I'm happy to say that we're moving in the right direction. We've made small steps, and that's what we've made, small steps, but I think significant steps. Changing our coat of arms is a significant step in acknowledging that the past was out of touch with what would be acceptable in today's society, or what should have been acceptable in any society at the time; a better

process of engaging with the Indigenous leaders and the Indigenous communities, but a better understanding that all that means very little if we don't take serious action. Serious action is about addressing the particular needs in an Indigenous community here.

Changing the name of a lake is acknowledgement that perhaps former generations, a mentality wasn't where it should be in society and that there was disrespect and injustice done to the first settlers of this great province of ours.

As we move forward now, discussion has to be around what are the other things that we need to do? What are things that are important in this process? To really make any strides and to really show that this is an inclusive process and that we need to make sure all Indigenous leaders, all Indigenous communities, all Indigenous individuals and the rest of our society, all of those who live in the same communities, all of those who work with them, all of them who are family members feel they're one in the same and that their same objective should be to make a better life for everybody in this province.

You know, it's unfortunate that hundreds of years ago the Beothuk were in this province and unfortunate that they were annihilated. We only know a small part of the history. That's the unfortunate part, we only know a small part of the history, their culture and what they contributed here; their own personal beliefs, all of this.

We get it from some of our particular parts of the research that's been done but it doesn't really spell out the full story here and it's unfortunate. There's a gap there to really understand what this culture was all about and the impact and the importance to this great province of ours that the Beothuk individuals and Indigenous peoples had.

My issue becomes around, as I led into, we need to move forward in the right process. My challenge with where we've gotten now is unfortunate. I just want to note this, not to be in any way derogatory about how it was handled but to ensure again – and my whole speech will be around we have to ensure that we don't cause more havoc or more trouble when we're trying

to do the right thing through reconciliation and inclusion and acceptance in our society by not thinking what is the best approach forward.

It's unfortunate through the consultation process that it became a national spectacle. It didn't need to be, had we thought it out a little bit more. I understand the minister has accepted things didn't go the way – it didn't put in play the way it should have at the beginning. I understand that and accept that.

Newfoundland and Labrador have too many good things for us to be embarrassed by not handling this. I do think – no I don't think, I know – every Newfoundlander and Labradorian feels the same way, that we're all one. We may have different views on how we do it, we may support our own community over others but our instinctive belief should be that everybody should be treated as equal as possible and should have access to services and amenities and respect, more importantly, equally across the board.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

D. BRAZIL: I know that echoes in this House of Assembly. Even when we debate and disagree on policy and procedures and processes, at the end of the day, the intent here is to do what's best for the people of this province.

Well, we have an opportunity over the next coming years to do what's right for this province in a number of ways, but particularly a segment of our society who've been segregated, disrespected, not included, and that would be our Indigenous communities here.

The best way to do that is acknowledge that we've learned from the past. We've learned from the historic past, but we need to learn from the immediate past on how we dealt with this particular situation now.

Enforcing something on people or not including people in the proper manner will only get you push back and will only cause more havoc. We've seen that in this situation.

I'm glad we've gotten to a point where there was more consultation, open dialogue, a more respectful approach to all included. Because our

society is not only about our Indigenous communities, it's about our settlers here, too. We have to find the mechanism; we have to ensure the mechanism is there, that we're all one in the same, we're all treated equally and we're all respected as equals.

To do that, we need to make sure there's a proper mechanism. To me, it's not beyond the concept of designing a mechanism for everything that we would do. This may have been the test case around – probably we were overzealous because everybody wanted to do the right thing.

Reconciliation needed to be done. We wanted to show our Indigenous communities that we support them, that we're starting to understand their plight in life. We may never be able to really understand what some of these communities, some of these individuals have gone through because we haven't lived it, but in true reconciliation, to have the discussion around how we best approach and deal with those situations. You do not want to put a wedge between any part of our society and another part. You want to do the opposite.

It's much harder to deal with this, than it is with this in life. So we need to find ways where the holding of hands and the sharing of information and the education and the understanding and the respect is the approach we take to ensure that our society is one and the same and we address the issues.

When we talk about – and I mentioned it earlier – symbols and names, it's important to acknowledge where they are disrespectful for any individual. But, particularly, in this case and we've seen examples nationally and internationally, where names or symbols or statues of individuals or events were disrespectful for our Indigenous communities. The fact that we're moving in the right direction gives me a sense of hope that we will heal, this community will heal and we will stand as one. We will ensure that all of our society understands the past, embraces the present, but looks forward to a very inclusive future as one society.

I do want to keep encouraging to ensure that we've learned. I know on this side we've had

our conversations about what we do and what we have to do that any mechanism that we talk about, any issue that's in this province but particularly if it's around reconciliation and our Indigenous communities or any disenfranchised sector of our society, until we make all parts of our society equal and that the mechanism is fair and transparent for all, we need to ensure that we just don't do what we think is the best political thing because whatever time you think is the best political thing ends up being the wrong thing. We've seen that too often in our society.

As we look at moving forward and as we look at understanding what reconciliation really means, I mean, we can say it as individuals who haven't lived the life that a number of our Indigenous friends and communities have, reconciliation has to be a bigger picture. I think one of the biggest parts has to start with our understanding of what's gone on, our acceptance that it was the wrong thing, our education on how we address it, but particularly – and I'll stress this – our actions to the future speak volumes.

Those actions have to be inclusive for all of our society if they're to be effective and get the desired result. The desired result is that we have a better society and a better understanding of each part of our society and our cultures and a more inclusive part so future issues like this don't surface. We've dealt with the situations, we have an acceptance, we have an understanding, we're all as part as equals and that works well.

We have some work to do to catch up in Indigenous communities. We have a lot of work to do to catch up. We know they've been marginalized, disenfranchised. They've actually done without particular services and that. So we have to find a way to engage that process.

I know over the last number of years we've looked towards self-governance, which is a great move forward. But as we do that, we also have to ensure that through self-governance, the lines of communication are open. As identified issues are put forward, as solutions are put forward, there isn't red tape and stumbling blocks and delays, to ensure that our society moves to the next level and we've done what we've tried to do in identifying how we improve the state of

our Indigenous people and how we improve the fact around reconciliation.

I do want to say, at the end of the day, that while the process at the beginning caused some dysfunctional, probably, division among people, I think since the discussions and the approach changed after and opened more discussion among settlers in particular regions – because people have a different attachment to everything more than other people would have and we have to respect all the people's understanding and their attachment to a particular situation, an event, in this case, a lake and what it means for them. But I'm confident that people now have a better understanding that we have a role to play in reconciliation, a role to play in better education of our past and a role to play to make sure our society is better. This is a first step towards that in looking at this process.

Since after the dialogue, coming back and coming to a consensus – or at least a discussion. We may never ever all come to a consensus on what we think is the best name, or the best location or the best policy. But in this case, in reflecting on it from my own personal view, I think from a respectful point of view, from an engagement point of view and from a reconciliation point of view, the renaming of Red Indian Lake to Beothuk Lake, I think, is in the proper modum and the proper manner to start the next level of reconciliation, acknowledgement and understanding in education about our past and how we rectify parts of the past, but, more importantly, how we plan for the future.

So, Speaker, I'm glad to say I will support the name change and I think Beothuk Lake is respectful of the Beothuk culture and the Indigenous community, particularly in Central and Western Newfoundland and Labrador. I look forward to hearing from my colleagues on both sides of the House as we move this important issue forward and as we look at the bigger picture of reconciliation and action to improve all of our stake in our society, but particularly the services and needs of our Indigenous communities.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

C. TIBBS: Thank you very much, Speaker.

It's a great opportunity to speak on this today. Of course, Red Indian Lake is in my district and the people up there they love it, and if anybody has never visited I encourage you to do so. It's absolutely beautiful.

Speaker, I'll give my opinion right now: Reconciliation, in my own opinion, recognizes the injustice and wrongs of our past, addressing those injustices to both heal and to ensure these mistakes never happen again. In my opinion, the Indigenous people of our province represent a very important link to our past, as well as they are a very important bridge to our future.

Speaker, I attended all of the consultations just as the minister did. Sometimes I think that there were different meetings taking place – we were attending different meetings. I'll just go over a couple of things and I truly believe the process was flawed from the beginning, but there was a part of the process flawed that came about in Buchans-Millertown and in Buchans Junction as well.

These are facts. These are not my opinions, but these are facts. Upon these consultations, there were many people who were against this whole process, against the name change of the lake at all. Former Liberal MHA Graham Flight made it be known in no uncertain terms. Former Liberal MP Scott Simms, the same thing. More importantly, Speaker, many Indigenous people around the lake said the same thing. Again, these are facts; they are not my opinions. I'm just putting the facts out there today.

When the minister had these consultations with her team – and we thank them for coming up. Of course, they were asked several times: Is the name of the lake changing for sure? Unequivocally, they were told no, that's why they were there to do the consultations to get the feedback to see where the public were going with this.

I argue that the process that they used created so much conflict, confusion and controversy that could have been avoided from the start. That's

what we're talking about here today, Speaker. If at that point somebody on the minister's team had to have stood in their place and said: Absolutely, we feel as though it is the right thing to do; we are changing the name of the lake for reconciliation purposes. That conversation could have taken a different angle right from that moment, and we could have went through this process much more diligently than we have right up until even now.

I truly believe that honesty should have been the best policy on that day for the consultations. Why didn't they just stand and say: You know what? We are changing the name of the lake, but we want to hear other recommendations. That is not what the people that I represent were told on that day. They were told decisions have not been made yet; that's why they were there.

Some Mi'kmaq felt targeted from this process; the people that settled around the lake, they felt slighted. They are the ones that have kept the Beothuk memory alive, and we want to thank them for that because they have been doing it for over 40 years on a volunteer basis.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. TIBBS: Speaker, the minister this morning talked about the plans for government when it comes to reconciliation. I applaud that. But I'm going to talk about some more things that the government hasn't done for reconciliation so far.

Up on Red Indian Lake we have a point, it's a little isthmus; it's a beautiful point. I encourage anybody to visit at any time. It's a National Historic Site recognized by Parks Canada. It's the only site with mamateek replicas on the land of the Beothuk winter home. Many real mamateeks were discovered there, examined and those artifacts were taken to St. John's.

This site has been washing away for years due to high-water levels and lack of protection. It has been taken care of, again, by the Heritage Society there and the people throughout Millertown and around Red Indian Lake. I have sent, about a little over a year ago, a request for a special assistance grant to get some simple ditching done that would save this point and the artifacts and what it represents.

I helped the people of Millertown form this together. We sent it off to government, a simple ask to save this point – denied. Denied, Speaker, after 40 years of trying to save it: denied.

When I got the denial email back, I wrote – and I quote, this is from myself, Speaker: “We were recently informed of the department's decision to deny a grant to fix and maintain” the point on Red Indian Lake. This point in Millertown “is one of the most influential places in Newfoundland and Labrador where Beothuk civilization made their home. The history and artifacts collected from this important landmark are extensive and extremely important to our history” here in Newfoundland and Labrador. “The washouts that are happening here are also washing away the prevalent history of our heritage. We were very disappointed to learn of our denied request for a special assistance grant to help preserve the culture of the Beothuk people which in turn will negatively affect the tourism industry in Millertown.

“Could you please provide me with a reason for denial, how much money is allocated for these grants” –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

I gave the minister lenience on the issue and I'm giving the Member a little lenience, too.

C. TIBBS: I'd just like to say –

SPEAKER: Continue.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Speaker.

Could you please ensure a valuable reason why it was denied? Nothing back.

Indian Point since then, just over a year ago, is more washed away again and who knows what artifacts are still there.

One other example – and it's an Indigenous business owner – Fred Thorne is a card-carrying, proud Indigenous business owner who runs an outfitting business around Red Indian Lake and his name is Red Indian Lake Outfitters. He has been struggling to get help from this government

for years and years and years to help him and his business be successful – struggling, Speaker.

So if we're going to stand up today and talk about the things that we want to do and help the Indigenous people throughout this province, whether it be food security on the North Coast or the mental health issues that afflict our Indigenous communities that are still ongoing, let's focus on some real things.

I don't oppose what we're doing for reconciliation, I'm just wondering why Red Indian Lake, the name change, gets a lot of attention, gets a lot of resources, which it should, but why not the point, which preserves these artifacts, which I have tried, and the people of Millertown have tried to preserve? That's not going to get a big clip on the national news, but it's going to help the Indigenous people. It's going to help preserve the memory of the Beothuk people in Red Indian Lake: denied.

Speaker, this has been ongoing for some time now. We have heard we want to do the reconciliation; we want to be champions for the reconciliation throughout this country. I, too, want to be a champion for reconciliation throughout this country. But we have many Indigenous groups and people throughout this province; we need to listen to them as well.

I applaud the minister and the Premier for getting on these weekly calls that they applaud themselves for as well, but we have Indigenous people throughout the whole province that have a voice as well. I want to ensure that they are heard.

The name, Beothuk Lake, it's much better than what was first considered, but from here out, I would ask the government to make better decisions in regards to the process of reconciliation. Divide and conquer – which is exactly what was done here in the past year in my district through non-consultation with the people that we represent – is not good enough. I demand better and we should all demand better when it comes to these processes.

I'm here today, Speaker, to speak on behalf of the people I represent. But as 40 MHAs, we represent all of Newfoundland and Labrador and reconciliation is very important to all of us. I

guarantee it's important to all 40 MHAs, this side and that side, but the process by way of means that we are doing it through, it's not right. It's flawed. It's completely flawed.

When the minister and her team stood up in Buchans and Millertown, Buchans Junction, sorry, and told the people that they were waiting to hear from: Nope, this is not changing, we are here to hear from you. Again, if they had just been honest – because nothing changed from then until now – and said: We are completely changing this name. That conversation would have taken a total different direction, which is the way it should.

So I'm calling on government to be more honest with ourselves moving forward and be honest with the people that we're looking to represent.

Beothuk Lake – much better than what was first introduced. But I speak on behalf of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians when I say: Have better engagement. We can do better. We're not here to represent ourselves. We're here to represent the people, the other 530,000 people out there. That's what we need to do better. We need to listen to them better. We need better interaction and we need to be more in touch with these people.

So Beothuk Lake, again, much better than what was first considered, but I ask that, please, have more respect for the people that we represent, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, have respect for those people.

We'll stand here today, Mr. Speaker, and we'll vote on this and we'll all do our best and we'll all work towards reconciliation. It's never a combative thing. Reconciliation should always be 40 MHAs working towards the one goal, and I know I'll do my part, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the government: Do better with your process from here on out.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: Thank you, Speaker.

Again, this morning, it's great to be in this House of Assembly and speaking on behalf of the Exploits District. Being from the Exploits District, of course, it's a place where the Beothuk called home. They combed the Exploits River, so this gives me a great time this morning to certainly reconcile and reflect on the past, especially on the Indigenous and the Beothuk people.

Mr. Speaker – Speaker, sorry; I'll get used to it. We are proud of the heritage of the Beothuks. They settled along the Exploits River system. Red Indian Lake, of course, is the headwaters for the Exploits system and that's where the Beothuk made their home in the wintertime. That's where they spent most of their time. They started their villages there. During that time, Speaker, they built and fished along the Exploits River system.

Not only that, during the summer, they expanded. They travelled from the Red Indian Lake area, from the interior, out towards the sea so they could fish the salt waters and use that during the summer. They expanded from Green Bay right to Gander Bay and beyond. Actually, it's proven, with regard to reconciliation, some has probably been done in the past before our time here in the House of Assembly. I know that over in the Baie Verte-Springdale district, they have the Beothuk Trail which they adopted, which is great to reflect and reconcile part of the Indigenous ways and the Beothuk people. It's great to see that they've recognized Beothuks in that way.

Not only that from down your way, Speaker, Lewisporte-Twillingate, they have the Beothuk Interpretation Centre, which is another way of reconciliation of recognizing those people. It's great that those initiatives are being done. It's something that we need to do. We need to reconcile; we need to reflect. In those ways, we can do that.

Of course, renaming of Red Indian Lake now is becoming another process that we can show some reconciliation on that. We are proud of the history again, Speaker, of the Beothuks. We learned about it in our school system. When I went to school anyway, we always learned about the Beothuks, how they travelled the Exploits River, how they did things, right down as far as

Exploits Bay, again, right out into the Notre Dame Bay and those areas. Those people, we're proud to think back on those places.

Really, when it comes to renaming of the Red Indian Lake, the name should depict and represent the Beothuk people. Again, like I said, they were the ones that started the interior in regard to villages, in regard to Red Indian Lake on the Exploits River so it should depict the heritage of the Beothuk people.

I've heard basically the Beothuk Lake would be introduced as the name, and that is a fitting name for the lake. If it has to be changed, that certainly would be a fitting name. I did hear a couple of more names thrown in there, and the minister did mention one, Lake Beothuk, of course. I've heard Red Ochre Lake would be another one, whereas the Beothuk would use the red ochre that was depicted in around the lake. The red ochre they used that for paint during their celebrations or whatever they did, that's what they did for that part and that was from the red ochre. So that was another name that was depicted. But most of all I think Beothuk Lake would be fitting.

However, again, as the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans did allude to, it's the process of renaming the lake. First of all, the first we heard about it, I know both of us probably looked at each other the same time, because the first time we heard about renaming of the lake was right here in the House of Assembly when it was brought to the floor, you know, they were going to bring in legislation to rename Red Indian Lake. We didn't hear about this before. We weren't consulted. Nobody told us. We didn't know what was going on there. So that probably was an insult to the people in the Central area that would've proud, would've been really engaged in being a part of renaming their heritage, because they are very proud of that heritage.

So the process was wrong; there were no discussions with the Millertown area, with the Buchans area or with the Exploits District area. I've heard it down in Botwood, I've heard it in Bishop Falls, you know, on the streets and the gas station: What are they doing to Red Indian Lake? What are they going to do? What are they going to name it? B'y, I don't know right now. I

can't tell you, we haven't had any consultation. So the process there was flawed; it really was, because they felt that they needed to be part of something that they'd been a part of for years. They combed those woods and wilderness the same as the Beothuk did. They're proud to stand on the same ground that the Beothuk stood on and they are.

But the process wasn't right, to not engage the people in that area of being able to be a part of that process and want to have some initiative into what we name that lake and how we proceed. All of us and everybody in the area believe in reconciliation. They believe that everybody matters, not only every child matters, but everybody matters. What was done in the past was wrong. There are things we can do to change it, of course, and as we move along doing those things of reconciliation, it will help us heal and we need to do that.

So, Speaker, I just wanted to touch on the part of the Beothuks and why the Beothuk name would be more fitting to that lake if it's got to be changed from Red Indian Lake to another name. I think Beothuk Lake would be more fitting today.

Thank you, Speaker, for having this time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: Thank you, Speaker.

It's a privilege to speak here today and it's very important that we do speak to this. Like they say, reconciliation is not a word; it's a mindset. It's an important mindset that we all have to have as Members of this Legislature because it's an important thing. Historically, we see a lot of names, places and things that were brought over here when the area was settled.

You see it really a lot here on the Island, but especially in Labrador, as well. The biggest example, the most glaring example, is the Churchill River. That name was changed whenever or which way, I guess, the colonial wind blew. It was Hamilton River; now it's Churchill River.

It was always Grand River and there was a reason it was called Grand River, and I'm sure the Member for Lake Melville (inaudible). It was the biggest river in the area and Grand River was the loose English translation from Mishtashipu, which is the Innu word for it.

If we're going to talk about reconciliation and setting rights of wrongs, you know, we can even start in Labrador with the Churchill River. That was only changed on a whim, on a personal want of a former premier.

We have a lot of wrongs to right in this province. We have a lot of work to do. There are a lot of things that we can all work towards as individuals, as people and as Legislators to correct those things. Some people who don't understand may not see why these things are wrong. It's important that we educate and support because for Indigenous people it's a constant reminder of a lost culture, a lost place, a lost piece of their heritage. It's important that we help them rediscover it with them. It's a journey we all have to take together. It's going to take all of us to do it. It's not going to be just one government, one person, one individual; it's a collective of this entire province.

Growing up in Lab West, when we had the Labrador school board, we were lucky in the sense that our curriculum was a pan-Labrador curriculum. It did have a very large emphasis on Labrador culture, Indigenous culture and that. I was lucky in that sense. But when I would come, as a teenager, and visit my family on the Island and I'd talk about something or anything like that, they used to tell me: We didn't learn about that in school.

I always found it very shocking that, while I'm growing up in Labrador, I was learning about Indigenous culture, Labrador way of life, the importance of those kind of things. On the Island, they weren't learning about that. I found it very shocking that a huge chunk of this population's culture and heritage and the richness that it is was not being taught to groups of children on the Island. I always found that very shocking that I had the benefit to learn about Labrador's way of life and culture and Indigenous people there but it wasn't being shared to entire province.

I think that's a good start that we also have to take is when we're talking about reconciliation and finding lost culture and importance of bringing attention to it, we also have to start with our school system. Start with teaching children that we're not a monoculture place; we are a very rich fabric of different cultures in this province.

We have so much beauty and wonderful things here that we need to share with everybody so we all understand each other. That's another thing, too. We all have to understand where everyone is coming from. We have to understand why some cultures do this and some other cultures do that. It's because of ways of life that we all have passed down to us.

I was also very lucky, too, in a sense, when I lived in Goose Bay. I met my wife. My wife is an Inuit woman from Cartwright. I was just a kid from Lab City so it was a bit of a culture clash that way, too, but I got lucky enough to be married into an Indigenous family. I will tell you one thing, there are things that I did not know, that I should have know. There were things that I wish I learned earlier in life. I'm very luck that I had the opportunity to learn about the Indigenous people of Labrador through their own eyes because it's not what it seems.

There are a lot of wrongs there. There were a lot of things that were done to the Indigenous people of Labrador that people do not realize. They were denied services, they were denied things that we all take for granted and they are only recovering their culture now. We are very lucky that we are going to start down this path but we have to stay on this path. We have to accept that it has to be done and we have to accept, as a province, collectively, we did a lot of people wrong and we have to make up those things.

Changing the name of a lake is a good first step, but like the hon. Member that just spoke and talked about the historic artifact site washing away: that is something that needs to be corrected. Bringing services to Indigenous communities in Labrador: that should be on the very, very top of the list because that's a historical wrong that has been perpetuated far a very, very long time. That is reconciliation.

That is the very part of reconciliation, is bringing things to the people that were denied it. We have a long road but it's an important road and we should all take it together, collectively, and with the best intentions in our heart because we must do this. We have no choice because, right now, we have to correct wrongs of our past and accept those wrongs.

Just look at the Truth and Reconciliation, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, these are things that – lights are being shone in dark corners of our past and now we must accept them, take them into our hearts and do the right things and that's where we go, collectively.

I can't stress it enough, we need to make sure that our children and our children's children understand what happened and why it will never happen again and put in the safeguards so it can never happen again.

We always portray the friendly province, the province that is there, but there are a lot of issues in our society. There's a lot of racism. There's a lot of exclusion. We need to work together to address those things.

I do applaud the minister on the task force. That's a good first step into recognizing that we're not perfect. We have flaws. We have a lot of flaws but we must take every effort, as a society, as a group, as a collective to address those flaws and make sure that people understand other cultures, other peoples, other ways of life, other religions so that way we can live in peace and harmony. Everyone is included and everyone feels like they have a purpose and a belonging to this place.

I've been very privileged, Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of Filipinos living in my district; wonderful people, very friendly. Very nice people who make excellent food; they are so welcoming, so kind. If it wasn't for that recent group of people immigrating to Lab West, it opened a lot of doors. It made people talk and realize that some of their behaviours, some of the ways they speak, some of the things that they did was not very kind. It wasn't very inclusive.

We've learned and we grew as a group. I want to take that and encourage all corners of this province to take a moment and realize maybe

some of the things we say are wrong, maybe some of the things we do are wrong. It doesn't mean you're a bad person but it gives you an opportunity to grow and change as an individual.

That's what I feel here today, we are going to do the right thing. Changing the name of that lake, that's a right thing. It helps us all grow as a people, as a Legislature, as a group of 40 here in the House of Assembly that we are embarking on the right path, but we have to keep it up. We have to keep the steady pace. We have to make sure that we talk to our Indigenous communities and their leaders. Like the Member said there, even just everyday folk that are members of those communities that may not engage 100 per cent with their own community but they have an opinion or a recommendation or even an example or something that maybe we missed.

This is important and those other tasks are important. We all have to take it into our hearts. It's not something we do; it's something we have to believe. We have to believe in the right thing.

With that, Speaker, thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

I'll be supporting this. It's interesting – I don't know if we've had the opportunity to read Thomas King's *The Truth About Stories*, or listen to the Massey lecture series where he spoke on this. But he did make a note of the fact that the truth about stories is that that's all we are. In many ways, that's what we are discussing here: the stories we tell. It is the facts and then there's the narrative.

Another Indigenous person said, something I don't think that occurs to settlers is that Indigenous people already are living in a post-apocalyptic world. There are plenty of series, books about a post-apocalyptic world that are out there as to what civilization would be like after an apocalypse which devastates the society that is present.

But even framing it in that way, challenges the narrative, Speaker. I would say that for many people, the westerns that were put out by Hollywood certainly created the narrative of how the west was won.

In Thomas King's book, he describes of how, as sort of the whole need to preserve Indigenous culture because it was dying out. It wasn't. It was transforming; it was changing. But it hadn't vanished. That was another narrative.

So here we are looking at changing names, and names are important as well. Back on May 3, I wrote the minister at the time about the name change. At that time, it came out on the news that they were looking at renaming it Peaceful Lake or Peaceful Waters.

So I'll just read a few ideas from that that I had said at that time. I do support the idea; I did say it was a misstep to announce the renaming without adequate consultation. But it's positive to see, at least now, that this will now take place and that the Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board will have an active role.

Consultation can be long and difficult, but I will tell you it makes for better decisions – it makes for better decisions. The rationale for changing the name has merit, but there are many other places too – Indian Arm Pond, Indian River – where the rationale equally applies. Then there's Lake Michikamau – I think it's Innu origin – which was absorbed into the Smallwood Reservoir. Obliterated in name and in geographical formation. And then, as my colleague from Labrador West said, the Churchill River. Then if it's about reconciliation, we're not stopping with the renaming of Red Indian Lake, but we have other geographical areas as well that we're going to look at.

I taught English at the high school and was fortunate to have a Newfoundland curriculum where I was able to teach about – very much my own choice there – the history of the Beothuks and the culture and so on and so forth, and the literature around that. So I did have access to Ken Pittman's *Finding Mary March*, Peter Such's book *Riverrun* and a number of other

pieces of literature in the anthology that was provided. It was important to me.

So, part of reconciliation then, if we're looking at the curriculum, and maybe that needs to be part of it throughout the curriculum about honouring the past and recognizing the narratives and telling the story that needs to be told.

I also believe that in renaming the lake it should at least recognize and pay homage to the people who originally inhabited its shores. Now, as imperfect as the current name is, it at least acknowledges the existence of the Beothuk people and their tragic history as a result of their contact with European settlers. They are the victims of that post-apocalyptic world.

That existence in history – if we had named it Peaceful Lake, I do believe that it would've erased that history, that existence. I think it's important not only in remembering the people who lived there, but also the tragic consequences of that contact with European settlers.

Now, unfortunately, I would love to see something of Beothuk language or a term, a word but there is not much of the Beothuk vocabulary extant. Although some research suggests that it's closely related to the Innu language. Still I think and, at that time, I suggested it still would be more appropriate to rename it something using a Beothuk term, even if it is called Lake of the Beothuk. Now I hear the minister would prefer Lake Beothuk; I like to think maybe I had some influence, or something similar. But I think the name Beothuk has got to be there or some reference to the people who made their lives, lived, died, raised their families there and vanished.

In keeping with what my colleague from Grand Falls-Windsor pointed out, we have to go beyond that. Shanawdithit, the last Beothuk, was buried on the south side of St. John's; you'd be hard-pressed to find where it is right now. The site was plowed under; I think there is a small plaque next to where the current wastewater treatment plant exists. I'm thinking should we not make this a more prominent monument, replete with historical storyboards in her memory and in memory of the Beothuk people. A plaque does exist in Bannerman Park but

something near where she was buried might be more significant as well to honour.

I suggest that at that time, for that matter, why not install a statue on the grounds of the Confederation Building in honour of the Beothuk people. So, to me, we've got to go beyond the name change. Changing the name, yes, it is time; it is overdue some people would argue. But I think we also have to walk the talk as well. So if there is a historical site where the Beothuk people lived and if it is an important part of reconciliation, then we should put the resources into preserving that as well to honour the people who occupied this land before we came. We can do all the land acknowledgments we like, but I think we have an opportunity to put something concrete, Speaker, not only in the historical sites and preserving them but also making it a part of the curriculum. Not as an option, as it was at my time. It was really up to me as a teacher.

I will support this, but there's more to be done. My only comment or suggestion, since we've been asked for suggestions, is make sure that we continue with an intensive consultation process and that we look at ways – it will make for better decisions. It will be longer, it will probably be more discussion, but I think it will make for better decisions.

Secondly, let's look at the provincial curriculum and bring Indigenous peoples into designing that curriculum for the province and make it a requirement, if that's what we're serious about.

Finally, if we have historical sites and people apply for funding to restore them or to keep them from being eroded, I think that's a small price to pay – or a small investment, I should say – in preserving those historical sites until we have time to determine where else we're going with them. But preserve our history; do more than change the name.

I will support it. I applaud the fact that at least there was some consultation here, but we've got more to do and a long road ahead of us in terms of reconciliations. These are important first steps, but they are first steps.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

P. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm just going to take a few minutes to make some comments on this bill. Like every other Member in this House of Assembly, I'm going to support it because it's, obviously, the right thing to do.

I, too, have some concerns. From what I've heard – I'm not as close to it, obviously, as the Member from Grand-Falls - Buchans and the Member for Exploits, but I did receive some feedback from people from that area who had some, I guess, issues with the process.

I don't want to beat a dead horse and beat up on the minister. I think we all understand and all acknowledge, perhaps, that the process wasn't perhaps thought out the way that it should have been and to come prematurely with a name without going through the proper consultation process was, obviously, not a good idea. I think we have to learn from that and do better in the future. That's all I'll say about that.

It is unfortunate, though, that – I think we need to be really sensitive about this on all sides whenever we're doing these things because I think it's important that as we're going down this road of reconciliation and we're making various changes throughout the province, that we need to try to be very sensitive of the feelings of all people involved. Obviously, our Indigenous people, they have to be top priority, obviously.

But I think it's also important that when we engage with other citizens who may be impacted, in this case, citizens in the Millertown area, citizens who live in the area of Red Indian Lake, volunteers who have volunteered over the years to try to preserve the memory of the Beothuk people and so on, it's important that we bear in mind that they have views and opinions and they're very passionate about some of those issues. We have to be sensitive to ensuring that they are included in the conversations, that their views are taken into account and that they are truly educated as to exactly what the intention is

from the outset of the process and the reasons for it.

I don't think it helps the cause of reconciliation when we get into a confrontation where people feel, perhaps people who may or may not be part of the Indigenous community but have a certain affiliation, a tie to a particular area or whatever the case might be, I don't think it helps the process if we feel like we're butting heads. That somehow their views are just being sort of shot down as well, you're not being sensitive to the needs of the Indigenous community or somehow you are racist and so on because you feel strongly about a particular name. I don't think that helps. I really don't.

We must recognize, we have a long history and somebody has said – I think it was my colleague from Lab West, talked about the whole concept of how we all grow over time as individuals in our views, as we become more informed, more educated.

I can look back at, and I'm sure there are other Members here of my vintage, some older, of a later vintage than I am and some younger but a lot of my vintage. I know growing up myself, we never ever considered ourselves racist, like in a mean-spirited kind of way. But let's face it; I grew up watching *All in the Family*, as a lot of Members here probably did. Nobody really thought of it that you're actually a racist because you're watching it or you laughed at some of the jokes and everyone got a good old charge out of Archie Bunker, whatever. People just thought in those days that it was funny, it was whatever.

SPEAKER: Order.

P. LANE: It didn't mean –

SPEAKER: Order.

Stay relevant to the bill, please.

P. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker – Speaker, sorry, not mister. I don't know if I'm ever going to get used to that one. I'm trying.

But the point is that was sort of those attitudes and so on that were there, it's what a lot of people grew up with and how they were – when they were born these are things that were

exposed to. It was the way things happened in school and what you saw on TV. Watching the sports teams that now have changed names, like the Edmonton Eskimos, they were called, and the Washington Redskins, I never thought of that as racist. I honestly didn't. Now, I see it now. I see that name as being offensive to Indigenous people.

But all my time growing up, and even in recent years, it never really occurred to me, because it's like anything else, if you're something and that's sort of what culturally you're used to and whatever the name might be and if someone doesn't point it out to you sometimes and say this is offensive, whatever, then you probably don't think any more of it than that, because perhaps it's not impacting you directly and so on.

We grew up watching cowboys and Indians, playing cowboys and Indians as kids. I never thought anything – I never considered the term Indian as being racist, at the time. I can see now why people would. As I say, as you grow as a person, as people point it out to you and we see how society has shifted and so on.

But my point is, I guess, that just because somebody, in this case, perhaps people in the Red Indian Lake area and so on who had concerns, and if we go down this road with other things, there will be probably other people who will have historical attachments and so on to certain names.

I know my family, certainly on my mother's side – I've said it in the House many times – we're from Bonavista North, from Wesleyville. They call it New-Wes-Valley now, but Indian Bay is right in that area. I was down in Indian Bay fishing actually the spring because it's somewhere where we've always gone trout fishing and so on. I never considered the name Indian Bay as being racist in any way; I just didn't. Perhaps that name is going to have to be looked at and may change. I don't know, perhaps it will. The same name as what's on Red Indian Lake.

If it does, I'm sure there's going to be people who grew up or were raised there, spent all their time there and whatever are going to have concerns about changing that name as well. But

it doesn't make them bad people and it doesn't mean that they're all racist because they have a tie to a particular area. That's my point. I think that's where the education piece really comes in.

So when we're making these changes, I think it's very, very important we educate the public. I think, as has been said, it's important that even in our schools and so on we start teaching our children, get them young, start teaching them about our history and what happened so that this will not be an issue. I know I look at my daughters and the way they think about things; they correct me lots of times on things that I say. Not meant in a harmful way or whatever, but perhaps just not thinking or because of the way you were raised. Some words or expressions you might use or whatever that we consider them just normal expressions, Newfoundland expressions, but you always have to be catching yourself on it.

That's not just issues around race, but issues around gender and so on, or things that can be considered offensive. I've always said my love, my ducky; I was probably the most guilty person out there for saying that over the years. From time to time, I still catch myself; I do. It's not right and I catch myself. It's not meant in a negative way; it's just an expression. It's the way you've always been taught and so on.

I guess to bring it around, the point is that, as I said, I do support this and we need to continue down this road but the point I'm trying to drive home is that we all have lived experiences. There are going to be generational gaps and so on of what you were taught and how you were raised. Some people are going to be more sensitive about these issues than others. I mean if somebody is outright racist, obviously, we have to call that out for what it is, but I think it's also important to realize that people, because of their lived experience and so on and perhaps lack of education around some of these issues, that doesn't make them bad people and it doesn't mean that they are racist. It is important, as we make these changes, that we consult with people and we try to educate them into the reason why we're doing these things, as opposed to just ramming it down people's throat and creating any kind of a divide.

If we want true reconciliation and we want us all to live together in harmony and respect each other, I think it has to be respect on all sides, an understanding on all sides and an education on all sides to make that transition really go smoothly.

Now, with that said, I also want to pick up on a point that my colleague from Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans brought up. That is the fact that it is one thing to change a name, and we all recognize this is the right thing to do, but I think we're being a little disingenuous if we're going to simply say we support reconciliation; we support the Indigenous people because we changed the name of the lake. But, by the same time that we did that, we're going to ignore the fact – and I'm taking my colleague on his word. I'm only going by what he is saying here now.

But if there is indeed, I think he said, a peninsula or a point of land out there and there is actual Beothuk artifacts there and it has been shown, it's recognized and so on, and if indeed that is being destroyed by nature and there is simple fixes that we can take, as he said, to put a trench in or whatever the case might be, to preserve that piece of land where more artifacts may indeed be or perhaps we may want to do something with that point of land to enhance it at some point in time, I think it is disingenuous for us to sit here and say yeah, we support our Indigenous people by changing that name, but we're going to allow this area to be destroyed because somebody doesn't want to spend a few bucks to put in a trench or a berm or whatever is required to deal with it.

We're going to deny all those things. Forget about the history, forget about the artifacts, forget about all that but we changed the name, b'ys; we support reconciliation. So that is a very valid point and if indeed that is, as being described by the Member, then I support him 100 per cent on that particular point. Obviously, we have to factor in costs and everything else. I don't know what the costs is involved with this or what's involved but if there is a reasonable fix that we can make to preserve that, then I think it is important that we do it.

And then, when we talk about those things, I think that not just Red Indian Lake. I think it's important that, as my colleague from St. John's

Centre said, put our money where our mouth is. I understand where we are financially as a province, but the federal government certainly has a huge responsibility when it comes to Indigenous affairs, Indigenous rights and so on. They have funding programs in place to deal with these things. There's a department that deals with these matters.

I think that we need to be more aggressive, perhaps. We have two federal MPs now. Not one, we have two. So if there are funding requirements to preserve some of these Indigenous sites and so on, and artifacts or whatever and we need some funding to do it, then if we don't have the cash – and I know we're strapped for cash – then let's get after our two federal MPs now – our two federal ministers, I should say – to get us some funding to make that happen.

Not just with that site, but other areas where this type of thing needs to be done. Again, this is a good start for reconciliation when we start making some of these changes. It's all good to do and necessary to do, I would say. But it goes much deeper, as Members have said here. It goes much deeper than this; simply making a few changes, putting up a statue here, taking down a statue there, that in itself is not enough. If we have Indigenous communities that are not being provided with the appropriate resources and services and so on they require to put us on par with everybody else, then that is a bigger problem and that's something that we have to be prepared to tackle as well.

I want to think in my heart that we all believe that. I know there are financial challenges to it all. I get that. But somehow, somewhere along the way, if we're truly committed we have to find ways of doing it. Again, perhaps the answer for the funding for some of this stuff is going to come from Ottawa. If that's what we need to do, then that's what we need to do.

But I hear my colleague behind me all the time and she's always bringing up these issues. I know that she's very sincere when she does bring these issues up. You can see the passion; you can feel the passion when she speaks about these issues. I know that a lot of people in her district in particular – and there are other areas in the province as well, but in that area in

particular – I’m trying to get my head around and understand the issues that the people she represents face. It’s hard sometimes to do it. You’re living here; I’m representing Mount Pearl - Southlands. So I have the City of Mount Pearl and the City of St. John’s.

Sometimes I try to, when she speaks, get my head around some of the things she’s saying. It’s not easy. Because I’ve not experienced it, I’ve never experienced it. Unless you’ve experienced it, I guess, it’s hard to really get your head around some of this stuff. Perhaps your perspective is different. You have a different perspective. That’s why it’s important that we have Members here from Labrador and from all areas of the province to share these perspectives with us all.

I’m sure everything she’s saying is correct and the stories that she’s sharing. I think it really needs to sink in sometimes, especially for us MHAs in the urban areas and so on, in particular, that don’t have these issues. We need to really try to understand and listen. That’s why it’s important that we listen to what these Members have to say and, more importantly, we have to work towards taking action to resolve these issues, as best we can, under the financial situation that we’re in.

Again, that has to be recognized as well. But if that requires more assistance from the federal government to deal with these issues, then that’s where we need to go and we need to get that assistance. As I said, we have two ministers now and it’s important that they step up to the plate as well on behalf of the people that they were supposed to be elected to represent.

Anyway, with that said, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the name change.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Speaker.

I’m just going to talk on Bill 12, the renaming of Red Indian Lake, but before I actually start talking on the bill, I want to thank the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

My district is totally communities that are Indigenous communities. A lot of people are looking to me to actually comment on Red Indian Lake because it’s so controversial, the renaming is so controversial.

I listened in the House and I hear Members trying to put forward some of the issues that their constituents have brought up but they’re a bit nervous about it. They’re a bit nervous because they don’t want to be negative or seen to be prejudice or anything to do with something that will take away from the Indigenous people and reconciliation.

I think, right now, that’s a reflection of a failure on the process of renaming Red Indian Lake. We’re creating divides where there weren’t divides. We’re creating frustration and hurt and resentment on people closely affiliated with Red Indian Lake because of the process of the name change. That needs to come out in this House.

I have an obligation to raise it because of people out there who aren’t racist, aren’t prejudice, now resent the renaming of Red Indian Lake because of the way they were consulted with, and that’s a failure. In actual fact, the way things go now, it could actually be creating racism, prejudice and discrimination and hurt feelings towards Indigenous people. Really, what’s happening is the reverse of reconciliation is occurring. I feel an obligation to speak on that. It’s very, very important.

You know, I keep talking about words – sometimes when some people in this House are speaking, not out loud but in my mind I keep thinking: There are more words, more words, beautiful, beautiful sounding words. But if you lived on the North Coast in Labrador with the Inuit and the Innu, if you went down to around Cartwright area where my fellow MHA’s wife is from, you would say we can’t eat words. We can’t eat words. We can’t heat our house with words. We can’t raise our children. We can’t get our children back from CSSD with just words.

Speaker, I’m going to remain relevant in my topic. I’m not going to have anyone call me on relevance to this bill. I’m going to follow what the minister actually said. I’m going to respond to her speech.

First, she mentioned atoning for past mistakes. That's a wonderful phrase. Let's atone now. Let's atone for all the hurt and harm and damage we've done to Indigenous people, to the First Nations, in our province, the two nations of the Mi'kmaq people.

The Beothuk, well, we're not going to be able to atone to them, personally. We're going to have to atone to their memory because they're gone, wiped off the face of the earth. Atonement. Have past mistakes.

I said, what are the mistakes? People don't need to listen to what I'm saying, but I wanted it recorded here in the House of Assembly. What's the past mistakes we're going to atone for?

The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: Why do we have that? That's what I said in a speech earlier. A lot of the missing and murdered disappeared because they were searching for a place to get away from harsh living conditions, issues that they faced every day that harmed them and their family, from intergenerational trauma.

Let's bring up Truth and Reconciliation – past wrongs, mistakes, a mistake. Truth and Reconciliation don't call it a mistake. They call it genocide, which no federal or provincial government wants to recognize – genocide.

There are many forms of genocide, but in my district of the Indigenous people, the genocide is creating such hardship that the generations coming next are harmed. CSSD is a make-work project for the Northern Peninsula. You just Google it – and I hope they never take it down – there's a CBC video up there recording of where the mayor, honestly, without malice, without ill-intent, without prejudice talks about, oh, the foster kids, that income saved our schools.

Those little kids grow up –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

L. EVANS: – to go back home.

SPEAKER: Order.

I remind the Member to stay relevant to the bill.

L. EVANS: Stay relevant.

Past mistakes: Residential school is another one. In Newfoundland and Labrador – I want to add some information here. Residential schools only existed in Nain, Makkovik, North West River and across from Rigolet –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

L. EVANS: – the community of Cartwright.

SPEAKER: Order.

I ask the Member to stay relevant to the bill.

L. EVANS: I'm just getting around to the –

SPEAKER: I've been very lenient.

L. EVANS: Yes.

I'm just getting around to the minister's sentence where she said: Atoning for past mistakes.

So what I want to say is, I wouldn't call it mistakes, Speaker. I would refer to the damaged lives, the cycles of trauma. Now, I'm not going to be forced to go off topic, so I'm going to just continue on.

The minister said we have to do better. So I always ask: How is this government doing better? We're going to rename a lake, and the process was so flawed and so disrespectful to the people to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador that they actually created resentment for Indigenous peoples and reconciliation. So I'm going to stay relevant and I always ask: What's the government doing to do better?

Now, this minister, one of the ways they're doing better, she mentioned in her speech – so staying relevant – and keeps referring to meet weekly with Indigenous leaders. Keep saying that. How bad were things that we have to refer to weekly meetings as a success? Because that's what it is. Because when I speak to the Innu leaders, when I speak to the Inuit leaders about these weekly meetings, they say they're frustrated. The Inuit hardly ever even go it is that tense. The ministers in the Nunatsiavut Government talk about sending over emails they don't even get a reply from. You know

something? I thought I was the only one that had that happen to, so I guess misery loves company.

When we look at the Innu missing the meetings, you know, we just have to look at Muskrat Falls rate mitigation and the RCMP policing in Natuashish. I got to say, I'm not going to beat up the Minister of Justice. He actually helped me. I was in Natuashish trying to address this thing about the failures that was coming out about the changes of the policing, and I reached out to the minister and he did help me. Actually, I was even able to talk with him, and it helped me prepare for my meetings with the Innu and I was actually, I think in some ways, able to help the Innu with this policing matter.

But when I got to meet with DeAnna Hill, the RCMP commanding officer, I had to find a way to gently and respectfully tell her: It was such a lack of respect towards the Innu the way they handled it, so disrespectful. It wasn't only the Innu that saw it as disrespectful. The Inuit in Northern Labrador also saw it as disrespectful, and I told her that and I gave her some advice. I got to say they were very receptive of it.

So I'm going to say relevant now, looking at this bill, looking at the renaming process. The minister talks about conversations for options. Then their intentions were good, changing the name of Red Indian Lake. They were criticized and, I think she even said, probably justifiably so. Then it talks about pause and reflect, and then seek the views of those who had interest in a name. What does that mean? They're going to consult, and they did.

But I find the whole process irresponsible when it comes to true reconciliation – irresponsible. They did reach out, 150 residents – I got the schedule there of the consultations. We had a technical briefing. I think the Member for St. John's Centre said he'd trust what the Opposition was saying in terms of the numbers, but I trust it because the numbers that were given to us was through a technical briefing from the deputy minister of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation; 150 residents, a four-day process, very little interest in changing the name. Basically, everybody who was actually consulted wanted to keep the name the same.

There also were some virtual opportunities for people across the province to contribute. The majority of the people said they wanted to keep the name. There was a lot of hurt; there was hurt from people who would say you know something, I'm not racist – I'm not racist. There are companies out there that are going to be harmed because of the name. The Official Opposition has brought that up; the Member from the district brought that up. There's not going to be any help to him in the rebranding. That's just another way of creating resentment, adding to it.

Do you know what I'm going to hear? They are going to be sick and tired of hearing about reconciliation in the province. People are going to be tired of hearing about it, and the biggest failure is nothing is going to be done before people gets tired of it, then it's going to slip by the wayside. All the hurt and outrage of those unmarked graves and those little bodies that were found in the graves, all the hurt is going to be forgotten. Yet, the Indigenous people are not going to be any further ahead. Not going to be any further ahead because it is just words. I can sing it in my head: words, words, words, words, words.

I'm sorry, but sometimes when people are talking in the House that's what I'm saying in my head: words, words, words, so many words, good sounding words. We should all just maybe leave and go and just be broadcasters reading off of teleprompters: beautiful words. Yet, we have families who struggle to feed their kids. I have people suffering from addictions and they don't know how to get better; there is no hope for them.

I resent the fact that this process is now going to hurt the Indigenous people of this province. I can actually say it. I can say it. Do you know what the process was? It was in the technical briefing. I have it written down. During the weekly meeting, the minister and the Premier met with people who were considered leaders of the Indigenous groups, very respected leaders, and they discussed the name change.

They decided to change the name of Red Indian Lake. They came up with the name change and told the people of the province that's it, and people were hurt. People weren't consulted with.

People were angry. You should have seen the emails we got. Over on this side, we all got emails. We got emails of people hurt and upset. Not racist people – I say all the emails we received even with the anger in them, it wasn't racist people.

Do you want to know something? When you do consultation, it's a two-way street. Indigenous leaders and the government needs to consult with the non-Indigenous people about something as important as changing a name on a lake. Because if you don't do that, people will be resentful. There are people out there who are racist and they are using this to create more racism, and that's not right.

We even got petitions. Then it goes back to pause and reflect. Yeah, let's pause and reflect on that and let's come up with more nice words that we can say. The government that exists since we joined Confederation has been a failure to the Indigenous people; it really has.

To me, it's difficult and I've been very tired. I get tired of this. I tell you, I get hurt. I lose a lot of sleep. I actually even thought of resigning for my mental health. You know what changes my mind every time my thoughts go there? I say I'm not going to let them get away with that. I'm not going to let them get away with that.

As I said, my grandmother learned English when she went to school. We called it a boarding school. How fancy is that? How fancy is that: boarding school? It was residential school. I told the story in the House where my mother was so thirsty at the age of six, she would sometimes pass out. But when she told us the story she kind of laughed and say, you know, it was a good thing there was a lot of frost on the window, because that's how she used to actually quench her thirst was scratching the frost off that windowpane. Atonement for mistakes: Would you call that a mistake? I never understood half the stories.

Do you know when I found out? It was when my mother refused to take any money from that class-action lawsuit. I said: Mom, you're old. Let the government pay for the harms done, because if not, we are; we're your children. I'm sorry for what I said to her, to encourage her to

take the money. I think I actually forced her because I thought she deserved it.

There are people now that are dead. Some of them are old; some of them are very young. But I will tell you something right now, if this government doesn't start taking real action that helps people – symbolism is important, there's a lot of value in that. I'm really glad when the game comes on and it's the not Edmonton Eskimos. But, also, when I'm in my district and I'm talking to people who really need help, who want help, who want to get their children back, who want their children to succeed.

Do you know something? Some of the children that are young adults that are committing suicide, they're coming from what we would call good homes. Their house is warm. There are meals on the table. We wonder: Where's this coming from? But if you went back and you looked at intergenerational trauma and past harms, you'll find the answers there.

I totally support not having a lake called Red Indian. But in terms of real consultation, we really have to start doing things.

I look at all this now: Plans to erect a statue. We need to put a camera on it, because that's the only way most of my people in the District of Torngat Mountains is ever going to be able see that statue.

Observe a day for truth and reconciliation: What's really being done about truth and reconciliation? What came out of truth and reconciliation?

We're going to furnish a new mural – I'm reading from the minister's statement in terms of reference: Furnish a new mural for the lobby of Confederation Building. A lot of people in my district struggle to buy furniture. They have money for furniture; how are you going to get it? You're going to get it to the Coast. These are very important things.

Update the curriculum for Indigenous people to educate people: Well, Nunatsiavut has already done that. Nunatsiavut has a textbook on the actual history. Nunatsiavut Government and the Innu Nation are leading the way for

reconciliation. They're the ones that's actually taking the steps to educate the province.

It's different for me, it's really different for me to sit here – and I hope people are not offended when I said that when I'm listening to people speak, in my head I'm just thinking: words, words, words. Oh, continue on to the chorus: empty words, empty words.

This government has to do things –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Member's time has expired.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Speaker.

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

E. JOYCE: Thank you, Speaker.

I'm just going to have a few words, after that passionate speech, on this Bill 12, the renaming of Red Indian Lake.

Of course, we hear a lot about the process and about consultations with the Aboriginal and Indigenous groups, Speaker. I just want to give a bit of history. I hear the words and I hear the Member for Torngat Mountains talking about the words, what words mean and you have to live up to your words.

I just want to make it quite clear; my family is a part of the Qalipu on both sides. My sister in Toronto did a lot of research on our family and we found out our connections back 20 years ago. This whole process of renaming this, and then we hear the words.

I have to bring something up here. I heard the Minister Responsible for Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs make a statement this morning, and going on the Member for Torngat Mountains on words, her words were: injustices must be corrected. I have to remind the minister you were a part of an injustice that happened in this House and you have yet to reconcile. You know what I'm talking about. If you don't know, ask me, I'll tell you right now. Here's your opportunity. So, please, don't go getting out these words. Injustices should be reconciled.

They should be: I agree, but don't go making these blanket statements here because it sounds good in the House of Assembly. You know what I'm talking about and if you don't, stand on your feet and ask me and I will tell you. I didn't think you would stand.

Mr. Speaker, I'll just go on the whole process of this and listening to the points. I know the Member from Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans made a great speech on the people in the area, and I know the Member for Exploits made a great speech on the people in the area also.

I just want to go back – and you want to talk about involvement with the Aboriginal groups. I remember back in 1989, that's my first involvement when I went to my first General Assembly with the Aboriginal groups. I know Mr. White was heavily involved with it, and I know Judy White was heavily involved to fight for recognition for the FNI at the time. I remember even going to Congress of Aboriginal Peoples conferences in Gander to learn more about how we could help. I remember even getting Clyde Wells meeting with all the groups and wanting to get recognition and pushing for Aboriginal rights in Humber - Bay of Islands. One of the biggest population of the Qalipu is Humber - Bay of Islands.

I go way back in 1989 when I first start going and Brendan Sheppard – and I'll tell a story about Garly Webb, when the premiers were going around and they were meeting all across Canada. Garly Webb wanted a schedule so they could make a presentation to the premiers across Canada. I remember getting permission to give him that schedule to go across.

I remember going out to a General Assembly in Gallants back in the '90s. There was a lot of progress at the time because of collaboration. I remember housing was an issue. I remember Dot George started up a housing group for the Aboriginals in the Humber - Bay of Islands area, Benoit's Cove and Corner Brook, for housing.

I understand the issues, but the biggest part that I take from this whole process is consultation. Consultation is the issue. I understand that we're all going to move forward with this now and say we have this whole issue in place. We're going to now change the name from Red Indian Lake

to Beothuk Lake. I understand that after the public outcry – and, yes, we received the emails. But the point, and I know it was made here on numerous occasions here in this House of Assembly, it was made on numerous occasions, is that consultation and process is what causes so much anxiety with people.

I look back at the time, again, when I worked for Clyde Wells and he had an open process of listening to the Aboriginal groups. I go back and look at Bern White, who passed away and I did a Member's statement here in this House, where he fought. Mr. Sams is another one who fought to keep their Aboriginal rights. Fought for their rights, fought to keep their culture, fought to be recognized and they fought over many years and they finally got it.

I know Brendan Mitchell who just got re-elected as the Qalipu chief and the great work that he has done and his family has done going back years with his family. The Sparks family who's involved with the Mitchell family. I remember all of that and I remember my grandmother talking about Indigenous rights. I'm going back 60 years, 58, 59 years talking about that. What they all wanted was respect and to be able to be consulted.

I hope we all learned a lesson and not just government. Government is just one part of this, but I hope we all in this House of Assembly learned a lesson on what happened here. I hope we did. It's one thing to give rhetoric; it's another thing to actually follow up on that rhetoric. I understand there are a lot of issues that most of us in this House of Assembly – and I agree with the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands, a lot of us couldn't appreciate because we weren't involved with that.

I remember speaking to Randy Edmunds – and I know you know Randy, I say to the Member for Torngat Mountains. I asked Randy: How do like the residential schools? Here's how Randy explained it to me. He said you take your father and your mother, what they gave to their families, and you take that whole set, Speaker, you take that whole generation and put them through the abuses that they had through the residential schools and then put them back in society, how much further would you be if your parents went through that? When you look at

that, it's so true. Taking that whole generation, and the abuse and the hardships they had to go through, now you expect the children to say, okay, we're all fine. You should treat your children the same. This whole thing of alcoholism, it's real. This whole thing of the issues that they face, it's real. And when you look at that, I think about if my mother or father had to go through that, it's sad – it's sad.

So this is why I say the process is very much the focal point here now. I remember the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans stated that if we had to come out as a government and as a people, come out and say, look, we're going to change the lake, what's the good ideas, how can we chat about this; nine chances out of 10, we'd be in here today and we would not be having such a great discussion because everybody would have collaborated to come up with this.

I really believe this, that when the Premier of the province came up and did this, I don't think he understood the whole consequences of it. Because I don't think the Premier of the province would try to insult the people, the Beothuk people. I really feel that. But this is where we've got to learn from this process. We really got to learn from this process.

If there's anything that I would take from this here – and I say it to the government and I say it to the people here: Remember, there's a lot of us who are Aboriginal. There's a lot of us who can give guidance to the government. There are a lot of us who went through this. Believe me, in the Humber - Bay of Islands, there are a lot of people who had a lot of injustices done to them over the years because of who they were and because they were supporting their Aboriginal rights and trying to keep their heritage. Trust me on that.

Now, I will be supporting this bill. I will be supporting this. But I call upon the government, from here on in, let's do the proper consultation for anything we're going to do for Aboriginals across the province and any group across the province so that we can have an open and honest dialogue on this whole process.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

P. TRIMPER: Thank you, Speaker, and I thank all of my previous colleagues for their very inspiring remarks. I think that while it's been a tough debate, I think it's been a very helpful one for all of us here and hopefully the rest of the province who are watching.

I've got a few remarks. Most of us, I think, in this House are going to support this bill today. What we're frustrated with is how we came to this point. As I was preparing my remarks and thoughts and checking messages that are coming from the good folks of Buchans, Buchans Junction and Millertown who are also feeding the independence that's for sure, I thought what exactly is a successful consultation.

I just did some googling here to try and understand. Some of the basic concepts are: should be sincere. It should be clear. It should be in advance by the way of any decision-making. It should provide an opportunity for both sides to learn. Whoever is coming forward as a proponent, whoever is being consulted, there should be an incorporation of those views.

I was listening very intently to the comments from my colleague from Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans and I just learned a little bit more this morning. I can recall here in May when government very clearly stated when this bill was coming forward, I wrote it down: It's a done deal. I wrote those words down.

I just remembered it was that determination to push forward, thinking that this was the right way and the appropriate way. I think that, particularly my colleague from Torngat Mountains, has reflected very well how so many people feel. All of a sudden, they feel they're in this awkward squeeze of anything they say and do is now going to be questioned, and they may be accused of something that they certainly are very respectful of and don't even want to go there. I just think how wrong this has all been.

I listened closely to the minister's remarks, and I thank the staff for the briefing that the Opposition had a few days ago. What was overlooked in the reflection – and the term Beothuk Lake was the most of those options that

was put forward; that was perhaps the most common name. But, in fact, the majority of the comments from 72 emails from April to June, from another 86 emails, from 523 responses that came in through the portal, the vast majority – I don't need to total them up. I can tell you the vast majority of the numbers I'm estimating is something like 70 per cent said please leave it as it is.

I thank the staff, and I think those of us who have had an opportunity to learn about so many of the struggles of the Indigenous peoples of this country, and why this name is here and debated in this Legislature today, understanding the connotation of the term Indian, Red Indian and so many have identified, there's really still a lot of education to do. I guess my point that I want to make, Speaker, is that, in my opinion, the consultation needs to continue. There is a lot of hurt and anxiety in the region. I'm hearing from the communities. I thank the MHAs from Exploits and Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans; they're certainly speaking to it.

So I have a few suggestions; one is: Please continue on with the consultation and the education. I do feel and hear from some of the community leaders, including one this morning, that believes that we need to move on with this. We need to get going. However, there are a lot of hurt feelings. I think we need to – no I think. We know we need to address that.

A second item that's going to be very, very important for particularly the communities there. The example of the outfitter – who I also happen to know – I believe government needs to step forward with some financial support. Let's take a wrong from the past, let's take an awkward consultation that's occurred and let's turn this into something now where we can build. The marketing and branding of a very proud group of residents in the Buchans, Buchans Junction and Millertown area, we need to support them. Help them embrace the branding and the marketing. And let's see what we can do.

Further to the example of the isthmus, these kinds of examples, these are incredibly important treasures. Again, I would urge government to go forward, please, with some support in terms of expertise and financial support.

Two final points: We've just gone through a naming exercise in Labrador. There have also been some missteps on the naming of bridges. However, it's been done. The advantage of the way that they were finally done in terms of recognizing five elders – some of whom were good friends of mine; I had the pleasure of working with. I knew them all. These bridges are now named in their honour. At least we had the opportunity to speak to the Innu, speak to the Innu community, speak to the Innu leadership, and say: What would you like to do?

The real tragedy of this bill here today, of course, is we aren't able to speak to the Beothuk. I think we're all realizing the importance of that and reflecting just how good it would be to go back and correct history. As my colleague from Torngat Mountains said, the atonement that is involved in here, we all collectively need to really understand that word and really work with that word.

Finally, I need to say that I also would like to encourage government to think about some of the other names that have been changed. I'm going to go to one that's right in the heart of my district, and that is this name: Churchill River. Its original name was actually – and I thank my colleague from Labrador West from reminding me, but it was actually Mishta-shipu. That's the name that the Innu called it. It means Grand River. Shipu means big river. And there's Mishta-shipu, -shipit and -shipish, meaning different-sized rivers. But Mishta-shipu is the Grand River. It's the largest river in our province. Mr. Smallwood and his team in 1965 said let's call it the Churchill River. The settlers that had come prior to that time and since, working with the Innu and so on, they used the concept Grand River.

There are a lot of folks that would be looking for government to think about some of these other mistakes. These are recent mistakes I would say. Not going back to the time when we lost the Beothuk, but we've got a lot of mistakes to make up for.

I'll leave those thoughts with government and I thank you for your time, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

Mr. Speaker, I move we adjourn debate on Bill 12.

SPEAKER: In accordance with paragraph 9(1)(b) that this House now do recess until 2 p.m. this afternoon.

Recess

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

SPEAKER (Bennett): Admit strangers.

Order, please!

Before we begin, I would like to welcome a new face to our Table today, Evan Beazley.

Evan recently joined our Office of the Clerk on a temporary assignment in a Clerk's role, having served in Hansard since 2018.

Please join me in welcoming Evan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Statements by Members

SPEAKER: Today, we will hear statements from the hon. Members of the Districts of Exploits, Labrador West, Harbour Main, St. John's Centre, Topsail - Paradise and Waterford Valley, with leave.

The hon. the Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: Thank you, Speaker.

On September 17, 1946, Gordon and Marie Lannon were married in Bishop's Falls, in what was then the British colony of Newfoundland.

Speaker, this September, Gordon and Marie celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary in Bishop's Falls, their home for all those years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

P. FORSEY: A diamond anniversary and a rare occurrence. They still reside in the home where they raised eight children and have 16 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren – their great legacy.

Over the years, Gordon worked 44 years with the Canadian National Railway and Marie was a stay-at-home Mom and later worked part-time at the local library. They both have been active in various church and community organizations.

Speaker, I ask all Members in this House of Assembly to join me in congratulating Gordon and Marie Lannon of Bishop's Falls on their 75th wedding anniversary.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: Thank you, Speaker.

I rise today to acknowledge Dwayne Broomfield who completed the 535-kilometre bike ride from Labrador City to Happy Valley-Goose Bay to raise awareness for a rare medical condition their son was born with called VACTERL association. In addition, they also aimed to raise money for a local charity called Toys for Joys, a Labrador West charity that gives gifts to children at Christmas whose families are struggling financially.

Dwayne completed the 535-kilometre ride in only three days and, in total, he raised \$7,060 for Toys for Joys.

Raising awareness for VACTERL was important to Mr. Broomfield and his wife as the condition is so uncommon. When their son was born and diagnosed they hadn't heard of this condition, so if they could provide awareness to other parents about what it is and how children with this condition can lead relatively normal lives, maybe it wouldn't be so scary if they got this diagnosis.

Dwayne isn't done yet. This summer he intends to ride from L'Anse au Clair to Happy Valley-Goose Bay to continue his journey.

I ask all Members to join me in thanking Dwayne Broomfield and his wife, Kelly Nippard-Broomfield, for being strong advocates for their son, raising awareness for VACTERL and donating to a charity that will help many families in Labrador West this Christmas.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you, Speaker.

I had the privilege this past Friday to visit Mary Costigan of Harbour Main, who on Monday of this week celebrated her 100th birthday.

Mary Costigan, the third child of eight children of Patrick and Rachel Hawco, was born in North Arm, Holyrood. In her younger years, Mary travelled the province working at both the Argentia and Stephenville American bases in the mess halls. She met her husband of 74 years, Cyril, who was a World War II veteran and a recipient of the Queen's Jubilee Medal before his passing in 2017. Together they had nine children, 10 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. Today, Mary resides in the family home in Harbour Main with two of her sons.

Some memorable moments in her life was meeting and having a great conversation with Frank Sinatra. She recalls fondly how he insisted that she call him Frankie. Another moment for Mary was as a young girl blueberry picking with friends in Holyrood. She witnessed the *Hindenburg* flying low overhead. She recalls them hiding in the woods with fear because, at the time, they did not know what it was.

Speaker, I ask all Members to join with me in celebrating Mary Costigan on her 100th birthday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

The current St. Teresa's School opened in 2014. Like other schools, teachers and staff seek to provide the best opportunities for their students and instill in them a deep sense of community service.

A \$100,000 Indigo Love of Reading grant revitalized the school learning commons and classroom libraries; a \$10,000 Farm to School grant funded the construction of six raised beds allowing teachers to engage students in hands-on learning with a focus on sustainability, food security, healthy eating and outdoor education; a provincial Active Schools, activate your outdoors grant purchased materials to help integrate the curriculum in an outdoor classroom setting; teacher and Juno award-winning member of The Swinging Belles, Erin Power, participates in the RPM Challenge with her class; and teachers cook, prepare and serve over 1,200 meals weekly as a part of the Kids Eat Smart breakfast club.

Over the past two years teachers and students made stockings for seniors, valentine treats for The Gathering Place, cookies and thank-you cards for city workers after Snowmageddon, cleared walkways in neighbouring streets for residents, painted canvases for residents of seniors homes and created videos and thank-you cards for front-line workers.

Mr. Speaker, St. Teresa's elementary is truly a community school.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

P. DINN: Speaker, today, I would like to pay tribute to a great friend of many and a true community ambassador who passed away last week after a courageous fight with cancer.

Vince Burton hailed from Shea Heights but settled in Paradise over 50 years ago with the love of his life, Pat. They have two wonderful children, Vince Jr. and his wife Nancy, and Michelle and her husband Chris and four

grandchildren, of whom Vince was so proud: Joey, Maggie, Lawson and Spencer.

Vince spent many years as a labour leader with the carpenters and millwrights union and from 2009 to 2017 served on the Paradise town council. Vince volunteered for numerous organizations and community groups, giving generously of his time and was a huge supporter of the CBS/Paradise Community Food Bank and the school lunch program. He served on several committees of council and was a strong advocate for the construction of the Paradise Double Ice Complex.

Vince will certainly be missed.

I ask all hon. Members to join me celebrating the life of Vincent Joseph Patrick Burton. May he rest in peace.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Waterford Valley, with leave.

T. OSBORNE: Thank you, Speaker.

I ask leave of the House to present a private Member's statement.

AN HON. MEMBER: Leave.

SPEAKER: Leave is granted.

T. OSBORNE: Thank you, Speaker.

Today I acknowledge and congratulate Labatt Brewery on Leslie Street in my district. On October 21, the brewery celebrated a remarkable accomplishment: Zero Lost-Time Injuries over the past 10 years.

Lost-Time Injuries are the top recordable metric on the Occupational Health and Safety pyramid. This metric is used across all industries to gauge how safe a company is.

Labatt Brewery, St. John's has 63 full-time employees and currently holds the record for the longest period of time without a Lost-Time Injury. This record is across every Labatt and AB InBev brewery in all of North America. This is truly an amazing accomplishment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

T. OSBORNE: Labatt has an active workplace occupational health and safety program, but this kind of safety record does not happen without the buy-in and co-operation from all employees. This accomplishment speaks to the commitment of every single employee, to ensure that all safety protocols are followed and that new initiatives are identified to keep people from being injured on the job.

Speaker, I'd like to ask all Members of the hon. House to join me in congratulating Labatt, St. John's and all of their employees on this outstanding achievement in workplace safety.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

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

J. ABBOTT: Speaker, today I recognize Foster Families Month, which is observed in October.

As the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development, I want to acknowledge the tremendous contributions of foster families in ensuring the safety and well-being of the province's children and youth.

Throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, there are approximately 570 foster families dedicated to providing safe, stable and supportive homes to help children and youth navigate complex situations.

Whether providing respite on weekends, daily care or a forever home, foster families play a vital role in supporting the best interests of children or youth in care.

This month is especially important to celebrate, appreciate and commend foster families for their invaluable service.

I would also like to take this moment to recognize the positive work of the Newfoundland and Labrador Foster Families Association which supports foster parents

throughout the province collaboratively with the department, and I had the opportunity to visit with them earlier in the month.

Speaker, I invite everyone in this hon. House to join me in thanking foster families throughout the province for their compassion, dedication and lasting impact on the lives and futures of children and youth in care.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DWYER: Thank you, Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

On behalf of the Official Opposition, I would like to also recognize this month, October, as Foster Families Month. To the 570 foster families in this province who provide caring and loving homes, I wish to extend my thanks and a genuine appreciation.

Foster families provide positive environments and role models for children and youth who are in their care. They provide more than just shelter; they provide a space where children and youth can be loved and can overcome any challenges they face.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize the Newfoundland and Labrador Foster Families Association for the role they play in supporting foster families and their advocacy efforts. It is important to have strong association in this province.

Finally, Speaker, I do want to encourage any families who are considering foster care to learn more and to get in touch with the Foster Families Association to see if foster care is the right fit for their family.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition – or the Leader of the Third Party.

J. DINN: I haven't been promoted that far yet.

SPEAKER: A little bit of work yet.

J. DINN: I'm good.

Thank you, Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement. I will join him in saying that foster parents do play a crucial role in shaping the leaders of tomorrow, and I thank them for their work and they deserve our appreciation.

To the children in care in this province, know that you are the future and that you are part of the Newfoundland and Labrador family.

Today I encourage the government to follow through on implementing culturally appropriate supports, particularly as it relates to healing intergenerational trauma.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

G. BYRNE: Speaker, it's important for me to report to this House that, yesterday evening, a plane carrying 116 Afghan refugees arrived in St. John's to begin a new life in a new country and under very new circumstances. We look forward to the tremendous contribution that our new residents will make to the province and to our country, but we must first acknowledge the incredible contribution that they've already made.

As we are aware, during the course of the war against tyranny in Afghanistan, extremely brave and principled Afghan people chose to stand up and work co-operatively with Canadian and NATO-led efforts to create security; to help educate children, including girls; to build infrastructure to improve the quality of life within Afghanistan; and to bring greater social justice to everyone in that country. They did so knowing that this would place them in direct

harm's way from those who opposed those efforts.

The people who arrived here last night are those very same leaders; those who stood up and stood out. They and the families that accompany them deserve our steadfast respect and support. We owe it to them as a country. Newfoundland and Labrador is doing its part.

I would further like to acknowledge that when the federal government took the decision to direct this group of Afghans to St. John's under its government-sponsored refugee program, they did so feeling very confident that they would be welcomed with open arms by the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. This, Speaker, is the first group of Afghans to land in Canada outside of Calgary or Toronto.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

G. BYRNE: The federal government will provide resettlement supports to all of these heroes for the next year and even longer as required. They will work with their chosen settlement services provider, the Association for New Canadians, to assist them and, with the help of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, to prepare to welcome newly arriving children to schools and to support efforts to find housing for the arriving families.

Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the team efforts of professionals from the Association for New Canadians; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada; Eastern Health; Health and Community Services; Children, Seniors and Social Development; the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District; Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, along with my own department staff of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills who have been working together to welcome these courageous heroes.

As these individuals and families settle to life in Newfoundland and Labrador, I ask that everyone be conscientious of their privacy. And for those who want to help, we encourage you to please contact the Association for New Canadians who are coordinating efforts for donations of personal effects and clothing.

Mr. Speaker, this is a wonderful day for us all.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

Speaker, I rise today to join with the minister to acknowledge and welcome 116 Afghan refugees that arrived in our province yesterday evening – the start of a new life in Canada.

The individuals and families that arrived here yesterday worked together with Canadian- and NATO-led efforts, so now it's time for us to do our part by opening our hearts and our communities.

Speaker, we, as Canadians, pride ourselves on being welcoming and providing supports where they are needed. As Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, we pride ourselves even more so.

The Official Opposition stands with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and we are privileged to offer our support where we can to offer these brave souls a new home.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

I commend the minister and join him in welcoming the 116 Afghan refugees. Diversity will be the future success of our province and the government must recognize that there are two parts to an immigration attraction and retention strategy.

I encourage the minister to look at both sides of the strategy and focus on retaining these people

who come and put supports in place so that the 116 Afghans and other immigrants will stay and make Newfoundland and Labrador their home.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Are there any further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

D. BRAZIL: Speaker, the Member for Ferryland has been loud and clear raising the concerns for his constituents regarding the lack of ambulance for the Trepassey area. Yesterday, we were told that there was a red alert in the area for eight hours. Eight hours where an entire region of the province was at the verge of disaster.

I ask the Premier: Do you think an eight-hour red alert in rural Newfoundland is acceptable?

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

J. HAGGIE: Thank you very much, Speaker.

Ambulance response times are important as a benchmark. A red alert simply describes the nature of the logo on the ambulance that responses to your 911 call. It simply indicates it will not be an Eastern Health vehicle. It could be a private one; it could be a community ambulance.

The important message for the people of this province is that there is an ambulance ready to respond should you need it. Red alert simply describes the colour of the logo on the vehicle.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

D. BRAZIL: Mr. Speaker, it's disturbing for people when they wait eight minutes for a metro bus. Eight hours to get an ambulance when you're in a health crisis, that's not acceptable in any part of this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

D. BRAZIL: Speaker, the Minister of Health previously claimed it was the contractor's decision to remove the second ambulance from the area, yet the department stated it had made the decision to move the second ambulance and not the contractor, according to a media report.

I ask the Premier: Which explanation should the people of this area believe, Eastern Health or the Minister of Health?

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

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

I think it's a bit misleading, really, to say that there was an eight-hour wait for an ambulance. I'm sure that if the Member opposite had had that problem, given our recent discussions, I would've heard about that, but, obviously, I'd be happy to receive specifics of a particular case and investigate that.

The decision about location of ambulances between a private contractor, the department and Eastern Health is a collaborative one. It's made on workload estimates. The issue is one end of the district has had a significant decline – over 40 per cent, nearly 50 per cent – in their population and their calls. The other end of the district has had a significant increase. Ambulances have been repositioned. In the event one is deployed, there will be dynamic dispatching; a second vehicle will be moved closer to cover it, Mr. Speaker.

I think it's important to realize an ambulance will come should one be needed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

D. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

But an eight-hour red alert is an eight-hour red alert, no matter where you live and no matter how big your population is. If you need it, you need it.

Speaker, the reality of this situation is the minister has tried to solve one problem by creating another one elsewhere in the province. Shuffling deck chairs on a sinking ship does not solve the health care crisis in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I ask the Premier: Will you instruct your Minister of Health to listen to the concerns from the people on the ground and reinstate the second ambulance to the Trepassey area?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER A. FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the opportunity to address this question.

Look, we know that medical transport is an issue for the province and the people who are using it, most importantly the patients and those in need. We understand that. That's why we've asked the Health Accord to look at that specific issue. It is a local issue. I understand for someone who has waited eight hours that is certainly a real and important issue for them and we're empathetic and compassionate and sympathetic to them. We will look at solutions for sure.

But on the grander scheme and what we've been tasked with here in this House is to come up with system solutions so that this doesn't continue to happen time and time again. We've been provided an opportunity of history here in this House and it's incumbent upon all of us that we be the visionaries that's required to create a sustainable system for the future of this province, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

D. BRAZIL: Thank you, Speaker.

Empathy and compassion is important, but we need immediate interaction here. When people have a health emergency, they need action immediately.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

D. BRAZIL: Speaker, today we learned that nine physician positions for the recently announced collaborative care team in the metro area are being advertised for competition.

I ask the Premier: While we support the creation of the new collaborative care teams as noted in our Blue Book, will these nine positions be filled by new recruits or will they come from rural Newfoundland and Labrador?

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

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

Eastern Health's recruiting practices are very clear. They follow industry and health standards. The fact is that there is such an interest in there; we are in the luxurious position in Eastern of having ample number of interested physicians. Competition is the fairest way to get the right person to provide the services that Eastern Health and the people of metro need. I think it's an example of how the appeal of these teams, these group practices is going to transform the delivery of primary care so you get the right care from the right provider in the right place at the time you need it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

D. BRAZIL: Thank you, Speaker.

Our concern is yet another reshuffling could be solving one problem here and causing another problem there, as I think the minister just outlined.

I ask the Premier: If these nine positions are filled by doctors from rural Newfoundland and Labrador, what will happen to the patients they leave behind?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER A. FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We are trying to change the deck of cards not just continue to shuffle the same cards, Mr. Speaker. We recognize that there are problems and we are looking at long-term solutions with respect to changing the system including the collaborative care clinics, including what the Health Accord is going to say, Mr. Speaker.

These are smart, dedicated, advanced people providing a collaborative approach moving forward. I'm happy that the Opposition finally joined because we welcome their voice. We welcome all voices at that table so we can create that system.

This is not about taking one doctor to replace another one within the system, it's about growing the system, growing the pie so that everyone, no matter where you live, have access to people that are required during a time of need, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

D. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

If you want to have a good card game and shuffle the decks and play with a new deck, you should get all the players at the table. I think you should start with the Medical Association, getting them at the table, maybe it would solve some problems.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

D. BRAZIL: Speaker, this is getting at the fundamental issues of government's approach to the health care crisis. The Minister of Health may talk about \$30 million attached to the collaborative team announcement, but he doesn't mention that there is only \$7 million in new money within the \$30 million.

Is the minister and the Premier more interested in a good headline than actual solutions to the health care crisis facing our province right now?

I ask the Premier: Will you stop pitting one region of the province against another and find a real solution to the health care crisis before us?

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

J. HAGGIE: Thank you very much, Speaker.

The arguing over sums here does not address the fundamental problem that the people of this province have, which is their ability to get the care they need from the right person at the right time.

Our package last week starts to address that problem, concentrating initially on metro and then with clinics in Central and Western. The medium- to long-term strategy is about recruitment and retention. It is making graduates of the Family Medicine Residency Program here, and elsewhere, look at Newfoundland in a positive light.

We have put \$100,000, for example, for those who come to work here from wherever and choose to join a collaborative clinic. I could go on, Speaker, but I see my time is up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

L. O'DRISCOLL: Thank you, Speaker.

Yesterday the Portugal Cove South area was in red alert for eight hours – not waiting, in red alert. The town is 2½ hours from the nearest emergency room.

During the red alert, a woman having severe chest pains required an ambulance and one was not available. The woman's spouse took her in a vehicle to meet the ambulance from Cape Broyle, which was an hour away from Portugal Cove South, and then transferred her to another ambulance on her way to St. John's, given her condition. This situation could have ended in tragedy.

I ask the minister again: Will he reposition a second ambulance to the local area before it is too late?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

Obviously stories such as this are of great concern. It is the first time that I'm hearing this here and would be delighted for the Member opposite to provide some detail so we can look into it.

Mutual aid is something that has existed in the ambulance service here for maybe 40 years. What that means is in the event that one operator is committed others stand ready and move to assist. In the case of the district under question, we move ambulances from one location to another. Periodically, there is a need for more skilled personnel to arrive and join the first team. That is not unusual and that reflects our need to have more advanced care paramedics. We're working with NAPE and with CNA to provide just that, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

L. O'DRISCOLL: Thank you, Speaker.

Well, yesterday dynamic dispatching didn't work. It was still in Cape Broyle when they made the call and it was in red alert when that happened. The last time I asked the question on ambulances in the area, you accused me of fear mongering or I'm not sure if it is going to be called rhetoric, but I am acting on the concern of the constituents in the Trepassey and surrounding area.

Speaker, the minister has numerous chances to fix this situation. The towns of the area have pleaded with the minister to step in and fix the crisis, but are met with silence from this government. If an ambulance is even to respond, it is an hour away.

I ask the minister yet again: Before we have a fatality, are you going to step in and restore the second ambulance in the Trepassey region?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

Obviously, if specifics are supplied, we will look into this. Response times are the metric that we use. We are not as concerned about where the ambulance came from or who provided it, as long as it gets there in a timely way. If the Member has concerns, and obviously he has, we'd love to hear them.

I would take a little bit of issue, though; we have discussed this across the floor of the House. We have discussed this in sidebars, and I have had correspondence back and to with the municipal leaders. So, Speaker, I would take a little bit of issue with the fact that there has been silence from the department.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DWYER: Speaker, as the COVID-19 outbreak in the Marystown area continues, I want to take this opportunity to thank Eastern Health and the entire Public Health team for their efforts to mitigate the spread.

My question is for the Minister of Education. With two schools closed to date, other schools in the region are uneasy with the potential risk of spread.

I ask the minister: Will you consider a circuit breaker for other schools in the region and shift them to online learning, knowing the high risk of transmission that remains in the area?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

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

This is very important topic, no question. The attendance numbers on the Burin Peninsula, Mr. Speaker, have been a little bit slower to rebound than we've seen in other areas, such as Deer Lake and the South Coast last year. It is something that the NLESD and the department are looking at closely.

We do follow the advice of the chief medical officer of Health and Public Health on when it's safe to have a school open or not open. But I also understand the importance of education to the children. So it is a topic that we are looking at.

I'd be more than happy to discuss it with the Member.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DWYER: Thank you, Speaker.

And I can appreciate that, Minister, but like I said, there are people that are very scared. I want the people who are making these decisions to understand that Sacred Heart is on the campus with MCHS, and Pearce is on the campus with DCJA. So they are in very close proximity and sharing buses. A lot of their cohorts and families and stuff like that – some families have kids in all four schools.

So I appreciate the work of Public Health, I really do and their efforts to date, but the minister has to be able to take some responsibility for his department and its efforts to keep children safe.

I ask the minister: Will you re-examine how decisions to close schools are made in the event of future outbreaks in Newfoundland and Labrador?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

T. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again, I take the education of the children in the area very seriously. We have to operate on the guidance of Public Health, Mr. Speaker. I am more than happy to discuss with Public Health how the area has been responded to, based on the low attendance numbers.

But Public Health, based on a variety of inputs, including contact tracing, including the risk in the community, epidemiology, provide advice to the NLESD on when it is safe for a school to open and when it's not.

However, I do recognize that the attendance numbers have been a little bit slower in the area to rebound. So it is something we are looking at.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Thank you, Speaker.

A few minutes ago, in response to questioning from our leader, the Minister of Health talked about a red alert and used two words: simply describes. Speaker, I would say there is nothing simple about a red alert when you're a person who finds yourself in one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

T. WAKEHAM: Speaker, the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association stated in a press release on Tuesday that 99 per cent of members supported walking away from the negotiation table and 94 per cent say they should stay away unless government brings forward "meaningful improvement" over the September 29 offer from government.

I ask the Minister of Finance: What meaningful improvements will you bring to kick-start these negotiations?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

S. COADY: I thank the Member opposite for the question.

I truly believe we have many areas of true agreement with the NLMA and, as I've said in

this House on many occasions, we acknowledge and agree that there is a pay issue with fee-for-service family physicians. We truly believe that there are solutions to be found on this. I think that we have solutions towards a full agreement and I look forward to working with the NLMA and to coming to a good solution and finding those good solutions, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Minister, the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association stated publicly that government offered zero new investment in the Physician Services' budget.

I ask the minister once again: Will she return to the negotiations with no strings attached?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

S. COADY: Thank you very much, Speaker.

I will say that we never left the negotiating table. We would welcome a conversation and discussion –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

S. COADY: – negotiations with NLMA. I believe that I'm available to speak at any time with the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association.

As I said earlier, I believe that there are solutions that can be found, I believe that there is agreement on some aspects of what we need to discuss and we acknowledge and respect the fact that we have fee-of-service family physicians that do have a pay issue that we need to address. So I look forward to having those conversations with the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Speaker, I would say that if the minister is really true to what she just said that she would take that issue about the zero new investment off the table and come prepared to have open and frank discussions.

Speaker, the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association has set a deadline of November 4 for a formal vote on whether to accept or reject government's latest offer.

So I ask the minister: What is government's backup plan, should doctors vote to withdraw services in this province?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

S. COADY: First of all, Speaker, I haven't heard the NLMA say that they were moving toward any kind of job action so I'll correct the Member opposite when he lays that on the floor of the House of Assembly.

I will say, again, that there are lots of issues and challenges to be discussed with the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association. I remain ready to speak to them at any time.

Speaker, I do think that there are solutions available towards a full agreement and I look forward to reaching one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Mr. Speaker, the NLMA has publicly stated that November 4 is the deadline for a formal vote but I wouldn't be waiting until then. Why hasn't the minister actually reached out again and openly and honestly say we're prepared to sit down and discuss all options without restrictions?

Here's a question for the Minister of Health who led the last work interruption by the NLMA back in 2002. At that time the minister stated: We're exhausted by the effort it takes to get government to listen and act.

I ask the minister: Why don't you practice what you preach?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

S. COADY: Thank you, Speaker.

I will say that I have reached out to the NLMA. I have encouraged them; I've written them; I've spoken to them; I've encouraged them to continue discussions around the important issues that we have. As I said, I truly believe that there are solutions to be found.

I've said in this House on multiple occasions that we acknowledge and respect that there are challenges with pay for fee-for-service physicians. I have said we're available at any time to have a conversation and I certainly will stand by that, Speaker.

I would say that there are solutions to be found for a full agreement.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Speaker, enough is enough. This deadlock is not helping the close to 100,000 people in this province who have no access to a family doctor. It's not helping the people who can't get a referral to a specialist because they have no family doctor. It's not helping solve the health care crisis in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I ask the minister: When will you stop trying to legislate the demise of the NLMA and finally bargain in good faith?

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

J. HAGGIE: Thank you very much, Speaker.

The issue around mandatory membership has been around for seven years. It's been on the table with the Medical Association for two. It is an issue around freedom of association. It is

currently in a phase of consultation. There are 10 groups that are affected by this including dentists, pharmacists, optometrists and massage therapists, to mention the ones that I have seen or I'm scheduled to see.

This is an issue around freedom of association and those consultations are currently ongoing at the moment, then a decision will be made about what to do as a consequence of those.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, yet another group of residents are protesting over the condition of the province's roads, this time are residents of Colinet – one being a 91-year-old man – who are fed up with the deplorable conditions of Markland Road.

Speaker – and I know the Member from Placentia - St. Mary's probably agrees – late yesterday the grader did show up, and the cameras rolled. It reminds me of some patchy work done on Bennett's Road over the summer, which I'm sure the minister fondly recalls.

I ask the minister: Why do you only take action when the cameras are rolling? Because this is not a new issue.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

E. LOVELESS: Thank you, Speaker.

I'll remind the Member about Bennett's Road – that was pure politics, nothing more.

In terms of Colinet, the two Members do have emails that I have where our superintendent of operations communicated with one person that was in that media story that the work would be done on the road this week and due to wet conditions they could not do it.

Another important fact is the fact that the operations were centered around Hurricane Larry, which took personnel to focus on other issues other than that dirt road. But the work got

done yesterday and that's the most important thing from my perspective.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Speaker.

I think the minister should check his TRIM because Mr. Davis, who is a 91-year-old man, has written numerous, numerous letters – and I mean numerous letters – and I sent a couple in for him, actually, to the ministers. He's well aware of this issue. It's long before Larry and it's long before the supervisor sent the email out.

This is not new. I repeat: It is not new. And I'm sick of hearing about Markland Road, it's not even in my district.

The residents out with shovels –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

B. PETTEN: – and one of them being – the Government House Leader was the minister of the day – residents were out with shovels and wheelbarrows filling massive potholes with gravel. The road has been compared to bubble wrap.

I ask the minister: Why are you spending 300 per cent more on the roads in your own district when 91-year-olds are out with shovels and have to do the job themselves?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

E. LOVELESS: Let me make it clear, I will not apologize for the investment that was made in Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune this year, thank you very much to the Member opposite.

In terms of the roads in this province, he knows full well as well, because he was executive assistant to a minister of Transportation at one point. He knows the challenges with roads in

this province that we face. We have a lot of roads – too many of them, actually – bearing the responsibility of our operational crew, they do a good job but we just have too many and it's a difficult task, no doubt about it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Speaker, RCMP officers in this province have a large area to police. The RCMP is continually being asked to do more with less. We are hearing from residents and police themselves that detachments are short staffed or at risk of closing because there are not enough resources given them by the government.

What is the minister doing to make sure there isn't a shortage of RCMP officers in this province?

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

J. HOGAN: Thank you, Speaker, and thank you for the question.

We are continually reviewing our budget and expenditures as they relate to policing in this province with both the RNC and the RCMP. As everyone in the province knows, and certainly everyone in this House knows, there are fiscal pressures in this province that we're trying to deal with. We can talk about whose fault that is but so be it.

We do work with the RCMP on an ongoing basis for resource allocation and if there are emergency situations – there have been situations in the past where we have provided one-time funding requests.

I will note that the RCMP are trying to modernize as much as possible as they can and come up with new policing solutions, such as one that was mentioned in this House this morning – a fly-in, fly-out model in Natuashish.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

If encouraging vaccinations is important and given what we witnessed in schools in the Marystown and surrounding area and a vaccine is available for those 12 to 18, I ask the Minister of Education: Why on earth are non-essential activities for that age group exempted?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

T. OSBORNE: Thank you, Speaker.

I would say to the Member that, again, this is a decision or guidance by Public Health on who should or should not be vaccinated. We are not about to start questioning the guidance provided to us by Public Health. I do understand that children, Mr. Speaker, who cannot make the decision for themselves on whether or not to be vaccinated, should not be precluded from receiving an education or being involved in activities within the school.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

Is the minister telling me that Public Health doesn't believe that requiring 12- to 18-year-olds to be vaccinated for what are non-essential activities is safer for our school communities?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

T. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the Member to write Public Health or the Chief Medical Officer of Health. I'm certainly not going to try to put words in her mouth as the Member does.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: I don't think I was putting words in anyone's mouth, I was asking a question, Speaker.

With whom in education does Public Health consult when developing policies for classrooms and schools and does that advisor have classroom experience?

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

J. HAGGIE: Thank you, Speaker. I'm getting there.

The Public Health team, both provincial level with the CMOH and the regional medical officers of health, have various links with the Department of Education. Certainly, at the regional level those links are with the directors locally of the school district, as well as the principals of any school involved. I don't know a lot about Education, but I think principals do have classroom experience.

From the point of view of the department, Speaker, the CMOH liaisons directly with the Department of Education at the ADM and DM level.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Volleyball Association has said no to spectators at its events. If access to extracurriculars are so important for children, will the minister consider a ban on spectators at extracurricular and varsity activities to make them as safe as possible and to avoid potential confrontations with unvaccinated members of the public?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

T. OSBORNE: Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, I'd certainly welcome a discussion with Public Health, the chief medical officer of health and the Volleyball Association. I will continue to take guidance from Public Health, Mr.

Speaker, on how schools operate when they're safe to operate, when schools are open and when they're closed, or what events can take place in schools.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

P. LANE: Speaker, last week I presented a number of petitions in this hon. House calling on the government to join the other provinces of Canada in adding Trikafta, a life-changing medication for those living with cystic fibrosis, to the province's drug formulary. I've since been advised through unofficial sources that our government does in fact intend on adding it to the drug formulary in November.

I ask the minister: Can you please confirm for this hon. House that this will indeed be done?

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

J. HAGGIE: Yes, Speaker, I can. By the end of November the product listing agreement with the drug company should be completed and the drug will be available.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

P. LANE: Great news. Thank you.

Speaker, the province's Consumer Advocate has recently pointed out a flawed process within the Public Utilities Board, which is allowing Newfoundland Power to submit what he terms as an excessive capital budget request without a full capital budget hearing. He further adds that there hasn't been a full capital budget hearing in 17 years and that Newfoundland Power has, by default, become self-regulating. This is obviously not in the best interests of the consumers and flies in the face of the reasons for having a Public Utilities Board in the first place.

I therefore ask the minister: Will he bring forward the appropriate legislative changes

required to close this gap and protect the interests of consumers in this province?

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

J. HOGAN: Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the Member for the question.

The PUB is an independent regulator with respect to electricity pricing. I have met with the Consumer Advocate in the past on this very issue and had discussions with him. We're looking at any and all options we can, but right now the PUB does stand as it is. It's an independent regulator with regard to electricity pricing.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Time for one quick question. No preamble, please.

P. LANE: I ask the minister: In the interest of openness and transparency, will he bring in the appropriate legislative changes to bring Nalcor and OilCo under ATIPPA and allow the province's Privacy Commissioner to determine what information can and cannot be shared with the public?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

I think if you reckon back to the Finance Minister's budget back in this spring, we talked about accountability for all government agencies as we go forward. I think if the Member opposite were to look at the Order Paper, he will see a piece of legislation coming this session when it comes to accountability for all government money as it's spent.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The time for Question Period has expired.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Tabling of Documents

SPEAKER: I do have one.

As required under section 51 of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, I'm pleased to table the annual report for the House of Assembly Management Commission for the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Any other tabling of documents?

Notices of Motion.

Notices of Motion

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Thank you, Speaker.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow move in accordance with Standing Order 11(1) that this House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 28, 2021.

SPEAKER: Any further notices of motion?

Answers to Question for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Petitions

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

T. WAKEHAM: Thank you, Speaker.

These are the reasons for this petition: The long-term care facility in Bay St. George in Stephenville Crossing is 45 years old. It is one of the oldest long-term care facilities in our province. It was not designed for the level of care it is now providing residents. The building has substandard bathrooms which cannot accommodate lifts. The rooms are antiquated

and small in size in terms of length and width. There is a need for a new long-term care facility for the people of Bay St. George region and its current residents.

Therefore we petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows: To urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to replace the Bay St. George long-term care facility so our seniors can receive the care they deserve.

Speaker, as I said in the preamble, this particular nursing home was built in the '70s. It was built to accommodate level 1 and 2 residents; it now is accommodating level 3 and level 4. There are cases where if you want to bring a lift into the room, a resident's bed has to be moved into the corridor in order for that lift to be able to go into the room.

There are several other major issues and challenges with bathroom access. The fact is, as I said, it was never designed for the type of care it's providing. That's not in any way a reflection on the great work that's being done by the staff, but it is time that this particular home be replaced.

My colleague from St. George's - Humber, where the current home actually resides in Stephenville Crossing, is well aware of the challenges of this particular facility, as I'm sure the Premier is, in terms of the poor working conditions and the inadequacy of the set-up for the current type of resident that it has in that particular home; as I said level 3 and level 4.

I would ask the government to start the process, start the planning process. Start it with next year's budget and start talking about the planning for a new long-term care facility in the Bay St. George region.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Exploits.

P. FORSEY: Thank you, Speaker.

Route 350, 351A and 352 in the Exploits District are main highways for the travelling public in the district.

We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador that immediate attention to brush cutting is needed in this area as trees are now growing alongside the highways and is causing safety issues with increased moose-vehicle accidents in the area.

Speaker, this past couple of years I've put in for brush cutting in those areas; I haven't received anything. It's becoming a big issue. I get a lot of calls from the area because of the brush cutting. The roads are in deplorable condition, but the brush now is also creating havoc with regard to driving along those areas. The brush is certainly thick and there are trees growing up alongside the highway, Speaker, that are causing dangerous conditions in this area.

I did talk to the department and they tell me there was some tendering being done, but I am just wondering if we will see anything this year on those routes, because definitely some attention needs to be taken before we come back in here reporting other incidents rather than just brush.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

E. LOVELESS: Thank you, Speaker.

In terms of that route, like many routes in this province that I travelled over this summer and even in my own district there is – I mean brush cutting is a grave concern for the commuters on these routes and certainly a concern for all of us. I am proud to say to the Member that tender has been called for Route 350 and work to be done on it.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

P. TRIMPER: Thank you, Speaker.

I am very pleased to present this petition.

A little bit of background first of all: At this time of crisis in health care, the government took four years to prepare to negotiate a new contract with physicians and then came back to the table with no proposals to address the long-standing physician recruitment and retention problem and zero investment in the Physician Services' budget.

WHEREAS most specialties have fallen below the Atlantic average and Newfoundland and Labrador's family doctors are the lowest paid in the country; and

WHEREAS the per capita spending on physicians in Newfoundland and Labrador is among the lowest in the country; and

WHEREAS 99,000 people of the province do not have a family doctor;

THEREFORE we, the undersigned, call upon this House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to show leadership in the negotiations with NLMA, resolve this impasse and work to build a spirit of co-operation with physicians to resolve long-standing physician recruitment and retention problems for the people of this province.

Speaker, this reminds me of a time, some 20 years ago, during the discussions and negotiations around the Voisey's Bay project. A certain Premier Tobin, at the time, decided that not one spoonful of ore was going to move out of Northern Labrador. While it was commendable on his part to have such a strong position in terms of supporting development of the province, the North Coast of Labrador needed that support.

It was myself leading the Chamber of Commerce and a group from Placentia that formed what was called the Alliance for Responsible Nickel Development to actually convince government to get back to the table and I find myself here again today.

I am very pleased for the petitions I have received from medical doctors in Labrador and other officials here on the Island to see what we can do to convince government to stop with the

hostile environment, to reach out to the NLMA, let's get back to the table and take the debate out of this room and back to the negotiating table.

Thank you, Speaker.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board for response.

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

I appreciate the petition. I will again remind this House and remind the people of the province that we have not left the negotiating table. I truly believe that there are areas of agreement between ourselves and the NLMA. I have acknowledged and recognized, again, because I think it is important and I think that a lot of the discussion has been around fee-for-service family physicians that there is an issue with pay there, and we're prepared to get back and talk about the solutions to that and reach a full agreement. I'm available at any time for discussion.

I have reached out to the NLMA, both in written form and in a telephone conversation. So I'm prepared for a conversation at any time, Speaker. I think it's important, but I also want to reiterate that I think that there are ways for us to reach a full agreement to address these concerns.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: We don't have time for another petition. It's only a minute before we start our Private Members' Day.

Orders of the Day

Private Members' Day

SPEAKER: This being Wednesday, I call upon the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay to introduce the private Member's resolution.

B. WARR: Thank you, Speaker.

As I mentioned two days ago, this resolution is being seconded by the Member for Burin - Grand Bank. So I move the following resolution:

WHEREAS 2020 and 2021 have been incredibly difficult for the tourism and hospitality, arts and cultural industries in Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS many individuals and groups are working hard to make 2022 a successful year; and

WHEREAS planning for 2022 is important now in order to take full advantage of the anticipated demand from people wishing to return or to visit our province; and

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the tourism industry and its important position as a key employer and revenue generator throughout the province; and

WHEREAS the desire of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who reside outside the province to visit their families and friends has increased because of many months of not being able to travel; and

WHEREAS the abundance of municipalities across the province have local or regional events planned for the 2022 tourism season; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation's mandate letter announced government's intention to have 2022 as a Come Home Year event; and

WHEREAS government will continue to support the very effective provincial tourism marketing and branding efforts that have brought so many visitors to Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS Newfoundland and Labrador is a remote working destination of choice; and

WHEREAS there are plans to encourage and convince Newfoundlanders and Labradorians living outside the province, as well as first-time visitors, to stay and make Newfoundland and Labrador their home to live and work;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this hon. House supports the government's plan to make 2022 a provincial Come Home Year celebration in all areas of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay.

B. WARR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I quote: Some things remain as remembered. In the heart and mind of every man and woman who has ever left home, nostalgia prints a kindly picture of the past. Old friends, old scenes and all the things which dreams are made of take on a lustre enhanced by distance and the passing of time. So will it be for those who revisit Newfoundland and Labrador. The basic and best features of the old homeland retain their appeal despite the process of progress and change.

The people: Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have vastly improved their lot since the days when immigration was the only escape from hardship. They are better dressed, better fed and better educated. They are still the honest, industrious, God-fearing and friendly folk they've always been. Most of all, they are hospitably ready to welcome returning friends and relatives to show them a rousing good time.

The places: The sea is still the only highway between many of the coastal settlements, but for hundreds of others the rapidly spreading network of new roads have ended centuries of isolation. Around our shores, the long-settled little towns and villages retain their distinctive character and charm. The well-kept homes cluster in the coves and bays, spattering the broad cliffs with cheery patches of colour. The ageless oceans still washes in and around the wharves and stages, and the salted cod soak up their sun on the flakes.

The way of life: They still take time to live in Newfoundland and Labrador, still shake the floor of the parish hall with the lively squares and lancers. Neighbours still come by for a mug up and a yarn. Radio and TV are spreading, but the marine forecast and the price of fish will bend more ears than the day's doings at the United Nations. There's time to relax with a good pipe when the skiff is on the collar and the day's work is done.

Speaker, I took that excerpt from – and I will not use it as a prop, but I will tell you that it's the brochure from the 1966 Come Home Year

celebrations in Newfoundland. My heart wouldn't let me to use just Newfoundland. I had to include Labrador in it as well, Speaker. Basically, that's the province that I am in and the province, certainly, that I love. I don't know why I was chosen or why it was suggested that I would bring in this resolution today. Perhaps it's because I'm only one of a few on my side that remembers the 1966 Come Home Year.

Anyway, it's a pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to be able to speak to the PMR today. While there are still concrete plans being put in place, I just thought I would offer some suggestions on things that we need to be aware of as a government and as a people of the province, and ideas that I think would ensure – we have ministers of all departments within government here listening today. We need to make sure that our 2022 Newfoundland and Labrador Come Home Year will be a resounding success.

I think we need to include the following, Mr. Speaker – and just a couple of highlights: transportation reliability. You can go anywhere in the province today. To the benefit of my colleague, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure who sits next to me in the House of Assembly, undoubtedly, the Trans-Canada Highway in this province is probably in the best shape that it's ever been. It's a very welcoming piece of highway that stretches across this vast province. Lots of money has been put into this piece of infrastructure and I salute government for the investment that they've made.

But, Mr. Speaker, air travel, we have several places within the province and Labrador that people can certainly fly into. We need to ensure that people are able to come to this province in an economic way. We hear the cost of airfares continuously, that people are finding it hard to afford airfare.

I'll move from airfare to ferry services, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, our federal colleagues in Ottawa are responsible for the passageway between North Sydney and Port aux Basques and Argentia. We need to ensure, again, that if we're going to be planning this Come Home Year that we need to ensure that ferry rates are reasonable and not necessarily on a load-and-go basis, but the next thing to that, we need to

ensure that we can be able to accommodate these visitors to our province.

Even with the provincial ferries, Mr. Speaker, I'd certainly again talk to my colleague next to me in discussing ways that we may be able to increase because we want people to see all parts of our Island. Not just the mainland parts but those that are certainly accessible by ferry and which the minister has many in this own district, as I do.

Mr. Speaker, it was only a little while ago that I've had colleagues of mine that have flown into certain areas of the province and unable to rent a car. We need to ensure that collaboration happens between all these service providers here within the province. We need to ensure that these basic services are in place.

While I mention the Trans-Canada Highway undoubtedly being in the best shape that it's ever been, I think our signage – whether it be private signs or certainly government signs – need to be updated. I get discouraged; I travel this Island as much as anybody, Mr. Speaker. There may be a few truckers that travel a bit more than I do, but I always look at the signs. I'm eager to go to different places throughout the province and lots of times it's signage that takes me there. So we need to make sure that we encourage as many of these people who own signs to make sure that they're up to date.

The other thing I wanted to speak about, Mr. Speaker, was accommodations and encouraging the hotel and motel operators to ensure that their space is welcoming as well to people who are visiting from away. Not only visiting from away but people from our own province who want to be able to go back and forth to other parts of the province, to be able to enjoy this celebration.

We talk about B & Bs, Airbnbs, cottage rentals and campgrounds, Mr. Speaker, of which we have many. I'm very proud of the campground operators within the province and, in particular, my own district, Mr. Speaker, both serviced and unserviced lots. We have campgrounds at Flatwater in the Baie Verte Peninsula; George Huxter Memorial Park in Springdale; Blue Canoe just west of the Springdale Junction; Crescent Lake down at Robert's Arm, Crescent Lake Park; Kona Beach; Maple Ridge RV Park

in Triton; King's Point RV Park; and Island Cove RV Park in La Scie.

I'm looking across at the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor – Buchans. I will mention Catamaran as well, Mr. Speaker. It is halfway between his district and mine but I will take ownership as the owner comes from my community.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to talk about our food, our music and our traditions, and celebrating both our Indigenous and European culture as well. I think it is important that we talk about family and making sure these celebrations are directed towards family, especially children. I expect that a lot of these people who will be coming home, Mr. Speaker, will be young families visiting the province; maybe went away as a younger generation, now coming back to enjoy a little bit of what they've missed all these years.

I thought about unique ways to be able to visit the province and visit all parts of the province. Something that has been really, with regard to tourism, a hot topic over the last few years, especially here on the Island, Mr. Speaker, was craft breweries. Again, a unique way to visit the province. A craft brewery tour would ensure that you see and have a taste of all parts of this breathtaking and scenic province.

I just thought, Mr. Speaker, that I'd highlight some of the craft breweries: Iron Rock Brewing Co. in Lab City; RagnaRöck Northern Brewing Company in St. Anthony; Bumblebee Bight Brewery in my district in Pilley's Island; Split Rock Brewing Co. in Twillingate; Crooked Feeder Brewing Co. in Cormack; Rough Waters Brewing Company in Deer Lake; Western Newfoundland Brewing Co. in Pasadena; Secret Cove Brewing Company in Port au Port; Bootleg Brewing Co. in Corner Brook; Boomstick Brewing Co. in Corner Brook; Port Rexton Brewing Co. in Port Rexton; Dildo Brewing Company; Baccalieu Trail Brewing Company in Bay Roberts; Brigus Brewing Co. in Brigus; Quidi Vidi Brewery Co. in St. John's; Bannerman Brewing here in town; Yellowbelly Brewery in town; Storm Brewing in Mount Pearl; Ninepenny Brewing in CBS; and Landwash Brewery in Mount Pearl.

Opening soon, Mr. Speaker: Little North Brewhouse in Baie Verte, Gander Brewery in Gander and Union Electric Brewing Co. in Port Union. With the non-craft beer is the Newfoundland Distillery Co. in Clarke's Beach and the Newfoundland Cider Company in Milton.

Mr. Speaker, what better way to see the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and get a taste of each and every one of these lovely communities?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

B. WARR: The other thing that I just wanted to highlight, Mr. Speaker, was the fact that adventure tourism is so important to our province today. I certainly wanted to highlight probably some of the better hiking trails, not all, but some of the more prestigious hiking trails in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, we have no other choice but start off with Gros Morne. Beautiful Gros Morne in the Premier's district; the Skerwink Trail; the famous and celebrated East Coast Trail including highlights such as La Manche Village, Sugarloaf, the Spout, Cobblers Path, Mad Rock trail, Chance Cove lobster trail, the Tablelands trail, Signal Hill, the Brigus lighthouse and, certainly in my district again, Mr. Speaker, a trail that meets national standards within the country is the Alexander Murray trail in King's Point.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to go on when I get an opportunity to speak a little later, but I will leave it at that. I look forward to hearing some of the ideas from my colleagues across the way and our own crowd on this side as we commence to celebrate Come Home Year 2022.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Thank you, Speaker.

I don't think anybody in this hon. House will disagree with this PMR. I thank the hon.

Member for bringing it forward. I suspect that your age wasn't probably the reason you brought it forward, it might have been something you said about your district and signage because everybody who drives down that highway has no choice but to see the big sign: WELCOME TO SCENIC GREEN BAY. I think that's been there for a long time. It's almost like a marker on the highway for you. So we all look forward to that.

The PMR WHEREASes were quite extensive and a number of them, so I'm not going to focus on every WHEREAS, but I would like to pick out some words in each of the WHEREAS statements, just to focus on them.

The first one was the 2021 difficulties; it certainly was a difficult year and we knew that. It was clearly highlighted in our economy notes in terms of the significant impact that it had on our tourism sector. Again, to be able to try to make that come back from what was a devastating year last year and to use 2022 as a way to move that forward would be really, really good.

For 2022, it talks about planning underway and we must plan now. I couldn't agree more. It's so important because the Member opposite mentioned about the adventure tourism. I want to talk about planning now because a lot of emphasis is given to our summertime tourism, but, as the minister would know, we have a great opportunity here in this province, especially on the West Coast in the adventure tourism, winter adventure tourism business. That is a huge market. It's not just about downhill skiing. It's about the snowmobiling and the mountains. People tell me that, outside of going all the way to Alberta, there was nowhere in between that you can access mountain trails for snowmobiling without going through someone's private land in any other province except ours.

I think there's a tremendous opportunity for us, but that needs to start now because 2022 is only a couple of months away. So it's going to be very critical that we take advantage or start to capture that now.

Which brings me again to the idea: Are we ready? Is our tourism apparatus already out there? Are we getting ready to start? Are we

ahead of the game? Have we taken command of the digital space?

So those are critical pieces. Let's not make it just about a Come Home Year from May to September. Let's make sure that this is truly a Come Home Year.

One of the other things that we talked about is towns' planning. I know there are towns out there already now planning that have announced it: Middle Arm, Millertown, Buchans, Green's Harbour, Botwood – they're all planning Come Home Years. So let's make sure, whatever it is we're using for an advertising piece, that there's a connectivity with all of that, so we're all part of that same thing.

The Member talked about the travel piece of it and the air travel and the sea travel. The air travel, obviously, I mean, the Greene report referred to the fact that direct air links are critical for growth. That's going to be a challenge with an industry that's trying to recover. But it's so critical for us, because even in our own Economy document, we say that air travel generally makes up the largest segment of provincial non-resident tourism, accounting for 72 per cent of non-resident visitors and 80 per cent of non-resident tourism spending in 2019.

So, again, getting those air links and working with our new federal ministers to help establish that, it will be a challenge. Obviously, the industry is just recovering.

But on the sea route with Marine Atlantic – and if we're going to make 2022 our Come Home Year, maybe we should be talking to our two newly minted federal ministers about: let's take a model out of PEI for a year and let's look at the possibility that maybe, just maybe, we could work out a structure or a plan that somehow, with the involvement of the federal government, with the involvement of our provincial government, that anyone travelling to Newfoundland in a passenger car or a person coming to Newfoundland in 2022 on Marine Atlantic would have a free trip over. They'd have to pay to get out, but –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

T. WAKEHAM: – we'll find a way to have them come in free.

It's like an outside the box – it's not putting all of our money into ads and it's not for commercial, it's simply for individuals in their own cars or people getting on the ferry. If we get them, we can keep them. I think there's a real opportunity, especially if you get a lot of expats that want to come back home; that's who we're after so let's focus on that.

The WHEREAS clauses also referred to the remote working. A lot of people now are working from home. We've seen some success in our province with people moving here and starting to work here because their business may be located elsewhere but they love the lifestyle that they have right here in our province.

So, again, a Come Home Year gives us an opportunity, as the Member said, to promote and, perhaps, increase the awareness of that opportunity. Because if we can get them here, I think we have a tremendous opportunity to keep them. Promoting a Come Home Year, inviting people to come, that would certainly give us that opportunity.

The WHEREASes talked about immigration. It was great to hear today about the 100-and-so people that have just moved here from Afghanistan and, again, another opportunity, first-time visitors coming here to our province, an opportunity for them maybe to say: Hey, I want to come back, I want to set up.

Let's use 2022 as a Come Home Year to talk about people who want to come, other professionals that may want to come and set up here when we start to market ourselves as a destination and as a tourism haven to basically come to Newfoundland and Labrador.

I think, as I said before, there is no one that won't support Come Home Year 2022. The challenges, of course, are around the – Come Home Year generally targets a specific segment of the market: the expatriates. We all know that fellow Newfoundlanders and Labradorians want to come home and welcome an opportunity to come home; giving them an excuse or a reason to come home certainly will bring them in.

Of course, we know we love to socialize. So it's going to be critical, as a part of 2022, that when we're doing our modelling when it comes to this whole COVID stuff that we factor in all of this into the equation so that we can find that and make sure that we're strong and we're ready to go.

But, again, we have to find a way to provide that support to all those operators and getting the message out, because people like to plan in advance. They plan their vacations well in advance, so we have to think about booking of the hotels, as the Member mentioned, and all of those things and the accommodations. If there is a way of coordinating somehow in a brochure of some kind so that we don't wind up with one town competing with another on the same time of weekend. There are so many places in this great province of ours for people to visit. We just have to make sure that we're not all doing everything on the same weekend.

The coordination from the minister's department will be critical to take the lead on that, to make sure that that happens, so that we wind up with a Come Home Year celebration that is province wide, focused on every single part of our province, the far north to the far south and everywhere in between.

Like I said, I think that it's critical that we start now and we start to think about it as a 12-month Come Home Year and not just focus on a few summer months.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

K. HOWELL: Thank you, Speaker.

I'm pleased to have an opportunity today as a former town councillor and mayor of St. Anthony and now the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs. I know that communities across the province will play a huge role in preparations for Come Home Year 2022. A large part of the success will be accredited to the communities that put off these great events.

Communities, their councils and their residents are really the boots on the ground when it comes to getting initiatives planned and organized and bringing them to reality. They've been doing this for years. They've done a great amount of work; we've seen it. We've all attended festivals or community events or anything that's planned and developed and then operationalized by our communities. I would expect much of the same as we prepare for Come Home Year 2022.

I wasn't around for the ultimate Come Home Year; I was but a twinkle in a my father's eye in 1966. But, growing up, I have heard stories of what a fantastic experience it was for people all over the province. At that time, there were many who came home after being away for years. It truly was a come home get-together kind of celebration.

Come Home Year is not really a Newfoundland and Labrador creation; it's a Canadian civic event for many towns. It encourages everybody to return to their hometown. Clearly, it's recognized across the country as a means to draw generations home to celebrate what has been, what they've accomplished, their families and the lives that they've created. People who've moved away are encouraged to come home and potentially stay

Since 1966, there's been several Come Home Years celebrated in our province. In 2000, there was a provincial Come Home Year where many people came home to visit. Individual towns have also celebrated Come Home Years over the past number of years. In 2017, McIvers hosted a Come Home Year that temporarily tripled the town's population, as did Rocky Harbour in 2017 and many other communities. Even in my district, in 2019, St. Carols had a romping good time and they accomplished a lot of great things for their community in the means of a Come Home Year.

Speaker, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are very social. We love to come together and, recently, it's been particularly difficult and even impossible since the beginning of the pandemic. So our government has recognized the benefits of a Come Home Year very early and made the following commitment in our Liberal platform. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, we haven't been able to gather as we're used to. We've

gone a long time without seeing family and friends who live away. As vaccines roll out, the Furey government will host Come Home Year 2022 to help tourism and help reunite us all.

Come Home Year is an excellent opportunity to attract tourism and to encourage Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who've moved away to get back home. We know, as I'm sure the hon. Members opposite see it, that many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians around the globe are very anxious and ready to be home. And we need to welcome them with open arms.

Speaker, our communities always step up and they always show leadership. Let's face it; this is an excellent opportunity for communities, residents, councils to showcase their special piece of Newfoundland and Labrador. Communities will be putting out the welcome mats for people travelling to the province, from Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who are living away, all the way down to first-time tourists who've come to the province to catch their very first glimpse of Newfoundland and Labrador. We have so much to be proud of.

As the Member opposite referenced, we have 12 months of awesome to put on display here, and our communities will certainly be up for the task. They'll be preparing their public places, their trails, their gardens, the tourist sites and they'll be planning events like church teas, garden parties – I can't wait to get back to Conche – and musical get-togethers, kitchen parties, shed parties. We will be putting on a show.

With that in mind, we've had significant discussions in our department – the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs – on how we can engage communities in this process. We see a huge potential here and it's an opportunity to spice up our towns, get things in order and just add sparkle.

We recognize how important our municipalities will be. To that end, I'm planning to put together a budget within the department for next year to offer some financial incentives and other support to towns as they get ready, because company's coming. We want to make sure our communities are ready, as all of these activities will leave a lasting memory. They'll provide us with the

opportunity to attract those who've moved away and hopefully remind them of how special this place is and they'll want to stay.

Our community leaders and residents, as they've done before, will pull out all the stops and put their best face forward to welcome those returning and those making their very first visits. We want to truly make them feel at home. We're looking at ways that we can support our communities in their efforts to make Come Home Year 2022 a success and keep a close eye out because I'll have more to say about that in the future.

I can't wait until the anticipation and the excitement starts to build. I mean you can imagine how cool this is going to be when people start trekking back to the Island. I encourage all Members of the House to support this private Member's motion and work together to make Come Home Year 2022 a great success for all.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

C. TIBBS: Thank you very much, Speaker.

You know we can banter all day long back and forth but this is a win, win, win for the whole province. I want to compliment the government for bringing this forward. I think it's important. I think it's a great PMR and again I compliment you. Great job.

I think that it's going to take a lot of hard work, obviously, a lot of planning. Speaker, 2022 is not far away; it's right around the corner. I would suggest that we set up some sort of a committee for ideas as well would be a great thing to look at.

Speaker, in 2000 when I was about 22, I moved to Ireland and I studied tourism. I know that they triple their population each year. It was something that was deeply close to my heart and I wanted to bring back my findings and apply them here in Newfoundland and Labrador to complement our own tourism industry.

Even back then I worked with somebody who is a pioneer for tourism here in Newfoundland and Labrador and she should be commended, Ms. Brenda O'Reilly. She's great and there are so many others like her. They just had the most difficult year and a half in the province's history. So this PMR is actually pretty emotional to some of us, to look forward to something that's going to be absolutely fantastic. Again a win, win, win for everybody.

Come Home Year 2022 for Newfoundland and Labrador, it's a unique opportunity. It's an opportunity to showcase our heritage, our traditions and our history – our history itself to what got us here today. That's something that we can all look forward to and it comes from every sector of the province, both the Island and the Big Land, to ensure that people come here and gives us an opportunity to show them where we've come from.

It's a bridge to where we're going but where we've come from; there are just so many different dialects and so many different pieces of history. Newfoundland and Labrador is one of the few places in the world you can travel 50 kilometres and get completely different scenery, a completely different dialect when people speak, and it's something that we have to offer the world. I hope everybody shows up to visit it.

Many great places here when we talk about our traditions and our history. The Viking settlements that we have here – absolutely phenomenal. That's not something that's everywhere in the world and it's something we're very proud of and we look forward to showcasing that as well.

Many Indigenous landmarks, we've talked about areas up my way, Buchans, Millertown, Buchans Junction, this morning and the history that is there. It's the history of a people that we are very proud of and, hopefully, gets the attention it deserves as well.

The outports throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, I mean, that's what we were first built upon. It's something that there are less and less each year of people that are in our outports but they are definitely a part of our history; a big part of our history. We want to ensure that the world sees that as well.

The architecture that's built across this province. You know, when we talk about history, Speaker, it's a very small history when you compare it to places like Europe and whatnot. But when we compare our history to North America, well by God, we got some of the greatest entrenched history on this whole continent and that's something to be very proud of, as well; I know I'm proud of it.

The theatre world here in Newfoundland and Labrador: we have a great theatre world here in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Queen Street Dinner Theatre in Grand Falls-Windsor, that's been going on a very long time. I know people within this House have seen it. It's a great dinner; it's a great show. I hope to see more of them across the province here. They're a great thing for our youth, a great community event and I look forward to seeing more of them across the province, just like the Queen Street Dinner Theatre.

Of course, one of my favourites, and the favourite of the Member sat behind me for Cape St. Francis, the culinary. The culinary here in Newfoundland and Labrador is great. We've talked about food quite a bit and we have some great culinary experiences right here in Newfoundland and Labrador, from mom-and-pop fish and chip places right up to some fine-dining cuisine. It's something to be very, very proud of. I know I'm very proud of it and I look forward to go to different areas of the province here.

We are even getting more international, of course, with our cuisine and we have some top-notch chefs right here in Newfoundland and Labrador that I'm very proud of.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. TIBBS: Fishing and hunting: If anybody wants to come and do some fishing and hunting, well guess what? There's no better place than Newfoundland and Labrador. Some of my favourite times are on the Exploits River come the summer and it's an absolutely fantastic experience to fly fish the Exploits River.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. TIBBS: Yeah.

And do you know what? I'm very proud also of – you see in many commercials from Newfoundland and Labrador – I remember when I was flying back and forth to Alberta. I was so proud to get on a West Jet flight or an Air Canada flight and sit down in the seat there and on the back of the seat in front of you the first thing we'd see is a provincial tourism commercial for Newfoundland and Labrador. You're very proud to see it and everybody else is watching it. I'm very proud of what they show in these commercials, you know, the oceans and the icebergs and whatnot. It's definitely a big part of Newfoundland and Labrador.

We also have another big part of Newfoundland and Labrador and that's our interior waterways. Whether it be, again, throughout the Island or the Big Land there, we have some lakes and rivers throughout Newfoundland and Labrador that are absolutely world-renowned. I hope moving forward, we showcase some of this with any of the literature we're putting out. I know in Grand Falls-Windsor there we have river rafting on a Class III river and it's absolutely fantastic. They stop on one of those islands and have a lunch. You get wet, you get some water splashed on you and the guides are great. I hope to see that, as well, moving forward.

We do have some issues that need to be address when it comes to this, and this is not political, by no means: a COVID plan. Of course, if we're going to have an influx to this province we need to ensure that there is an intact, solid COVID plan for if anything goes astray or goes wrong. We want to ensure that everybody has a safe, happy and enjoyable experience when they come to Newfoundland and Labrador. We, on this side, will do whatever it takes to help with that as well.

Gas prices is another one. I would like to see something along the lines of if you want to drive your car here – and, to me, that's the greatest way to experience Newfoundland and Labrador. Yeah, you can fly here of course, but when you drive across the Gulf and you get off, whether it be Port aux Basques or Argientia and you make your way across the Island, that's what we truly want.

We want everybody who's coming here to ensure that they see all of Newfoundland and

Labrador, from Gros Morne to Central Newfoundland, Twillingate, Avalon, St. John's and many places in between. I'm sorry if I didn't mention anybody. But we want you to drive across here. If you drive your own vehicle it would be great to have a \$50 or \$75 destination card, gas card to anybody that's coming here for the first time or whatnot that would like to experience the Island like it should be experienced.

Cell service is another one. Yeah, it's great and I encourage people to come here, but we need to ensure that we have as much cell service, obviously, as we possibly can. But also to let them know where there may not be cell service, and that would come back to signage as well. If I'm going to go down a highway, sort of thing, that I've never travelled before in Newfoundland and Labrador, I think there should be signs there letting people know you may be losing cell service for the next two hours. I think that's a very important strategy as we move forward when it comes to people's safety and whatnot.

I'll end on this one. When I studied tourism, you know, I gave guided tours around Dublin for almost a year and it was a great experience. But one of the greatest things that I've seen over there when it comes to tourism is information sharing. It's a part that everybody has to be a part of, whether you are a restaurant or if you're a hospitality unit. If you're entertaining somebody at your restaurant or you have somebody staying there for the night, if you can't offer something, let them know that it's two minutes down the road, the next community, 50 kilometres away.

Somebody is looking for some good Chinese food, for instance, or some good fish and chips and it may not be in that area. We have to make sure that the people that are addressing or welcoming our visitors know exactly – do you know what, the next community over you're going to find the best fish and chips on the Island. Guess what? They also have a heritage society there that shows the old railway going across Newfoundland and Labrador. It might be of some interest to you.

I suggest that we – literature, yes, for people that we want to come here, but I hope that we have some training sessions as well for our own

people that are going to be entertaining the people that are going to be coming to our beautiful province.

I just, again, want to commend the government on bringing this forward. I am super, super excited about it. I'm sure everybody is excited about it. It's an opportunity for a couple of smiles after a year and a half of – it's been a rough year and a half. It's a unique opportunity for us to come together now, 40 of us and the whole province, to welcome people to come here and let them know that Newfoundland and Labrador: we are open for business.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER (Trimper): Thank you.

Staying on the theme of grand districts, the hon. the Member for Burin- Grand Bank.

P. PIKE: Thank you for the opportunity to speak to this motion.

Speaker, the idea to celebrate Newfoundland and Labrador is indeed a wonderful opportunity for family and friends to come home and once again immerse themselves in our great culture and heritage.

The first homecoming in 1966, actually I can remember that as well, I hate saying that but I have to say it because my colleague over here admitted it. It was the year of the orange licence plate, Come Home Year licence plate. I still have one at home. They're quite valuable now as well.

Many communities have had Come Home Year celebrations since that and there are communities in this province that do them every four and five years. It's not uncommon for the population of communities to double in size during this time. It usually lasts one or two weeks in duration.

My mother always complained that it's going to be two weeks in the kitchen because everybody wants to come home and have the boiled dinners and all their favourite meals – stuffed squid and

things like that. It is a lot of fun and people just love to come home.

There are a number of communities, including my District of Burin - Grand Bank, in the province that have already formalized their plans for Come Home Year. Volunteers spend a lot of time putting plans in motion for all age groups, which are designed to bring people together and enjoy the unique traditions of their towns and communities.

The activities range from sports activities to games, mug-ups, scoffs, beach parties, family gatherings, parades and even mummering. Last Come Home Year I was involved in, we had a Christmas in August day where people went mummering. There was a mummer's parade, mummer's dance, prizes for the best mummer's costume. It was a lot of fun. A lot of people don't get home at Christmastime but still remember that great tradition of mummering.

Most towns as well develop themes and have their activities around these themes. One of the things that was mentioned here in the House already is theatre. Theatre certainly plays an important part in Come Home Year celebrations. A few years ago, I was involved with a group and we put off a play of a historic event in our community. Very well attended, lots of good laughs, lots of fun practising and this stuff brings communities together and that is so important. That's what Come Home Years do; it brings people together.

Somebody talked as well about people coming home. We had, on occasion, people come home and while they were home, or shortly after, bought homes in the area for retirement homes. So it does have that impact as well.

Not only do people enjoy their communities, but they like to visit the attractions in the area. In the District of Burin - Grand Bank, there are museums that capture the rich culture and essence of each community. Everywhere in Newfoundland you have beautiful walking trails; people love to walk. I know some communities even close off streets in their town and have a community walkabouts; no vehicles but people just walk back and forth and catch up on old times and so on.

One of the things that we can offer down our way, too, is you can get a day trip, an overnight trip or as long as you want trip to Saint-Pierre and Miquelon. A lot of people in the region, a lot of people in this province go to Saint-Pierre. A lot of us went over as students years ago for our French Immersion experience, which became more than a French Immersion experience, in a lot of cases. Anyway, this brings significant economic benefits to Newfoundland and Labrador.

Speaker, as has been stated before, COVID has taken a toll on Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that live in and outside this wonderful province. All too often I've talked to people in my district and they've said: I haven't seen the grandchildren in two years. If it wasn't for Skype, I wouldn't see them at all. I haven't seen my son in two or three years. Since COVID, nobody has visited. This is a wonderful opportunity for people. A wonderful opportunity for the mental health of people as well.

I can't imagine not being able to hold my grandchildren pretty much every second or third day, but there are people who haven't been able to do that for a couple of years now. Let's get them home.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

P. PIKE: Families need to reunite. One of the things about Come Home Year – and I won't spend too much more time – is the fact that the key to a successful Come Home Year is a dedicated group of individuals who are going to do all the legwork. Come Home Years, people try to create a great experience for those that are coming back, and for their communities. Local businesses and organizations need to take a degree of ownership and work in conjunction with the committees and the communities.

Back in 1966 – I'll just make one more comment about that – Dick Nolan wrote a song "Come Where We're At." I don't know if you remember that. I played it today, by the way. I was looking it up on the phone. I didn't realize, but I played a little bit of it from my colleagues on this side. I don't know if you heard it over there. But there are two lines in that that I'd like read out for you. The lines are: "There's lots of fish and brewis and treats like that, so don't stay

where you're to, come where we're at." That basically captures what we want to do with Come Home Year.

Hopefully, Speaker, we'll be the good place this summer and our families and friends can come back and celebrate this great Province of Newfoundland and Labrador with us.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

The hon. the Member for the District of Bonavista.

C. PARDY: Thank you, Speaker.

It's a great opportunity to have a few words on tourism, Come Home Year, on this PMR, and especially from the District of Bonavista, which is a region that prides itself in being a tourist attraction in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I think the stats would indicate such.

I often state sometimes before I speak about those residents in the District of Bonavista who are watching – and there a quite a few, Speaker, that do watch these proceedings. More than what I initially had thought. I know that just recently it was Daniel and Sadie Tucker in Bunyan's Cove who I met; that was getting my second vaccination. And two of them were there waiting for their 15 minutes out in the car and two them had stated that they watch the House of Assembly faithfully. And I'm sure they're watching today, as is Gil Bonnell in Catalina.

Come Home Year is a wonderful initiative. I think a lot of us thought that in 2021 we'd be back to normal or close to normal this year. I would sincerely hope – and as the Member before me had spoke – that in 2022 people can feel comfortable with travelling, and that won't be as much an impediment as what 2021 is.

I mentioned tourism is big on the Bonavista Peninsula. It's big in the province. Tourism accounts for \$1.14 billion to our GDP in the province. People would say that the fishery is the backbone of our province, and basically it's about the same GDP. This year the fishery may

be a larger portion of the GDP because of the value of the product that we took out of the waters off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador this year. But tourism is significant when we're not in a pandemic.

So if we look at data for the past couple of years to 2019, our tourism numbers aren't great. But that's not surprise to anybody. It is where we would expect them to be. We have over 2,700 tourism-related businesses in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. That's a significant number in a province of half a million people. Big geography, but a decent number, 2,700 small businesses. Of those, 78 per cent of them are small businesses. So the value and the importance of small businesses to our economy is huge, in particular in tourism.

How many are on the Bonavista Peninsula? I know that the viewers, Speaker, are anxious now and figuring if I got that statistic, because in Bonavista it is big in the district. Well, we have close to 300 small businesses associated with tourism in the District of Bonavista. That is a significant number. In one region, one district, 300 small businesses, knowing there are 2,700 in the province. We're very proud of that and I would think as tourism increases we ought to see more businesses start up in the province and in the district.

Those businesses are in accommodations, food and beverage, transportation, recreation, entertainment and travel services. But in 2021, there were 14,584 that were employed, and that was a COVID year, an off year. Because in a normal year, we would have about 20,000 people employed in tourism within our province. This year in 2021, HNL expects it to be 17,642, is the figure, and how they were that precise – but anyway that was the figure that they threw out. I really don't know. But I'm doubtful that we're going to reach that figure in 2021. Again, that's no surprise to anybody either. So I say with those numbers that we've got and knowing that we're 2,400 less, Speaker, then we'll need to be patient on the rebound.

One little cautionary note is I would hope that by 2022 we're in a different place than what we are in 2021. We all wish and hope that is the case. I think with the vaccination schedule that we've got, but we certainly depend on out-of-province

visitors coming into the province. So what have we lost – and maybe we'll hear some more accurate figures as we go, but I would assume that we've lost between \$400 million to \$600 million due to COVID, to date. Again, if I'm not mistaken, it was HNL that may be predicting that. I stand to be corrected if it isn't. But, anyway, it's a significant loss.

One thing that HNL did state is that if we have residents that travel the province, and we do have many in the District of Bonavista that travel from the Avalon region, then basically they generate \$1 towards our GDP. Basically, their expenditures are dollar for dollar. The non-residents that travel in our province are valued at \$2 of their spending. I guess it's new money. But international, it's three times the amount. The international travellers are noted to spend around \$1,500 a day. That seems like a large amount of money. If they're here for any length of time, I find that to be a large, large number, but that is what – probably if it's an average, it's knowing the airfare.

When we look at the airfare, the access to the province is probably one of the most significant items that we would have when we want to increase tourism, it's access. I'm sure it was mentioned before, we talked about, you travel to PEI on the Confederation Bridge and there's no cost to get to PEI; you pay to leave PEI, but to come home there's no cost going across to the Confederation Bridge.

I said wouldn't that be something if we had Marine Atlantic – that we had visitors from a country that didn't pay to come and only pay when they leave. As long as the price when they left is similar to what we pay now and it's not doubled because that would negate the whole thing.

I would say what we do in lines of air access is very important. I remember I asked a question in the last sitting of the House to the minister and we talked about an air-access plan. The minister had stated that there is a plan developed and I think it was probably embargoed, rightfully so, to the point that we don't publish or promote the plan that we have to try to expand our air access. But it would be sure nice to see some measures out there that we would see that would make it

much more affordable for people to come to our province; that's via air or by Marine Atlantic.

When we do comparisons on tourism, we said that the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador is \$1.14 billion, tourism; Iceland is \$5 billion. We look at what growth we can have, and we're moving. The only thing being is that the sky is the limit, it often depends on what we put in there and what strategies and what initiatives that we put in there.

So someone would automatically say, well, here you are comparing a province within a country to a country, that's true. But the similarities are great. Iceland and Newfoundland and Labrador are northern bodies of land. We're similar; we're northern climates. There are many people saying now in the world and after COVID and with the climate change, cold is hot, signifying that people want to get clear of the heat sometimes and to go to a colder destination is more attractive.

Iceland, while it's a country in and of itself, we often say and look at the population that we have a mere half a million. Well, if I'm not mistaken, Iceland is less than half a million. So there is a formidable comparison. They're based on fishery and tourism. They don't have the mining – we have that, thankfully – but tourism is an industry that I think we can really make some inroads and strides on if we do have some aggressive strategies for doing so.

I think that would be the challenge of all of us in the House, is to what strategies we can put in place to make sure that we enhance the amount of tourists that come to our province and maybe – maybe – get to the level of Iceland, with \$5 million towards our GDP.

A previous speaker mentioned about the walking trails and the various parks that we have on the Island. We have some wonderful walking trails in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. We have some wonderful eateries. We have some wonderful entertainment. Marketing – and it was said before in this House and said many times – we have world-class marketing.

In my Fisheries portfolio, I know that when they looked at Norway, Norway links their tourism strategy with their export of fish products. I

thought that is very strategic and very neat. So if their market is Europe, and some part of Europe in some big city that they know that that's where their fish products are going, then on that plane when the fish products are going to that large centre, by golly, they're investing in their strategy, that tourism, and people are going back and forth while they've got their fish products being exported out.

That is something that maybe we can pursue. I had a large fishing organization in Newfoundland and Labrador that I sat down and met with and they had 14 international offices – you can probably guess which fish processing company that would be, only one in Bonavista – that is the one.

I immediately thought that if we're transporting or shipping or exporting our fish products, then why not strategically look at having tourists come from those locations and those big locations that would be in Asia and Europe that are travelling on those flights. That would enable us to incentivize or strategize in order to make it a little more affordable.

Then, we would double down to make sure that our marketing campaign is in that populated region of which our fish products are being exported to. I thought that was a wonderful, novel idea. I don't think we're doing it but that might be a pursuit that we can have a look at to say is there some kind of strategy? It may be in our air access strategy now. We don't know because it's embargoed, but if it is, that's a good pursuit.

Speaker, I think I will end it there. I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak on the Come Home Year. I commend my good friend who raised that and brought it forth to the House as a private Member's resolution. I'm sure we're all in support of a very good, well-attended Come Home Year 2022.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Thank you.

I now turn to the Member for St. John's Centre.

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

I was seven in 1966. I don't know what exactly I remember, if anything, of Come Home Year. I do remember the licence plates. I do remember my first introduction to the communities outside of St. John's were the drives around the bay that we would take.

Even when the Trans-Canada went by there, dad usually packed us all into the station wagon – no seat belts at that time; you sat anywhere – and we'd go to Conception Bay, the highway. It used to be a source of consternation to us that he never took the highway, which would be shorter. However, one of the games he used to play was try to figure out what communities we were coming up to. Could never figure that one out, could never keep them straight.

Dad grew up and was from Carbonear; Mom was from Bay Roberts. That's where our family hails from, Fitzpatricks and Dinns. But I learned many years later, when I started to drive up and down the Southern Shore to work, exactly how he was able to keep them all straight. He worked on the railway so his trip each day out across the province would – out to Carbonear would bring him back and forth past every community. Certainly, when I was driving up and down the shore for half my teaching career on the Southern Shore, I could do the turns in the road in my sleep after a while. I knew where every community was.

But we do take things for granted in many ways. We live here and we take the wonders, the beauty and the attractions we have to offer for granted. I think here in Newfoundland, when I look at it, Signal Hill – it's a place I'll go to, anyone who's coming here, or out to the most easterly point in North America, Cape Spear; the Crow's Nest, if you want to go and look through a periscope from a U-boat. It's small things like that, the paraphernalia and mementos from World War II.

The Inn of Olde: If you haven't tried that down in Quidi Vidi Village, it's worth the cash. You'll have plenty of stories. Linda, I think it is who operates the place – you'll get your share of stories.

I do want to pick up here on one – my colleague from Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans talked about dialect. It's interesting; sometimes we tend to be ashamed of our dialect. You go away and people will say, you don't have a Newfie dialect and I'll say, it all depends where you come from, what part. There are many Newfoundland and Labrador dialects, depending on where you're from.

The Southern Shore – a very strong Irish-Catholic background, no two ways about it. When I went up there, I didn't go berry picking, I went burry picking. If you do a history of the English language, you'll realize that this is rich; this is something to be proud of, to me, in many ways.

I no longer look upon it, when you're growing up, as a source of shame or the Newfie joke; this is something that we need to market. This is part of who we are, our background and our heritage. The French Shore names, you name it, this is all part of our history so promote that.

I will say this: It wasn't until I was president of the NLTA that I really got to know the province because then, as part of my job, I went around to visit just about every school in the province that I could get to. I got to get to some beautiful places. I was going to visit François and – now the name is escaping me – on the South Coast.

AN HON. MEMBER: Grey River.

J. DINN: Grey River, yes. I had them all there – Grey River. I remember going over the headlands in the helicopter because the ferry wasn't running that day. It gives you a whole new perspective on the province when you're looking down at it and being buffeted by winds.

The Sandbanks Park – beautiful. Look at what they've done, when you look at it, in Bonavista. We had Trinity – Trinity we knew about, but Bonavista built on that and it's just growing in leaps and bounds. The Tablelands, the Dover Fault, Gros Morne and the Irish Loop. We've done a tremendous amount of work when you look at just what we have to offer here.

I will say that it's probably because of my work with the NLTA that I developed a long-last relationship with the Pinware River. Now, any

of you who've been on it you know, anyone who's been on it you have to be part billy goat to fish it. It's probably the only reason I try to keep my legs in shape because there's going to come a point, sooner than later, when I won't be able to scale the cliffs, the 45-degree angles, to fish for salmon. But it is a river that parallels many of them.

Vernon's Antique Car Museum: Now, Swift Current. I used to drive by that when I was first teaching in 1981-82 and that wasn't there. But if you go to that place in the middle of – I guess some people might say the middle of nowhere, but in the small community you have a world-class collection of some of the finest antique cars you'll ever see. It's a multi-million dollar outfit. I think at the last count, I believe it was 56, maybe over 60 antique cars. A mere, what is it, \$8 to get in and I think the money is donated then to charitable organizations. If you drive a bit further down the Burin Peninsula, you can actually get a taste of Europe when you visit Saint-Pierre and Miquelon.

On the Southern Shore where I spent most of my – well, at least half of my teaching career, the Colony of Avalon. The Colony of Avalon is actually – and I used to teach in St. Joseph's school, which is now the museum. I would watch that – that was always something that they were just starting. Now that's grown into a major tourist attraction.

Or the Lighthouse Picnics, basically run by a former Student, Jill Curran. I mean, I have a special spot in my heart for the Southern Shore; it's where I spent most of my career. All opportunities were – and I look at Jill's enterprise of integrating a very common activity, picnics, with the surroundings. If you haven't had a chance, it's well worth the visit because you get to have a picnic overlooking some of the finest scenery there. Breathtaking in many ways.

I do remember with the cod moratorium, you look at how then we transitioned into boat tours. People found ways to use their skills from the fishery and they transitioned into something that was much more, maybe user friendly and certainly that showed off the province to the people outside. Icebergs are taken for granted, but I'll tell you for Mainlanders and come from

aways, first time, an iceberg is well worth the cash.

Craft breweries have been mentioned. I like the idea of maybe a craft brewery tour. If the Member is interested, we can try that next year. I'm only too happy. I'm always happy if it involves beer; that brings us together.

I do look at opportunities like ski slopes. It's interesting visiting Whistler, BC years ago, what amazed me is that they had the ski slopes used in the summertime. They were using them for downhill mountain biking. They used the ski lifts to bring them up. I don't know if it would work here or not, but I often thought what an opportunity here to use any of the ski slopes we have for the summer as well as the winter.

Here's my key point, I guess, a suggestion: This is going to bring people who have not been home in years – and sometimes it will be their first time and sometimes they'll bring family and friends who have never been to Newfoundland and Labrador. I want to draw attention to roads and signs. I've said this before a few times as a suggestion, too. I don't think I've ever seen this on other roads but the washouts that are on the sides of the roads at times – we're not talking, Speaker, minor; we're talking about they're almost caverns in some ways or ravines.

I've often thought that for the uninitiated or the unfamiliar pulling off in some of these at night, could result in more than just simply a bump. It could cause some serious injuries. I do think, on the main thoroughfares, these need to be fixed up.

Secondly, my sister came home this summer and she's the one that brought it to my attention. Two cars got off the ferry in Port aux Basques, got not even halfway across in that section between Port aux Basques or maybe Stephenville and hit on a pothole that blew out her tire and the tire of the car behind her, at night. She's lucky she wasn't killed or hurt.

I do believe here, for this, if we're going to encourage people from across this province to return or people to come home who haven't been here for years and may not have the familiarity because there have been changes, we need to look at our roadways and make sure that they are the safest and user friendly as possible.

I understand, yes, we have a lot of roads in this place and the Trans-Canada is a large undertaking to keep up.

The other thing I might draw your attention to is signage, if we need to review signage. I often think when I go up to the Pinware – I usually go up to Pinware every July. I know where the ferry is, but I often think that the first time you see the sign is near the beginning when you leave Deer Lake, and you drive on up and there's a sign for the St. Barbe or the Labrador ferry, but you don't really see any signs, or noticeable ones after that. So if it's your first time driving, you say: Have I missed it? Did I happen to look away? I think it's important to have signage like that for people. Not all the people coming are livyers; some it may be their first time.

I'm hoping, I would assume, that this is not only about bringing Newfoundlanders and Labradorians back, but also bringing with them other people and maybe first-timers and people who have no connection. But I'll guarantee you one thing: The people who come here, people who've been with the Canadian Teachers' Federation, people who come here, they love the place. They'll be back again. They enjoy the culture, the food, the wit, the friendliness. All the things that make Newfoundland and Labrador such a great place.

But from my point of view, if anything else, when they get off the ferry, whether it's in Argentia or in Port aux Basques, I think we need to make sure that if there's any investment we can make – and it'll be a long-term investment for the people of this province as well – it's to make sure that the Trans-Canada Highway is as safe as possible, and any of the thoroughfares where we want to get them to visit, that they are as equally user friendly.

Some of them – and I remember driving down the Baie Verte Peninsula, and I remember Roxie Snow, a teacher up there, saying: Jim, be careful – it was in the wintertime. If you're not careful, you could drive off the road and they'd never know where you were. I came up there at night and it wasn't until the next day when I was driving back out in the daylight I said: Oh my God, I know what she was talking about, because you could go down into a bank of snow and they'd never know where you were.

So I think many ways, bring people home; get them safely to and from. And I do like the idea of having people come in free, but paying to get out.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER (Bennett): The hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation.

S. CROCKER: Thank you, Speaker.

It's absolutely a privilege this afternoon to have the opportunity to speak to this private Member's resolution. As Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation, I can tell you that as the lead department on Come Home Year 2022, our department has been extremely busy and I can tell everybody and ensure everybody in the House this afternoon that this is pretty much a take-note debate. They are back in the office this afternoon listening to some of the ideas here, and this is one of the reasons why I am so happy to see this as the private Member's resolution today.

This campaign, when first envisioned by the Premier and our government, was about bringing our expatriates and expats and their families home, but it is also about inviting others to come to see our province and to consider making it their home.

This is about reinvigorating Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. We all know the past 18-24 months that we've been through and we need to rejuvenate our tourism and hospitality industry, and what better way to do it than celebrating our arts and our culture and our history in this province.

I can assure everybody in this House today that we will be launching Come Home Year 2022 in the very near future. Some of the things that I have heard today that I do want to reflect on because I think they are very important. I see this Come Home Year as an opportunity for our industry to rebuild, recover but like every Newfoundlander and Labradorian, let's celebrate. Celebrating is how we can help it recover.

By making sure our expats and their families come next summer and they invite their friends from other places to come in, we fill up that VFR market, but it is also important next year. We will also maintain our non-resident campaign, because there are two different campaigns here. There are our visiting friends and relatives' campaign and our non-resident campaign. We certainly realize that in order to rebuild our tourism industry, we have to maintain our focus on our non-resident campaign.

It was mentioned by a couple of Members this afternoon and, most recently, the Member for Bonavista when he talked about air access and the challenges around air access. On Monday, I had the opportunity to attend the Atlantic Canada Airports Association meeting, which was well attended. All airports in our province were well represented at that meeting on Monday.

It was interesting and encouraging to be there and listen to their rebuilding strategies but, with that being said, there is much work to do. The rebuilding of the air industry is going to take quite some time. As a government, I think our commitment is clear; we will be there to help our airports rebuild. Our airports, by the way, have been very resilient. They are doing as well or better than many of their counterparts in Atlantic Canada. That is important, but we do know that the strategy going forward is going to be tough. The air industry in Canada rebuilt itself to about 52 per cent of 2019 this season. It's relaxing back now. Hard to know what the fall is going to bring. September numbers were strong but very important we get there.

Some of our major airlines have really retired a lot of their capacity. That is concerning. But I can assure this House that our department, other departments and the Minister of Finance clearly said in her budget back in April – that's a long time ago – and June –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

S. CROCKER: Yeah. And the Minister for IET, we're committed to working with our airports, our airlines and airline partners to make sure we rebuild that capacity as fast as possible.

We've been talking to groups regularly, like Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador. I know the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans referenced Brenda O'Reilly and her group and the tremendous work they do at getting us back to where we need to be. A lot of work to do but as we plan Come Home Year, we will bring in those stakeholders. Stakeholders like HNL, MNL, MusicNL, ArtsNL and Heritage NL. I can go on and on but these are the people we want to bring in.

There's such a role here for our municipalities, as the minister said in her remarks, such an opportunity for them to be a part of this. I can tell the House that there will be announcements in the coming days of ways that we want to partner. We want to work with municipalities and other groups so that we can leverage their Come Home Years and their willingness to bring people back to their towns and to our province and how important that will be.

Interestingly enough, the Member for Burin - Grand Bank referenced the Dick Nolan song. Before I came over today I watched the launch video from Come Home Year 1966. If anybody gets an opportunity to watch it, it was quite interesting that video.

The Member for Bonavista also referenced in his remarks about the fishery and tourism. I often say to industry when I'm talking to them, if you look at – no disrespect to my urban colleagues – at rural Newfoundland and Labrador right now, the number one employer in your town is either the fishery or tourism. They are one and two, one and two, no matter where we go in this province.

If you look at Bonavista, as an example, probably one of the strongest fishing regions that this province had at one point in time. They've turned that, since the moratorium, to become I think, certainly outside of the urban centres the most successful tourism destination in the province. Our provincial historic sites in Bonavista in a non-COVID year have some 35,000 visitors. There's so much there to explore.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention a gem in our provincial historic sites that's not as highlighted as I feel it should, and that's the

Heart's Content Cable Station. One hundred and fifty years ago the first trans-Atlantic cable was successfully landed in Heart's Content. Heart's Content is the Canadian nominee for UNESCO in a partnership with Valentia, Ireland. We will find out in January if Ireland brings Valentia as their nominee. If they do, we will have a joint application to UNESCO to make Heart's Content the next UNESCO World Heritage Site in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

S. CROCKER: Our history is so important. It was referenced by others about access through Marine Atlantic. I can assure you we will be having conversations with Marine Atlantic. There are so many things that we can do. I had the opportunity this summer to actually cross on the ferry. I see opportunities I think that we would've had in the past that we may not be leveraging today as we did in the past. Ambassadors, whether they're on that side of the Gulf or on the ferry itself, there are opportunities here to help support the industry.

I won't take much more time because I know I have some more colleagues that want to speak to this. But I would invite everybody here, for all of us to come together in this campaign because this is about rebuilding an industry that is so important to this province and been so devastated. There's no industry in this province or in this world, I think, that was affected in the same way as tourism and hospitality. That in itself means that the arts and cultural industries are also impacted greatly, because it's our entertainers and it's our culture that people come here to see. This is so important.

With that being said, I will take my seat. But, again, I look forward to sharing with this House and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador our plans for Come Home Year 2022 in the very near future.

Also, Mr. Speaker, before I do stop, I do want to thank the staff at Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation and the staff in many other government departments. One thing we've done with this is made it a whole-of-government approach. Whether it's Municipal and Provincial Affairs or my colleagues in Population Growth

Strategy, there are so many important things we can do here.

L. DEMPSTER: Indigenous.

S. CROCKER: Indigenous: We'll work with our Indigenous partners to deliver, because Indigenous tourism is something that has untapped potential.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, with that said, and before I remember something else that I should've said, I'll take my place.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Ferryland.

L. O'DRISCOLL: Thank you, Speaker.

I won't touch on this too long so someone else might get a chance to speak on it. I wasn't going to speak but I couldn't let it go because, I'm going to say, the district that I'm in and the tourism that's there and Come Home Year. I think it's a great initiative. We had a Come Home Year – was it last year? Well, 2019 we had a Come Home Year in Bay Bulls. That was a great event. There was another one in Ferryland that I attended the first year I was an MHA – another great event.

I think it's great, bringing people home. Again, to touch on what the minister just said, for non-residents as well because – I'll use the boat tours that are in Bay Bulls and along the coast. They mainly rely on non-residents. Speaking to a couple of owners on the boat tours, they said, 5 per cent, maybe this year they might've gotten to 10 per cent of their business from locals. They need non-residents to get here. Flights are a big thing; it's certainly a big issue.

I'm not here to beat anything down but that's something we certainly have to keep in mind are the flights coming in. I guess just even people looking to go on holidays this time of the year – and I know some people that have gone – they have to do a test before they leave. They pay \$150. They just went down to Nashville. They paid \$230 each to get back to do a test. That

adds a lot to their trip, so it's important somehow that we try to navigate around that – I'm not going to say get around it, but it's important that we keep that in mind. Cost is a factor for people coming home and it is a holiday for them as well. It's just something to keep in mind.

Touching on the tourism in the area, the Member for St. John's Centre touched on the lighthouse tours in Ferryland. I've done that myself during the Come Home Year, as a matter of fact, in Ferryland. I did the dinner theatre this year in Ferryland; took my parents up and it was a great event. I'm sure, in all these districts – Bonavista, I was down there last year and I was up the Northern Peninsula five or six years ago to a dinner theatre. So all those events for Come Home Year, if they could all coordinate together – and I know that's not easy because it's a big province.

I'm going to say every community has tourism of some sort, for sure, whatever that may be. That's something we certainly should look at. I would say that when this is getting organized – and there's a lot of work going in by the department, according to the minister, and I'm sure there is – just nice to keep everybody informed in here, where it's going and be able to put out information that we all can use for our districts and for the whole province. Hopefully we all stay engaged on this and I'm sure they will. So, certainly, it's something to look forward to.

I will touch on the road signs. I only drive a half an hour back and forth every day, some days 35 minutes. I think I mentioned this before. I think something that we should look at as a province – and, again, not here to beat anything down but I do look at signs. It's just something that really bugs me, the signs that are – I'm going to say – rotted out. I just think that we should go to a metal sign, like you do down in Florida. You see the metal signs on the road. They don't rot out once you do them, unless somebody sprays them and you can't control that. But the metal signs I think would be, not a lifetime investment, but a lot better than some of the wood.

If you leave here and you followed me home this evening, you would see four or five signs that are rotted out; it just looks bad to me and I'm

looking at it from the whole province point of view. I'm sure everybody has some somewhere that they'd love to see replaced or done. You can't do everything but for tourism, just these main signs. That'd be something that we certainly should look at I think as well.

Again, not to beat anything down because that's not the purpose of this, but that's important when you come here. When you go somewhere else and you see these signs – I use Florida as an example; they're always up over the top. The ones that are on ours now on the Gushue Highway when I go home, they're good signs. They're metal; they're up on top. There are some over there that have fallen down. It's something that should be looked at. So anyway, that's part on that.

The Member for St. John's Centre talked about dialect. Where I live in Bay Bulls – and you go to Trepassey, they have a dialect. Some of these videos used some people from these areas. Ferryland has a different dialect again; you go out to Harbour Grace, a different dialect again. So all these areas have different dialects. Most times I can meet somebody and say you're from Trepassey, I'm sure you are. And I don't know if they are, but they end up being because you know their dialect. So it's something that we should certainly be looking at and putting in our videos as we're putting out.

Also, I had the pleasure to go down to Petty Harbour this summer just to visit. There's a business down there that takes people out jigging fish as a tourism attraction and they have students hired there. It's pretty interesting I have to say. I was trying to get the minister to go down – I don't know if he did after or not – there and look at it. It was certainly a great event to go down. They fillet the fish for you; they give the fish. They give you the cod tongues; they show you how it's done. They split a fish for you. It was pretty interesting.

I'm surprised – and probably because of rules on fishing – somebody hasn't tried to open up, in the close area, cod trap tourism, something that you take people out on a boat, you watch a fisherman haul a cod trap. It's something that's gone – you might never see here, I'm sure. You're putting a cod trap out, you're trapping the fish – and too many have been caught, but

it's an event that I'm not sure if all the people here have seen it. I grew up with it and fished for a couple of years with my dad. Never got paid but I fished with him. I was a young kid. There's lots of stuff to look at when you go back and look.

One thing we didn't do back then and we didn't have back then were phones or pictures to look at. Every time I see them now I see a science fair about 20 years ago that a kid had a video in school of a trap being hauled in St. Mary's Bay somewhere and I had said, wow, and the trap was full. It was an unbelievable experience to look at. Just some of that stuff as Come Home Year would be great.

I think it's a great initiative. I won't take any more time but it's certainly a pleasure to speak on this. The only thing I would say is that if I haven't touched something in the area, it's certainly not intentional, but with the restriction of time and giving everybody else a chance.

Thank you so much, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Speaker.

I'm very happy to get the opportunity to speak. I won't speak very long. Unlike my learned colleague from Mount Pearl - Southlands, when I actually say a couple of minutes I'm only going to be a couple of minutes.

I do want to say how happy I am to be standing shoulder to shoulder with all colleagues in this House of Assembly to support the Come Home Year 2022. I know how important it is to an industry that has been affected quite heavily over this time frame for the last two years. I know the minister has worked very, very hard with the stakeholders to ensure that their needs and wants are going to be brought forward with the initiatives in Come Home Year.

I think it's all encompassing for all of us to do everything we can in our communities to support the municipalities and the LSDs to get to a point where when we do have our Come Home Year,

get that information out to the public so we can all enjoy the activities that are happening there. I will touch on a couple of things that some of the Members had mentioned which I thought were really neat.

The Member for Bonavista talked about the world-class internationally recognized marketing campaigns that we do have in this province. That's a testament to the staff that we have in the department, but also the agency of record that does some fantastic work for us. I know that they're looking forward to the Come Home Year marketing and the brand that's going to go along with that.

To address one of the questions was the research that's been put in place to direct those ads to where they have to be directed to. To get the best fruit of people travelling to this province is based on exit surveys, it's based on the best research that we have not just here in this province, but internationally and nationally as well. I think it's important that we all push and share those on social media and get it as far as we possibly can.

So much to say and so little time but many people that travel to Newfoundland and Labrador do so, not like you travel to Toronto or Montreal, it's a week or so before or two weeks before you can say let's go to Montreal for the weekend. Newfoundland and Labrador is a bucket-list destination so you have to plan for that.

Talking about air access like some of the Members have talked about is very important. It's been a challenge that we've been facing for decades in this province. We've worked with our stakeholders to ensure we could get as much as we possibly could out of the airline industry to come here. I know that is an important piece and it is something that we should all be working for. I encourage every one of us to reach out to everyone we know to come back to this province to celebrate with us because nobody celebrates as much as we do in this province and the way we do.

The MHA for Ferryland mentioned air access and I think it is a great point that he makes. But one of the things I was hoping that he'd make a point on was Mistaken Point. I know he is over

there saying how great a spot it is. It is a fantastic spot with fantastic staff that do amazing work up there and are dedicated to their job. Anyone that hasn't had the pleasure to visit Mistaken Point, please take the time to drive to the man's district and visit Mistaken Point –

D. BRAGG: It won't be a mistake.

B. DAVIS: It will not be a mistake, that's for sure, as the hon. minister said.

Many of the attractions that we talked about today I could go into in great depth, but I just want to say how important it is for all of us to be together supporting this initiative. I think it's great for the tourism industry that has been embattled during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Without any further ado, I'd just like to say thank you to them for showing patience to walk this road with us. We're going to be there with them to help them come out of this, but all of us together are going to make it a lot easier.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to hearing the rest of the comments.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation.

L. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Speaker.

I'll try to be as brief as my colleague there: five minutes. I just couldn't let this afternoon pass without saying a couple of words about a very beautiful part of this province affectionately known as the Big Land and some of the Indigenous talent and the tremendous untapped potential up in that part of the province, Speaker.

My grandfather, who many know came from Carbonear, went to Labrador in 1936; later wrote and published 19 books with only a Grade 2 education, I might add. So if you want to learn about some of the tremendous history of Labrador and the Indigenous peoples, you can read some of those books, *Labrador by Choice* being his first one.

Speaker, I just have to start with this really quick story. A couple of summers ago I was taking a

walk in my hometown, down towards the shrimp processing facility and I came across this really big, fancy motorhome. This elderly gentleman was down changing a tire. I went and spoke to him for a minute and I said: You didn't mind taking that fancy thing in here on the gravel road? He got up, he brushed himself off and he said: Look at me – he started first by saying we had wanted to see this part of the world for as long as I can remember. He said: Look at me, I'm 83, my wife is 81; we're out of time. So they ventured on the gravel road. That's just an indication of what's to come.

Speaker, when you cross the border in the Labrador Straits, you come into a beautiful, beautiful area, Point Amour Lighthouse – the tallest lighthouse in Atlantic Canada, the second tallest in the country. You move on down and you've got Red Bay UNESCO World Heritage Site; take a ferry from Mary's Harbour out to Battle Harbour, a step back in time to when cod was king with all the amenities, just a beautiful area. Everyone who goes there is never disappointed.

Come to my hometown in Charlottetown, nestled up in St. Michaels Bay, we have 365 islands in our bay. You can visit one island for every day of the year. Tremendous history around Cartwright and how that was started. Port Hope Simpson, the logging and you come all the way down – we have a number of festivals, Speaker. Volunteers, we should mention here today that make these things happen; that make it interesting for people to come and visit, starting with the bakeapple festival that's been around for 40 years. You've got the Crab Festival, the partridgeberry festival and you move on up to Makkovik and Rigolet and you've got the Salmon Festival, the Trout Festival – all of which I've been privileged to have attended in past years.

Also, Speaker, Indigenous tourism is the fastest growing tourism, I believe, maybe in the country. When I travel through Labrador, the talent that's there in the making of sealskin, knitting, hooked rugs. Just Friday at the airport my colleague said to me – I was wearing a sealskin pin and she said: You always have very interesting things. I didn't buy them away. They're always bought by somebody that I've bumped into up in Labrador. Beautiful, beautiful

trails – as we're building up our infrastructure and our roads also, most of the communities now have lovely trails with an incredible view.

Mr. Speaker, myself and the Minister of Justice, we just got a quick tour up in North West River, an extension of The Rooms; tremendous history of our First Nation's groups, the Inuit. I would encourage anyone if you're going into Lake Melville area, take a few minutes to get up to North West River and see some of the tremendous history that's in that area.

Mr. Speaker, I've no doubt that next summer is going to be a tremendous time as folks gather here at the most easterly edge of Canada, a vast land, small in population but the friendliest people that you will ever meet. Where I come from, we always say there are no strangers here; there are only friends you've not yet met. I can't wait to have some of my family from across the country coming home and getting together. It's going to be a very positive, wonderful thing.

Thank you for the opportunity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Seeing no other speakers, the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay to close debate.

B. WARR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a new book written, Mr. Speaker, with that many notes that I've taken this afternoon. I don't even know where to start, but I'll start by certainly thanking each and every one of you.

Certainly the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port who talked about winter tourism – an absolutely fabulous product. Talked about the timing of Come Home Year, making sure that we make it a true Come Home Year, from January to December. He talked about, as others did as well, travelling to the island the same way we do to Prince Edward Island. You only pay to get off the island. Talked about the immigration and the importance of showcasing our province to the world, and I certainly believe that as well. And he talked about the coordination of events and the fact that we're focusing Come Home Year 2022 on every inch of this province.

I also want to thank the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs and the Member for St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows who recognized our event as a Canadian civic event. She spoke to the many Newfoundland and Labrador communities that are celebrating a Come Home Year and, in her own words, having a romping good time. She talked about communities who put out the welcome mats and will certainly step up their game. She talked about engaging communities by offering financial incentives for towns to plan.

The Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans, I thank him as well. He suggested about setting up a committee to assist and, again, a unique opportunity to showcase our history. He talked about outport Newfoundland and Labrador, which is so important, and the world needs to see this. He talked about the architecture here in Newfoundland and Labrador and it's amazing; his culinary experiences that he shares with the other hon. Member sitting behind him, the hon. Member for Cape St. Francis. From fish and chips to fine dining, we're very proud here in Newfoundland and Labrador of our top-notch chefs.

Certainly something that's near and dear to most Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and that's the hunting and fishing experiences. Not only are we sharing that with the rest of Canada, we're sharing that with the world. And I couldn't agree with you more – and the importance of in-land waterways. To the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair, who just brought it up about all the different islands that you can visit in her district as well, it's a very unique experience and certainly I appreciate you bringing that up.

You talked about strategies and issues, which, again, as the Member for Ferryland had mentioned, its criticism and it's constructive, and that's the way it should be that we need to make sure we have a COVID plan. You talked about the rising gas prices and that's certainly important to all travellers. We talked about cell service and that's something that not only is our government committed to, as we all are here in this House of Assembly, I think we've got a commitment from the federal government as well. I really like your point on information sharing; I think that's so important. As we share

that information in our tourism bureaus, we certainly should be sharing that in all parts of our tourism industry.

The Member for Burin - Grand Bank, let's immerse ourselves in culture and history. He talked about parades, beach parties, mummering and the importance of theatre bringing people in communities together. He talked about a unique way to sell real estate. While people are home, they take an opportunity to view an investment that they may be able to come back and enjoy further down the road.

Again, he talked about the opportunity to visit the French islands of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon. I've been there and if you haven't, I encourage you to go. He talked about families not being able to see their children or grandchildren in the last 20 months. I'm fortunate; I get a chance to see my grandchildren every weekend I go home, or most weekends. But I can certainly put myself in the position of grandparents, especially grandparents who haven't seen their grandchildren in quite some time, only via Skype.

The Member for Bonavista, and certainly a good friend of mine and from a very touristy place on this Island, talked about the wonderful initiative that Come Home Year 2022 offers. He talked about tourism and the \$1.14 billion to the GDP here in the province. He talked about tourism being a tremendous value to small businesses and the dependency on out-of-province visitors and the importance of access to the province as well. The attractions, he talked about the attractions of a colder climate and I found that very interesting, and aggressive strategies to enhance tourism.

The Member for St. John's Centre took us on a family drive of CBS from back in the '60s and talked about taking friends to the Crow's Nest, to Signal Hill, to Cape Spear and the love and enjoyment of the different dialects within the province. He got to know the province as president of the NLTA and the great experience. He talked about the Dover Fault, the Irish Loop and the Tablelands, the pristine and exciting Pinware River. He talked about Vernon's car museum. I've been there as well. Again, I encourage people to visit that area if they can. He talked about the major tourist attraction with

the Colony of Avalon, and the use of ski slopes for summer fun as well as winter. He also spoke, as I think most of us did, about roads and signs and the investment and the upgrading needed.

The Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation and the Member for Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde talked about reinvigorating Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. He talked about the fact that his department is the lead on this file and we can expect this to be launched in the very near future. He talked about the importance of rebuilding and recovering. He talked about the two different campaigns with regard to non-resident and resident.

He talked about the tremendous relationship and collaboration that he's had with different groups across the province, different organizations. And especially his desire to have a really good working collaboration with HNL. He also talked about the number one and number two economic sectors in the province right now are tourism and fishery. He talked about Heart's Content and our nominee for UNESCO. The sharing of plans, and I think we all will join him in thanking his staff and the staff of different departments involved in this file throughout government.

The Member for Ferryland, I thank him his as well. He talked about the past successes of Come Home Year events in his district. Again, constructive criticism on signs and we need to make the investment. He talked about the use of persons with unique dialect in our tourism videos, and I certainly agree with him on that.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change and the Member for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville encouraged everybody all to come home and back to celebrate with us. I was a little bit distracted because we had a young visitor that visited the House of Assembly as soon as you started to speak. Alexander sort of took top shelf, so I apologize. But he did mention the fact that it was great to see all the House supporting these Come Home initiatives.

The Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation and the Member for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair spoke about the Big Land. She talked about the many books that she's proud of that were written by her

grandfather about the area. Spoke to the many scenic areas of her district, talked about the festivals and the importance of volunteers. She talked about the talent involved in Indigenous tourism. Again, like us all, she talked about the beautiful trails and the tremendous history and the Indigenous roots.

Mr. Speaker, I really don't even know where to go because there is so much that I want to say in so little time. I thought about an idea as well and I wondered if it would come up today and I just want to throw it out there. We talked about the idea of an honorary patron for our provincial Come Home Year celebrations and I throw this out, really, to the minister and his department. If you have an idea and you want to share it with the minister, please do. I only use one for an example and that was maybe someone like a Gordon Pinsent. Or if we take it a step further, maybe each community can offer a name of a member of their own town who would like to be recognized as their own honorary patron. But there are thoughts there that I certainly encourage you to reach out.

I want to talk about encouraging community spring cleanups. We cannot forget our coastlines throughout – this is a very unique province. I live in a very unique district; 40 of the 42 communities that I represent, we're touched by saltwater. Many will come to walk our beaches, smell the salt air and feel the breeze of the North Atlantic. I just think that we need to encourage our friends and neighbours to don't walk past a piece of garbage or a bottle. Pick it up and take it to the nearest trash can.

I wanted to talk about encouraging traditional events or sporting events in traditional areas of the province. For instance, maybe a reunion of sports teams, the St. Lawrence Laurentians – probably one of the most storied soccer towns in the province. Maybe to showcase Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that have made their way to the NHL. Maybe, for the Member for St. John's West, a symbolic row of the record-breaking crew of Outer Cove at this year's St. John's Regatta.

Maybe an outdoor concert highlighting some of the best musicians past and present. Just an opportunity to recognize these people. I think it was the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor -

Buchans who talked about the award-winning tourism and marketing efforts made by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation with regard to Air Canada. These are award-winning marketing efforts and certainly we tip our hat to them.

I guess, where I started off with the brochure, I wanted to end on the brochure but, before that, certainly things that we're known for, not only provincially but across the country and around the world. We're known for our whales. We're known for our icebergs. We're known for our unique culture. We're known for our friendliness. I'm surprised that I didn't hear anyone say 911 and *Come From Away* and the importance and the respect that it's brought to this province. There's an amazing tourism opportunity here as well.

Certainly our love of screech-ins – again, if the minister who's responsible for NLC would look back at me, I'm putting her on notice that during this Come Home Year we will not run out of Newfoundland Screech in 2022.

Anyway, Speaker, before I close, I'd like to just read one more excerpt from this.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

B. WARR: We give you ships and tides and men,
Anchors aweigh and windfilled sail.
We give you back the sea again
In sailors' songs and rousing tale.

And inland where the dark hills rise
Between you and the Salt-thick foam
You hear the surf, the seagull cries
And eastward turn your hearts toward home.

Mr. Speaker, it's been a privilege to bring in this PMR. I certainly hope that we get all 40 Members voting in favour of this.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'll turn it back to you.

Thank you so much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

It being Wednesday, in accordance with Standing Order 9(3), this House do stand adjourned until 1:30 o'clock tomorrow.