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Speaker: Honourable Derek Bennett, MHA

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The House resumed at 6:45 p.m.

SPEAKER (Bennett): Are the House Leaders ready?

Order, please!

The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

Mr. Speaker, I call Motion 1.

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

J. DWYER: Thank you, Speaker.

It gives me great pleasure and an honour to be here today to represent the people of the great, vast District of Placentia West - Bellevue and bring their concerns forward.

When we look at the budget here, I spoke earlier to an amendment, but one of the biggest things that are concerning the people right now of Placentia West - Bellevue is health care. When it comes to health care, obviously Placentia West-Bellevue is in a pretty unique situation, Speaker, because we rely on hospitals in all our adjacent districts. We rely on Whitbourne, which is in trouble right now about staffing issues. We rely on Clarendville, which is overworked and losing doctors. The Health Accord hasn't bode well for the Burin Peninsula in talking about the loss of different surgeries and obstetrics, stuff like that.

Like I said, there are two ways of looking at this when we talk about the budget. I don't think health care should be looked at as a cost. I think health care should be looked at as an investment to make our people better. With that being said, when we see no succession plan for retention and recruitment, then that obviously would raise some red flags for anybody that's concerned with the state of health care in this province.

In listening to my people, Speaker, it's obviously in a crisis mode. We see that people are making decisions now on if they can afford gas to get to an appointment. They're making decisions between prescriptions and food. They don't know if turning on the heat in their house

is going to bode well for their budget later on for the month because, like I said, with a fixed income, it's just that. There is nowhere to draw the extra money from. If it wasn't for the good nature, I guess, of family members and community-minded people, then some of these things wouldn't be able to happen.

When we look at health care as an investment, we're looking at this green economy as an investment and a transition, but I don't understand how we can't look at it the same way in helping our people. In the federal budget, or in COVID times, I guess, they announced \$320 million to help save the oil and gas industry on the East Coast. The next day they announced \$1.8 billion for electric charging stations.

So, like I said, it's kind of a slap in the face to the people here that have contributed so much to the economy of not only Newfoundland and Labrador, but to the country of Canada since 1949. I really think that it's time that we see the federal government as our partners and not as our overlord, or our landlord type of thing. Like I said, a lot of stuff that's being decided on, whether they're giving us approval for Bay du Nord – it's almost like we had to beg for that to happen, whereas we should be the purveyors of that and just get the go-ahead, I guess, or make sure everything is in place environmentally and stuff, and that would certainly help our cause.

Down on the Burin Peninsula right now when we look at some of the programing that's being cut at the College of the North Atlantic, that's not an economic driver to bring health care workers to the area. Like I said, when you hear about the deterioration of services, then it's not really an economic driver to draw young families to the area either to carry on their careers.

Like I said, it's just one thing after another. When you see the price of gas and the price of diesel, us being leaders in all of North America on price, that's not a good thing. I mean, that's something we should be ashamed of. We should do better for our citizens. As we know, we're here on an island, transportation is obviously a big concern and a big issue for everybody in the province; but, like I said, with the degradation of services or anything in health care, then that just means that people from outside the overpass are

just going to have to start paying out more to make their appointments and to rely on other areas of the province for their services that they render.

We have some stuff that can be preventative measures, like the glucose monitors. For such a miniscule price, the savings are about \$25 million down the road if we look at the fact that it will cut back on some other health care issues that can arise from anybody that has diabetes or anything like that.

It's one thing to tax people, but it's a whole other thing to tax them to death. People are really having to make those compromising decisions. We had a five-step program, but it just didn't go far enough. Yes, it's helpful for some of the people that find themselves in those thresholds, but there are still thresholds and it didn't cover everybody.

The one thing that would affect about 98 per cent of our province's residents would be the reduction in the price of fuel. If other provinces can do it – I really don't understand how we can stand here in this Chamber and say that we have no will or we have no political voice to be able to do it. I think that we need to pull up our socks, buckle up our shoes, tighten our belt loop and get at it, because we're here to represent 520,000 people. This shouldn't be about any party lines or anything like this. It should be about making sure that our people are well taken care of. That's what they elected us to do: to give them that opportunity to have access to their government and have access to a quality of life and, I'll say it again, peaceful enjoyment.

There's so much anxiety out there that peaceful enjoyment is just out of reach right now for a lot of people, and it's very unfortunate. As fighting Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, as hard-working, honest people, we deserve to be recognized as not just the 10th province in this country, but a country that came to join with another country in the Commonwealth. Like I said, it's not about entitlement; I don't like that word, but it is certainly about getting our just due.

As we know, with everything that was kind of pillaged from here with our natural resources, with not only forestry and mining, the biggest

one is obviously our fishery. One thing that we learned from our fishery, over many years, was the secondary processing is so important to our fishery and to our people. Now if we have the secondary processing in place, then we're actually looking out to jobs for the people of the province.

There are things we can do in a different way. We're not asking for more money in the budget or anything like that. We're asking to be more efficient with the budget. Like I said, there are things there that seem to be priorities this time around that certainly wouldn't be priorities of this side of the House, I can assure you that, Mr. Speaker. It's not the priority of the people of Placentia West - Bellevue.

When I see a five-point plan coming out to help seniors, I was very happy and proud to see that. But when you take a segment of seniors and you treat them differently than the rest of the seniors, that's where I draw the line and I have an issue. A Metrobus pass is not very much good to Mrs. Williams out in Arnold's Cove that has to get to Clarendville – while Clarendville does have a good bus support system for their residents it's not currently resonating throughout my district. Being so spread out and such a vast district that covers 5,503 square kilometres and goes from seven kilometres outside of Whitbourne right to Marystown, then we have to realize that there's different demographics and those demographics treat the residents very different than somebody that's over on Carpasian Road and got to try to get to the Health Sciences.

It's about treating everybody fairly and treating everybody with respect. It's not about picking one sector or another. Even for the little pittance that was certainly passed along to the people in the five-point plan, then it's probably welcomed in the short term, but in the long term it really does not help to clear up anything in their budget or their economy.

What we're doing is creating a larger, more vulnerable sector, because people are starting now to realize that that peaceful enjoyment of living, whether it's groceries, gas, medications, just anything, are becoming more out of reach for people because obviously with the price of gas going up to the astronomical price that it is, those, we know, gets passed on to the

consumers, and it's very unfortunate that that's the route that we have to take.

When we look at trying to do doctor retention, I've been after it now for a couple of years, trying to get even a nurse practitioner in the Arnold's Cove area, because we have a doctor there, Dr. Fowlow, God love him, he's been servicing that area for 50 years. He deserves his retirement. There are no two ways about that. He's a very well-respected man, very loved in the community, just unbelievably a treasure.

We don't want to see him go, but he deserves to go. For the last couple of years, I've been in consultations with the town, and we convinced to go to Eastern Health and we'd even build a building to their spec of whatever they wanted. So to say that those tertiary services are not available to the families and stuff, then I would beg to differ. Like I said, it's an opportunity for us to focus on some real issues as opposed to focusing on different sections and segments of the province that appease more than anything. Because, with the pittance that's available, it really doesn't go far enough.

So what we are doing is creating a larger, more vulnerable sector of people that is bringing the middle-income people back to that level of poverty. And when we look at the Health Accord that everybody is touting, and I commend Sister Elizabeth Davis and Dr. Parfrey and all their committees for such hard work, but the real issue here is that we are creating a more vulnerable sector. One of the biggest social determinants of health is poverty. Before they go on to any other points in their presentation, that's the one that they talk about the most, and that's what makes health care and jobs and all this kind of stuff unattainable for some people.

Right now, we got our blue-collar workers that are getting up every day and they still have to pack their lunch and that's more expensive because groceries are more expensive. They're still getting in them trucks and cars and still travelling to their positions and working and trying to provide for their family, but it's just becoming unattainable. How many times have I heard, in the last couple of weeks, that it might be better off just to stay home and do nothing, as it is to put yourself in the hole for going to work.

As we heard earlier in the week – and my colleague and I have been working with these people from Southern Harbour for quite some time. They're backlogged with trying to get reimbursed for medical transportation. When medical transportation is only covering 20 cents per kilometre, which is obviously more expensive now to drive, that 20 cents is not going far enough.

Like I said, if we want to make health care better outside the overpass, I will say, is that maybe it's an incentive like a northern allowance type of thing that would attract a doctor to a rural area. Because right now they're trying to get out of the rural areas, just for the simple fact that there's too much put on them, and they're covering a lot more pieces of health care in their position, like dealing with psychological help and stuff like that, when that's not what they studied. But if we had something like an incentive to keep them there, then that would certainly be welcomed. Right now what we're doing is we're robbing Peter to pay Paul. We tout the fact that we had 37 or 38 new doctors hired in the province, but we lost 46. So it just makes no sense, the situation that we're going.

Cutting programs is certainly not producing new grads. For the Minister of Health to stand here today in Question Period and say that they're hiring 100 per cent of the graduates from the nursing class, I'd beg to differ. We talked about a situation earlier this week where three brand new graduates approached Eastern Health and wanted to be hired, and they were told that there are no positions available. To me, it kind of flies in the face of what we're hearing here in the House and what the people of the province are hearing. These three young men did very well in school; they got very good marks. Now they're working at the QEII in Halifax. That's just not acceptable.

We need them here, yet we can't keep them. They want to stay here, yet we can't keep them. So there's not really a lot of incentive to keep them. I don't understand that we can sit here and talk about recruitment and retention, hiring new people to cover an office like that, yet we're telling our new graduates that there are no positions available. So like I said, talk to them three gentlemen and ask why they had to go to Nova Scotia. I have it there in an email verbatim

of why they had to go and the response that they got. So there are no questions on that.

When we look at recruitment and retention, we can go after whatever we want when it comes to the human resources. But if they're not available, then we have to get creative. That's the issue is that we have no succession plan on replacing people.

The Seniors' Advocate office is obviously an indictment to that. That's been vacant now for almost a year when we knew that the former Seniors' Advocate had given her notice, and it's still not filled. Like I said, we can hide behind the fact that it's a lengthy process and it has to come to the House and all that kind of stuff, but at the end of the day we have to have the will to want to replace that person.

It's such an important office. Seniors really do feel like that they have someone to go to when that office is filled. The Seniors' Advocate is such an important piece to our province, right along with the Consumer Advocate and all that kind of stuff. It's an important entity where people feel that they can bring their concerns to somebody that's in a position to understand all the legislation that would be governing what they're asking.

To not have that Seniors' Advocate in place just shows me that in health care right now, even in CSSD, we don't have a succession plan to replace people. We're talking about \$70 million that was saved last year, all because we couldn't fill positions. I know a bunch of people that applied. We're saying we need 200 and 300 people and a couple of thousand people for IT. I know somebody personally that applied to IT here with government and was turned down. Said no, all our positions are filled.

It's just not good enough. It's just unbelievable. I hope it is certainly not because they're coming from a PC district or anything like that. But, with that being said, I think we have to have the will to understand that the 40 Members in here are all equal. There's no unilateral decisions that are made here, but people need to have their voice listened to.

This is not about pitting each other against each other, or anything like that. It's not about

helping one segment of the province, and not the other. It's about, we are responsible to help everyone. Whoever decides that they want to live in this province, we have to do what we can to make sure that they peacefully enjoy where they chose to live and work, and what they want to do. That doesn't mean that it's more attractive to be inside the overpass because there are more services. Those services are being paid for by the people of the province.

We heard the Finance Minister today say that we're going to have an extra influx of income tax this year, then let's make sure that the people are getting to understand the whole gamut of what they're contributing to.

I see that my time is running short there, Mr. Speaker. I would be very remiss if I didn't say thank you to all the nurses, here during Nurses' Week, and say we appreciate all your service and hopefully we can get you some full-time and benefits –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

J. DWYER: – coming soon, because this retention and recruitment program is going to work.

The last thing I would say before I go is congratulations to all the graduates in the province, especially in my District of Placentia West - Bellevue. Once you have your graduation night, I always say tomorrow is the first day of the rest of your life.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Speaker.

Thank you to the hon. Member for Placentia West - Bellevue. I share his hope for the future for our students, and congratulations to all those that are going to graduate this year and the celebrations that will ensue. Hopefully they get to celebrate a little bit more than they have in the past couple of years due to the pandemic.

I'd like to first address the fact, the word of balance. I think balance is really important when we discuss things in this House of Assembly. The Member for Placentia West - Bellevue highlighted some things that we differ on here. I will be the yang to his ying. I'm always look at it from a positive perspective. Even when it's difficult times, I think we all have to look at that. We can look at it like the couple of people that sits up in the bandstand at *The Muppets*, Statler and Waldorf. We can look at it that way, or we can look it the way I try to view it, as positive.

A bunch of times throughout this debate over the last couple of days, I take great exception to the – I won't say attack, but I guess marginalizing of the residents in the City of St. John's and the metro area because we as a government decided to invest in Metrobus. But that's true though. You say we shouldn't do it because it's not in every part of the province. If that's the case, ferries aren't in my part of the province – in my district either, so that's not what we do as a government. You invest in every district and try to invest everywhere.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

B. DAVIS: They're not in my district. You're saying that investments in one area of the province shouldn't be done because there's no other comparable service in another district. That's exactly what you're saying.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

B. DAVIS: That's exactly what you're saying. I didn't yell or scream when you were up, I am just saying that's exactly what's been talked about on a number of occasions during this debate – exactly what's been said. Why would we invest in Metrobus in the City of St. John's and the residents of the greater St. John's area, that utilize that service, because it's not in the District of Terra Nova?

We can get *Hansard*. The good thing about *Hansard* is everything everybody says is recorded. It's also the bad thing for some people; like we're going to find out when you go to look for your *Hansard*. You've said it. It's not my words, it's yours. I agree that in every district, in

every investment, in every area of this province, as a government, you have to weigh. You try to invest everything you can in every district possible. Don't put words in my mouth, because *Hansard* can do that for me; you don't have to put it in my mouth. All you've got to do is look, and read.

All I'm saying is I get a bit perturbed –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

I ask the minister to address the Chair, please.

B. DAVIS: Thank you.

I get a little bit perturbed when we don't understand that investment in a particular area, because there is a public service or a public transit system in the City of St. John's – and in Corner Brook I might add, and other senior services that the Minister of CSSD has talked about many times that we're trying to encourage other jurisdictions, other municipalities, other areas of our province to invest in. There's nothing wrong with that.

I just want to make sure that the people in the City of St. John's understand that they've got an advocate on this side of the House for sure that's going to advocate for those individuals to avail of that service, because they've invested in it themselves, and I encourage every other part of the province to do the same. And that's exactly what we'll do as a government and we'll try to support them as best we can.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

B. DAVIS: Excellent.

I'd also like to highlight a message that I fully agree with. I can't wait until we get the Seniors' Advocate back in place. I am glad the hon. Member for Placentia West - Bellevue disagrees with his party's stance in the past, that it was a luxury. It is really important to us because the PC Party in the past voted against that office. I am so happy that he is seeing the light with that and see the benefit that office brings forward because it does bring great benefit and I cannot wait for it to come forward again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

B. DAVIS: I thank the hon. Member for that endorsement of that office.

Now, in the last few minutes that I have left, I am going to take the opportunity – over the last couple of days we have done a lot of talking about climate change and where we sit as a province and what we can do to be a little better. I'm not going to go in the same direction because I am going to try to add a little bit more about what we've done in our department and I think I have tried to hit the high bar on some of the things that we've done as an investment *Budget 2022*.

I will go a little bit in the lower side of what we announced in the budget. I know that we all talked about the Electric Vehicle Rebate Program and the Oil to Electric Rebate Program a lot last night so I am not going to talk about that today. But I will talk about some of infrastructure that will come along with some of those investments. I know that the hon. Members are right excited about the charging stations that are going to be put across the Island. I know how excited they are. I know the Member for Bonavista is right excited about it. There are some 200 level two charging stations that are across this Island but in addition to that –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

B. DAVIS: And I will say that the hon. Member for Bonavista is no climate change denier; that is for sure.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

B. DAVIS: He came around from the debate last night; I am so excited.

In all seriousness, I have a lot of respect for the hon. Member and I think that the hon. Member was making a point by conversation and maybe taking a little out of context, so I do want to just clarify that and I do know that he believes in climate change, like all of us in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

B. DAVIS: But I would like to highlight some of the things. We did talk about infrastructure and the things that we need to do to be ready for

when we make that change to electric vehicles and all those things associated with that.

Phase one of that process was the 14 charging stations that we placed last summer and the summer before across the Island to make sure that between 65 kilometres and 70 kilometres apart, you could get a fast-charging station available to an electric vehicle. That was one thing to at least knock the initial barrier down for making that range anxiety that exists.

But the Public Utilities Board had the ability to go a little further this year as well. They've also approved the ask for 19 additional fast-charging stations from Newfoundland Power and Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro that will include places on the Northern Peninsula, the Bonavista Peninsula, the Burin Peninsula – I know my hon. Member on the other side would like that – and in Labrador.

These will be installed early this summer. So we're excited about that. I think it's really important to highlight the 19 sites, because I think anything we can do to educate the public on things that we're doing to reduce those barriers is important. We're going to have fast-charging stations in Trepassey. The Member for Ferryland would appreciate the fact that we're going to be in Trepassey. St. Mary's, Cape Broyle, St. John's – I know some people don't like us investing here, but St. John's, Carbonear, Marystown, Port Rexton –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

I know everybody is tired and had a long night last night and a long day today, but I ask for order.

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

B. DAVIS: Bonavista, Port Rexton, I think I said that – I want to make sure you heard Port Rexton – Lewisporte for the hon. Speaker, Robinsons, Woody Point, Cow Head, Port au Choix, Flower's Cove, Roddickton, St. Anthony, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Churchill Fall and Lab City. All of those are important investments that we're doing to break down those barriers

that people see for buying one of those electric vehicles. It's new. I completely understand why people have hesitancy; it's new.

AN HON. MEMBER: Can you charge your phone there?

B. DAVIS: Sorry?

AN HON. MEMBER: Can you charge your phone there?

B. DAVIS: Absolutely. You can charge your phone there for sure.

But the good thing about what we've done in the budget is we've put a commitment not only to helping individuals make the transition to an electric vehicle, but making sure that the infrastructure outpaces the vehicles coming to the province, which is really important in my mind. I think everyone we talked to from the Dealers Network to Drive Electric NL, those are important people that are early adopters that we want to ensure that they can continue to get what we need out of that.

Through *Budget 2022*, that million-dollar investment, along with the million dollars we're going to get from the federal government as well is going to help us grow that electric vehicle-charging infrastructure.

I've got a lot more to talk about. I know my time is running short, and I think –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

B. DAVIS: Oh perfect, good, if that's the case.

One of the other things I'd like to talk about very quickly is flood risk mapping. One of the other things in the budget that we talked about is a \$1.2-million investment, \$600,000 from the province and \$600,000 from the federal government for flood risk mapping. I think we all can understand how important flood risk mapping is in terms of land development, infrastructure investment and sustainability.

So we're really excited about the mandate we have in our department to undertake flood risk mapping under the *Water Resources Act*.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

B. DAVIS: I'll answer your question on a sidebar, if you'd like. I know you're trying to throw me off and it's great, thank you. And you've succeeded.

But also to ensure the minimal damage of floods when they do happen to municipalities. So this information is used by government departments, municipalities, LSDs to try to make sure, when they do their land developments, they do them outside flood plains to ensure that when those floods do happen – and they will happen in the future. As we know, climate change is changing what we see and what we feel from our water, from our weather systems. I think it's really important for us all to understand the benefits that it can have.

Hopefully I'll get another opportunity to speak again, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much for the opportunity here today and I look forward to all my colleagues in this hon. House reaching out and standing up for this budget and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Seeing no other speakers, if the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board speaks now we will close debate.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

S. COADY: Thank you very much, Speaker.

It has been an honour to be able to table my third budget in this House of Assembly – third in 18 months. So this House of Assembly has worked very, very hard over the last 18 months to ensure, what I'm going to call, fiscal security and fiscal responsibility.

But I'm going to begin today by talking a little bit about advice that I was given when I first became Minister of Finance. It's really interesting; I remember in the early 2000s speaking to Paul Martin. I had been, at that time,

moving into being chair of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. So I was spending a lot of time in Ottawa talking and dealing with the Minister of Finance at the time, who went on to become the prime minister. He was the one who encouraged me into politics.

Anyway, he called me when I became the Minister of Finance and he congratulated me and said it was a tough road ahead and the difficulties. I had asked him his advice, because of course he had dealt with a very similar challenging situation in Canada during the 1990s and was able to ensure that Canada was a stronger nation when he finished as minister of Finance moving into the prime ministership. He gave me this piece of advice; he said, you will need a lot of patience and perseverance. I think that he was absolutely right. It has taken a lot of patience and perseverance.

But I will say to the people of the province, I'll say to Members in this House, that we're making big progress. There's big progress being made. And I've said in this House, multiple times, that my goal here is to have a stronger, smarter, self-sufficient, sustainable Newfoundland and Labrador. I think that's the goal of everyone in this House. I don't think you'd have one argument from one person in this House. I've listened very, very carefully to the debate and there are a few things I'm going to talk about in this, but let me first lay out where we've been and where we're headed, and what the investments and how important the investments are in this budget.

First of all, 18 months ago, in the midst of COVID, \$1.8 billion in deficit – terrifically challenging times. We were able to bring that deficit down in June of last year, so not even a year ago, now. So in June of 2020 we were able to bring it down to \$826 million, so a billion-dollar difference. And then we ended '21-22 at \$400 million in deficit. Still a lot of money, but again, huge improvement from \$1.8 billion to \$800 million down to \$400 million and this year we're saying \$350 million in deficit.

Now, that is a big thing to be congratulated. It means we've had to have a lot of fiscal strength and a lot of responsible actions being taken by this government, because people have to realize that every cent we borrow, that \$351 million,

we're borrowing from our children and our grandchildren, and we have to pay interest on that. So our cost-to-debt, every year, before we take a penny to anything, we have to spend a billion dollar – a billion dollars. And that impedes our ability as the people of this province to make some of the investments we wish we could all make. It really does impede our ability.

In this budget, and in the last 18 months, what we've done is laid out a plan, a very strong plan of how we're going to get to that stronger, smarter, self-sufficient, sustainable Newfoundland and Labrador. So we're bringing down that deficit, while making the investments that we need to make. So by '25-'26, we're going to be at near balance. It's laid out in the budget document, as here's our multi-year forecast. So by '25-'26 we'll be down to near balance about \$75 million in deficit, and the next year we'll be in surplus. Now, think of the investments that we could make for the people of the province. Think about how we can really help the people of the province, once we start to not borrow from our children and our grandchildren.

I'm going to just give everybody a kind of a sense of how challenging that is. If you go back a decade ago, like 2011-2012, the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador took in \$1.8 billion in oil royalties. This year, because production is lower, we're going to take in \$800 million. Still a tremendous amount of money but a billion dollars difference. Yet, the deficit in 2011, a decade ago, was almost the same deficit we have today. A billion dollars difference in the revenue numbers from oil and gas, yet we're still focused and really making sure we're being responsible.

That's why it's important that we keep on working towards lowering our deficit. We cannot continue to borrow from our children and our grandchildren. We're already \$17 billion in debt – \$17 billion in debt. So for the people of the province who might be listening are saying, well, what's the difference between debt and deficit? Deficit is what you don't earn in a year, so that you're in the hole in a year; you don't take in enough revenues to pay out. Debt is how much you accumulate of those deficits or any borrowings that you do or any investments that you make in infrastructure.

So in this budget we really focused on a few key principles. I think they're important. I think it's important to focus on principles because that's what guides us in our discussion. In developing this budget we were guided by a healthy, educated, growing population. We made investments in each of those areas. We were guided by responsible financial management, bringing down that deficit, how are we paying down that debt; clean, green economy, very important; a modernized and transformed government – we need to refresh and modernize the way we're providing public services to people because things have changed. Things have changed in society. We want to have true reconciliation with our Indigenous. We definitely all want to have that.

We have not done a stellar job in the hundreds of years that we've been here in order to have true reconciliation. I think we're doing some really good work there. So, Speaker, guided by those principles.

I'm happy to say too, Speaker, that we are really doing well in terms of economic outlook for this year. We're really focused on growing our economy and improving our economic opportunity. Our employment numbers are up; our retail sales numbers are up; our gross domestic product has improved. We have better restaurant sales; better household income. The economy is rebounding; it is strengthening.

Then there are the recent announcement that my colleague from Industry, Energy and Technology has made recently that I think that we should all be reflective of how that is strengthening our economy. Terra Nova Project will be back on stream later this year. Braya Renewable Fuels, a redevelopment of Come By Chance, an opportunity to have renewable fuels. This is a part of the new economy and part of the new opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador.

My colleague recently approved the environmental plan for Marathon Gold and as we move towards a new gold project. IOC is expanding. Vale has gone underground. These are big mine opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador. Then we heard recently, I think it was this week, about how our mineral exploration has exploded – if I can use that term. There are

more investments being made by companies in mineral exploration in this province. We should be proud, buoyed and enthusiastic about the opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I didn't hear that in the 75 hours that we've debated this budget in the House of Assembly, and that concerns me because there is a resurgence in Newfoundland and Labrador. There are opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador and I think we have a very bright future ahead of us.

So what are some of the investments in this budget? Well, first of all, we've spoken a lot in the House of Assembly about the cost of living and we have done three things in the budget, I think, around cost of living. First of all, we recognized and we talked about it prebudget, about helping the most vulnerable. So we have what is called an Income Supplement that is provided to families and that Income Supplement we've increased by 10 per cent.

We have also increased the Seniors' Benefit. Now, the Members opposite like to talk about the home heat rebate. Back in 2016, when they improved the program, it was rolled into the Income Supplement and the Seniors' Benefit. And by doing that we were able to provide more money because we were able to make a more robust rebate program. Now that program, since 2015, has actually gone from \$60 million right to, I think, today it is close on \$140 million we provide.

We increased both of those. We provided a cheque, an additional amount of money, I think it was \$400 to families and \$200 to individuals who were on income support, and that cheque was in the mail to them in April, so it was help right away. We also then in the budget said, well, everybody in the province has been impacted by the cost of living. We knew that if we changed our gas tax at the pump, that we would run the risk of the federal government coming in and putting carbon tax on home heat.

So we didn't change that; what we did was we provided an equivalent amount of money back to the people of the province. We thought: How can we get this money out as quickly as possible but as widespread as possible? We provided a 50 per cent discount on motor vehicle registration

fees and eliminated the retail sales tax on insurance. We've done that for one year, but we're revisiting that as we move forward.

Speaker, we also did a third thing, and I think this is equally important. We all realize that we're in a changing economy. We all realize, and we've spoken substantively about climate change, about how we're going to have to change the way that we use fossil fuels. So in this budget we increase the amount of money we are providing – \$5,000 for those that are transitioning from oil heat to electricity. Now, that can be stacked. The Minister of Environment yesterday, last evening, talked about the stacking of the programs. If you're a family, I think, earning less than \$50,000, you can get \$15,000 to help you transition from oil to electricity.

That's important. Because we know the price of oil is worrisome to people. We also know that transportation accounts for a tremendous amount of our GHG, greenhouse gas emissions. So how do we start to talk about and help people move and transition from using gasoline in their cars to using electricity? We're providing a \$5,000 rebate for either fully electric or hybrid cars.

Now that is stacked with the federal government, so that's a big help for somebody who's going out to buy a car. The price of electric cars are coming down. Are they hard to get? Absolutely. But there's hard to get vehicles in a general sense. My husband just waited, I think, five months for his new vehicle.

So we've taken those three big steps. This is how we're going to help. That took all the monies that we have in gas tax – all of it. Now, what other things do we have to do? Well, we've been talking a lot in this House about the provision of health care. And we know that it's challenged. We absolutely know it's challenged. Every person in this Legislature today, every person in the province knows how dedicated our doctors and our nurses – and I know it's Nurses' Week, so I want to say thank you to all of those health care providers. What they've done in the last two years, all we can say is thank you.

We've done things like we've expanded and added collaborative care clinics. We have a new recruitment and retention office. We put in two

pilot projects to attract new medical graduates. We've facilitated immigration pathways. We have a retention bonus, new licensed practical nurses. These are just some of the things that we've done. We've put over \$400 million – \$400 million. Now, there are only 525,000 of us. So that's a tremendous amount of money. We've added that to the health care budget.

We also, in education, for the first time since the early '70s – what, 50 years ago – we've had an increase of 1,000 new students. I think that is amazing growth and it is unprecedented. So we've had to do things like expand the teaching services. We've had to put millions of dollars towards substitutes, millions of dollars towards guidance counsellors. We've had to invest in our education. But again, stronger, smarter, self-sufficient, sustainable Newfoundland and Labrador. That's our goal.

So investments in education, investments in health. I'm going to say to my colleague from Corner Brook, Immigration, Population Growth and Skills, thank you, on behalf of all of us in Newfoundland and Labrador for the amount of work that you've done. We welcome the Ukrainians, we welcome the Syrians and we welcome the Afghans you've been able to bring to this province. We welcome what you've been able to do to attract Newfoundlanders and Labradorians home again.

So I'll say we've put some extra money in that department, a million dollars in that department, because the underpinning of everything that we do is population growth.

We've also heard and I heard many Members opposite talk about transportation. We recognize that we can drive – in Newfoundland and Labrador I think there are 11,000 kilometres?

AN HON. MEMBER: Eleven thousand kilometres.

S. COADY: Speaker, 11,000 kilometres. I think we can go from Newfoundland to British Columbia – to Vancouver on that length of road. Can you imagine? That's the amount of road that we're responsible for.

Now, think about it. We had to put in some extra monies there, so we've been able to invest \$10

million. It's not as much as we'd like. I'd love to give the Minister of Transportation more, but it is what we could do. So he's got an extra \$10 million. Community groups have been challenged. They provide incredible services to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. So we were able to put in an extra \$5 million there.

I guess all this adds up, Speaker, to say the budget was about balance. We were trying to balance lowering our deficit so that we don't take money out of our grandchildren's or our children's pockets; looking at how we transform and modernize government so that we can bring down the cost of government, so that we improve service delivery in government; investments where they are required the most: health care, education, population growth; investments where there's a call and a need like in transportation, like in community groups.

Speaker, I could continue, but I know my time is getting short. So I want to say this: I want every Newfoundland and Labrador child to be proud of the efforts that we have made. Because it's going to take all of us in this province to bring down our deficit, to get the kind of services that we need, to ensure that the people in the province have a strong and healthy atmosphere and environment. Because we have so much to offer.

I know I could turn to any person in this House and they could tell me about their district and about how important it is and how contributing it is to the people of the province. I will say that we should rejoice in our determination. I will say that the amount of effort that we've all placed, that we've all put in – it's all of us in this House. It's all of us in this province. All of us have made the sacrifices, have worked hard, especially during the pandemic, who have made the commitment and we deserve to have the strong, growing economy that we do, and that we are all focused on that stronger, smarter, self-sufficient, sustainable Newfoundland and Labrador. And, Speaker, we're going to have it. We all are working toward it and we are making progress.

I'm pleased to say in this House, I don't understand how anyone can vote against this budget because they would be voting against health care, education, transportation and the

investments that we made. I'm confused. I honestly am. I can understand that we would like to have more. I've listened to the Opposition. They'd like to have more, but all I can say is this: This is a budget that gets us to that stronger, smarter, self-sufficient, sustainable Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that this House approves in general the budgetary policy for the government.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

SPEAKER: Motion carried.

AN HON. MEMBER: Division.

SPEAKER: Division is called.

Call in the Members.

Division

SPEAKER: Are the caucus Whips ready?

Order, please!

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

All those in favour, please rise.

CLERK (Barnes): Steve Crocker, Lisa Dempster, John Haggie, Gerry Byrne, Tom Osborne, Siobhan Coady, Pam Parsons, Sarah Stoodley, Andrew Parsons, John Hogan, Bernard Davis, John Abbott, Elvis Loveless, Krista Lynn Howell, Paul Pike, Scott Reid, Sherry Gambin-Walsh, Perry Trimper.

SPEAKER: All those against the motion, please rise.

CLERK: David Brazil, Barry Petten, Craig Parry, Tony Wakeham, Chris Tibbs, Loyola O'

Driscoll, Lloyd Parrott, Joedy Wall, Pleaman Forsey, Jeff Dwyer, James Dinn, Jordan Brown.

Mr. Speaker, the ayes: 18; and the nays: 12.

SPEAKER: I declare the motion carried

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

Just before we move on to the next piece of business, I just want to raise a quick point of order, if we can get some clarification. If you look at Standing Order 16 on Division and if you look at 16(2), can we get a review of this? Maybe if the Standing Orders Committee needs to look at it. I read it to be clear, but if we could just, Mr. Speaker, have a review of the Standing Order.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

Yes, we will take that under advisement and take a further review of the Standing Order, as it relates to Division.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

I call from the Order Paper, Motion 3, a resolution respecting the imposition of carbon tax, Bill 60.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

S. CROCKER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Deputy Government House Leader, that this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 60.

SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that I do now leave the Chair for the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider the said bill.

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.'

Motion carried.

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

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (Trimper): Order, please!

We're now debating the related resolution and Bill 60.

Resolution

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

CHAIR: I recognize the hon. the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. TIBBS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

It's an absolute pleasure to stand here this evening again and talk about the carbon tax that's about to be imposed by the federal Liberal government and rammed down the throats by the provincial Liberal government, unfortunately.

Last night I had a few words, Mr. Chair, about why we weren't doing a little bit more up in Ottawa, and I think I was a little bit mistaken. I thank the Member for Windsor Lake for coming in and talking about the rights when it comes to the Supreme Court and the rulings they had over other provinces. I couldn't agree more. I wouldn't want this to go to the Supreme Court either and lose a case and waste time, waste taxpayers' money. And I want to thank him for that.

But I was a little bit mistaken because I heard the Premier today say this was in the making or this was done three or four years ago before COVID, before the implosion of the economy. My point last night was before this happened, whether it be three months ago, six months ago, when we knew this was coming down, my point was not to go to the Supreme Court, but to go to the prime minister, to go to Ottawa and again put our case out there to say that Newfoundland and Labrador isn't like the other provinces. Again, our geography puts us in a very distinct situation; our population disbursement puts us as one of the most distinct provinces in all of Canada. That was my point.

Many years ago, there was a younger MP by the name of John Crosbie. John Crosbie was in Ottawa with the prime minister at the time, Mr. Mulrooney, and he was trying to convince them, the federal MPs, about Hibernia. Well, it didn't go over well at first, and they had to fight and fight and fight. John Crosbie, God love him and God rest him, he had to go to Ottawa and he had to convince the MPs and he had to convince the prime minister to give us a chance here in Newfoundland and Labrador when it comes to Hibernia. He did it, because he fought, because he had the gumption to go up there, and he knew what was right. That's what I was asking about. Who's got the gumption to go against the federal Liberal government? Who has the gumption to do it? That was my point.

So maybe go up there six months ago, three months ago, go up there now and let them know do you know what? This just does not fly. We're not saying don't ever bring it in. It's a timing issue right now. Let's look at it next year. Maybe give us a 12-month reprieve so the people of the province can actually have a little tiny bit of disposable income in their pockets and they can move that around inside the province, inside a movie theatre, inside a restaurant, where it should be, where that disposable income should be. It should not be back into the coffers of the federal or provincial government. I just wanted get that straight.

I also want anybody listening at home – this debate it's not about climate change and the environment. It truly isn't, it's about a carbon tax. Another tax for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and they really can't do it. The

people are absolutely defeated of this province right now.

I heard the Minister of Finance talk last night and tonight and she said we have to borrow so much money and our grandkids and kids have to pay for that eventually. I couldn't agree with you more, of course, that's the way it's going to go. Unfortunately, the way we're going, we're not going to have a whole lot of grandkids and kids here.

We're going to see a mass exodus. I see it all ready. I talk to rotational workers. I talk to workers – and when I talk about an exodus from this province, God love our seniors. Our seniors aren't leaving. I'm happy about that. I love our seniors. I want to ensure that they're here and we take care of them as best way possible. They're not the ones that are going to be leaving this province. It's going to be those young families in their 20s and their 30s, who in their words: I can't wait to get out of here. I cannot wait to get out of here.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

C. TIBBS: One hundred per cent wrong.

Go to Alberta and I'm telling you right now, they have shutdown operations in Alberta that they can't even get enough workers for right now. Those shutdown jobs, they're not paying \$12 and \$15 an hour. So, yes, the cost of living is higher across Canada. My apologies, you're absolutely right, but the wages are not consistent across Canada.

I've watched 18-year-old kids come out of high school and go out and finance an \$85,000 truck because the wages are so high. So that's the difference. That's the difference that we're looking at right now.

So every little bit of incentive to keep those young families here in Newfoundland and Labrador, we should be doing. And if that means going up to Ottawa – not the Supreme Court, but to the prime minister. I'm hoping you guys truly have a great relationship with the prime minister, it sounds like you do. Well, let's go up there and talk to him. Mr. Prime Minister is there any way we can defer this for 12 months to

ensure Newfoundlanders and Labradorians can have a chance at survival?

Do you know how scary it is out there? All day long I've been hearing: seriously, another tax. That can't be right. I've been called out on it all day. I've had to send people this bill; absolutely, it's another tax that's going to be imposed on you. People can't take it. The people of the province can't take it. Not only the people of the province can't take it, but we're looking at municipalities once again. My colleague from Cape St. Francis talked about it today.

Municipalities are going to find it very, very difficult. They're finding it difficult already. Whether it be this fuel surcharge, trying to get their work done over the summer. This is their busy time of the year. Come Home Year: municipalities are going to find it very, very difficult. So it's on an individual basis, but also on a much higher level as well.

Tour operators: Do you know what? This is for the Minister of Tourism as he pays attention quite well there listening to me intently. The Minister of Tourism, I want to congratulate him. We've got 22,000 bookings for Marine Atlantic this year. That's fantastic. That's truly a fantastic news for the province. I hope that the majority of them make it here – hope they all come here – and I hope there's more bookings on top of it. But tourism operators, they have to pay these extra taxes, these extra fuel surcharges and it's going to hurt them in the long run as well.

Just to see it on the Order Paper, it's absolutely debilitating to the people of the province. I truly believe – again, I said it last night – if you had your backs against that corner and you really, really were suffering as well, you would have fought harder. I guarantee it. You would have fought harder. If you could take somebody off the street, if you could take somebody that's truly suffering, put them in the House of Assembly, give them a seat, give them a voice, send them to Ottawa, they would fight very, very hard. And that's what we're talking about right now. The comfort level, it's terrible. It's absolutely terrible in this Chamber.

We also talk about truck drivers, that's another one. Health care workers: we're trying to incentivize health care workers to come here.

Our geographics say you're not going to drive eight kilometres down the road in most rural parts of Newfoundland and Labrador to go to your workplace, whether it be doctor's office, a hospital, or whatnot. Many of these people have to travel sometimes up to 60, 70, 80 kilometres. It's just costing too much money. We've got health care professionals that have to work an extra job now. That's terrible. It's absolutely terrible. And, again, I'm not saying it's anybody's fault, I'm just saying they can't afford another tax.

So when you see another tax coming down – and I know it's all across Canada – it is going to deter people from coming here. It is going to deter people from staying here. I'm hearing it all day long and I know you guys are hearing it all day long, too.

When they talk about health care: social determinants of health outcomes have the greatest impacts. Well, that came right from the report. In order to coincide with that, we need to ensure that we have as many breaks in Newfoundland and Labrador as we possibly can. When we talk about low-income people and their determinants when it comes to health, we see how it coincides with each other; it has been laid out.

Of course, it's going to have an impact on that. We talked about immigration; we're trying to get people to come here. All those other provinces out there, all the other nine provinces and territories, they're trying to get people to go there as well. What are they offering that we're not offering? What are they fighting for that we're not fighting for?

I just want to ensure that we take the time to look at everything that we can do. Do you know what? By the vote and what not, this is going to come to fruition. But what we're asking for is a commitment from the government that this tax money is going to offset home heating fuels immediately – right now. Not in the fall, not next year, but that is something that needs to be done now. If anything, to give the people of the province confidence back in the government.

You know, sometimes I am absolutely ashamed to say that I am an MHA; I truly am. I thought that this job was going to give myself a lot more

pride. Unfortunately, when I see stuff like this and I don't see us fighting for the same cause, it really, really takes that pride away from me. I want to ensure we get that pride back.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: Thank you very much to the Member.

I now recognize the hon. the Member for St. John's Centre.

J. DINN: Thank you, Chair.

Chair, I'm a townie; I'm a corner boy. If anything else, I was probably just a little bit put out by some of the disparaging comments last night about Metrobus and how it was only serving a segment of the population in St. John's. I mean, I am used to being put down by anyone outside of the province – I have a complex, no doubt about it. However, in 2016, the census showed that we had a population here in the St. John's metro area of some 205,995 people, two-fifths of the population.

So I have here, too, an email – because I know that three other MHAs have it, the Ferryland District and other areas – from a person who said, when this funding – looking for improvements to transit in the province and not just Metrobus or GoBus but the school buses, the ferry from Bell Island or Fogo Island or Change Islands and so on and so forth. The seniors, persons with disabilities, low-income earners, the most vulnerable population, people who don't drive for various reasons rely on transit to get to work or go grocery shopping or to go shopping, or to a medical appointment or to activities and school. Some people don't drive and they depend on public transit, wherever it is.

The other thing too is, in my district alone, I would say I probably have people from every other district in the province, because most of the people in St. John's come from other parts of the province. Then there are second- and third-generation townies such as myself.

When we're looking at it, when I've been putting forward the idea of regional transportation, it's got to be across the province in layers. Start with the Northeast Avalon; the Metrobus is just a starting point for me. But how

do we increase this – and there is funding. There's \$14.9 billion in federal funding over the next eight years to basically build a reliable, fast, affordable, clean public transit, if we are willing to match it as a province.

We have another \$750 million available from federal funding, and Newfoundland's share of that is over \$4 million. Basically, emergency federal support to address ongoing COVID-induced transit operating revenue shortfalls, to make up for that, and the city is asking for confirmation from the Newfoundland and Labrador government that we'll be applying for that important federal relief.

Now, that's economic growth, because that means you have to bring the transportation system in. You have hire people to drive them. You have to hire people to maintain them. You've got to build the infrastructure. That's job creating. If you want to look at it, let's take advantage of it, leveraging that money.

We have made decades of decisions, I would say, that have gotten us to this point where we basically decimated any regional transportation system, any meaningful public transit.

Now, it's only since January that I decided I'm going to – I've been using the bus on and off; parking my truck. Nothing to do with the gas hike, but back in January I bought the buss pass to see if I can make it work. Because, in the end, a car is about convenience. It stays in the parking lot most of the time. It probably costs me more to own a vehicle than it does to use public transit, but there's a convenience of it.

Not saying I'm going to give up my vehicle, but it comes down to that choice. But how do we make it effective? You're not going to encourage people to use public transit as they have in other jurisdictions, if we don't build it up and invest in it.

I will go to the cyberattack. We can invest now some at the beginning, or we can pay the price down the road. I don't care what it is, whatever government is in power. The fact is, if we had invested the \$18 million back when the report came out, we probably could have saved ourselves some issues right now. The same thing here, Chair. We should have been investing in

public transit for quite a while, and we probably wouldn't be in this situation. We'd probably have a robust system.

As I said, we lost the railway, we lost road cruiser and then we lost DRL. It's a hodgepodge of apparatus. And if we're looking at short term, let's start helping the taxi systems that are there so that people who need them can get into town efficiently and cheaply.

Here's the other thing when we talk about electric vehicles and the need for a long extension cord and everything else that goes with it. For some of the first electric planes, 15 minutes flight – now that sounds like, well, that's a long way, but consider this: That's 14 minutes and 45 seconds longer than the Wright Brothers on their first flight. They've already got an Israeli plane – they've already got a passenger plane built that they're using; it can fly an hour.

The technology is there; it's coming our way faster than we think. I was thinking the other day – I was teaching at Holy Heart when 9/11 happened, and what vividly struck me, other than the planes flying in front of the school, was the fact that just about everyone who got off that plane, the first thing that they wanted was a phone. They had to get a phone. And the main reason why? Cellphones weren't as ubiquitous as they are now. Actually, I've got two. I've got an iPad. But at that time there were no cellphones.

Yet, in that space of time, they've come to the point; the technology has expanded so quickly that you'd be hard pressed to find a payphone around this city. It's basically driven out the technology or the landline. So my point is the world is changing faster than we think.

So when it comes to the carbon tax, I will support it. I will support it, not because – I'm not worried about whether it's imposed by Ottawa or whoever else because they think in the long run climate change is going to be more devastating to the vulnerable, to the people who are on the margins, to the people who can't feed themselves now, it will be more damaging to them than any carbon tax. It's going to happen.

But I'm going to say this, and here's where I'm seeing that – I was thinking a lot about this last night – because my friend, I think it was my colleague from Ferryland talked about being comfortable. And he's right. My colleague from Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans talked about having your back against the wall. And he's right, too. Inflation is devastating people. It demands immediate action. It is devastating to people and it demands immediate action. I compare it to the leak in your roof. If it's a small leak, you can afford to put it off and put the bucket under it and we'll take care of it sometime.

But if the roof gets blown off, regardless of your economic situation, you've got to fix it. It's got to be dealt with. And right now, for a lot of people in our province, the roof has blown off. I think in some ways what I do support here is that yes, we may be \$17 billion in debt, for God's sake what's another \$500 million or whatever else if it means helping people. Because we do have people who are struggling right now, who are struggling not now; they were struggling back in December.

Let's pass this but if we can find a way right now to help the people who are most in need right now, and there are – if we can find ways to help them with transportation, so they don't have to quit their job, so that seniors don't have to call crying about the fact that they can't afford to eat. It is \$2000 to fill up an oil tank – unheard of. But I've been there, many years ago, so I do think we've got to address that.

We can't wait until the fall. Because I don't think there's going to be any respite over the summer. At one time, the fuel bills, in the summer would go down, the price would drop, and you'd have a breathing space. I don't think we're getting that. And it's not our fault, but we get to choose how we react to it – don't worry, Chair, I can see the time. But I do think we need to have an immediate response to that, as well as medium and long term.

Thank you, Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Thank you.

I next recognize the Member for the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis.

J. WALL: Thank you, Mr. Chair, I always appreciate that.

It is indeed a pleasure to stand again to speak to this particular bill tonight on carbon tax, not to be confused with climate change, we're speaking about carbon tax.

When I go back to the list of exemptions that are there, municipalities fall under the list of exemptions. Well, Mr. Chair, when I go to the regulations, and we've learned that we've got to be very careful when we're looking at regulations, it is said in the regulations that gasoline purchased by a council and used in vehicles or equipment leased or owned by the council and operated is exempt. But not including vehicles or equipment of contractors or employees and their vehicles. That's in the regulations.

I've spoken to several municipalities today who watched the proceedings last night and reached out to me today with respect to that. That is where we're going to have the issue. That is where we're going to have the issue for municipalities.

So we all know that municipalities have the same tax base as the province, as does Ottawa. However, when the province and Ottawa impose more taxes, municipalities are pressured to tax less. We've seen that. I've seen that in my district in this past number of months.

One of the municipalities in my district were feeling the pressure from their citizens. They felt the pressure that they were being taxed too much and they looked at the mill rate that the municipality was imposing. And that council was forced to go back, because of provincial and federal level of taxes, they were feeling the heat from their residents and they were asked to tax the citizens less.

So what did the municipality do? The first thing they did: they cut services. The second thing they did: they cut professional development. Two important key aspects of a municipality are the services that they provide and, of course, you have support your elected officials in

professional development. However, that municipality made the tough decision to make those cuts because the same people were being taxed provincially and federally. But, of course, citizens can't come into the Chamber here or into the House of Commons in Ottawa, as they do to the municipal chamber, and ask for tax breaks, ask for relief.

It goes back to the point I made last night, the 93-year-old lady who asked me not to cut off her water because she couldn't pay her taxes. That's reality. That's what we're dealing with.

So I wonder, Mr. Chair, how many other mayors and councillors and municipalities across our beautiful province are having to make those same decisions, because anyone coming into their municipality to do work, as it says in the regulations, not including vehicles, equipment or contractors or employees with vehicles. So we have many municipalities having work done by contractors. If it's paving byroads, if it's putting in green space, if it's updating their parks and recreation. If it's putting in heat pumps or energy efficient windows in their municipal buildings. All of these things are done by contractors, who are now going to have to pass that extra level of taxation on to the municipalities and it is back on the backs of the residents.

I spoke with a municipality today, outside of my district, with respect to waste management. It's contracted out. On a weekly basis the garbage and recycling is collected. However, they are now affected by carbon tax when it comes to waste management. It not only affects people directly, but also indirectly. So this particular municipality currently has a fee of \$200 per household on waste management collection. That is going to be increased. That increase is passed back on to the residents.

With respect to the higher fuel surcharge that the companies and the contractors are going to be introducing, because they're not making it with the tenders that were put out a year ago, there's a big difference in the cost to do business today than it was this time last year.

I speak to Come Home Year celebrations: we're looking at, of course, many municipalities doing that across the province this year in recognition

of the provincial Come Home Year. What's going to be the difference for those Come Home Year celebrations for the municipalities? That's, again, increased costs that's going to be passed on to the same taxpayer.

Mr. Chair, I heard my colleague from St. John's Centre speak shortly ago with respect to inflation. The government has said it has no power to control inflation and there's no one here on the Opposition side that says that you do. We don't think that and we're not expecting that. The people of the province know you can't control inflation. What the people of the province are asking is that the government use its broad powers to buffer the impacts of inflation. That's a big difference, Mr. Chair. Buffer the impacts of inflation on the people of our province through tax policies and other means. It is very important to remember what we're discussing here and the level of impact that it has on our constituents, again, with respect to my role with municipalities.

When we are looking at people who work here in our province – and my colleague for Stephenville - Port au Port said it several times with respect to working remotely. You can live anywhere in our beautiful province and work from downtown Toronto to British Columbia to Beijing, throughout the world. We can definitely offer a better lifestyle here in our province; that is said without a doubt.

But when carbon tax hurts our province more than people throughout the rest of Canada because of our geographical location, the distance of where we live from Ottawa sometimes has a disadvantage. If you're getting to our beautiful province by road, sea or air, you're going to be affected. Again, Mr. Chair, it all comes back to the same people being taxed.

I'll go back to contractors coming in to the municipalities, and I look at the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, with respect to the high carbon costs with laying asphalt. That is going to be a major increase for municipalities. I know I heard the minister speak with respect –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

J. WALL: Yes, I fully agree. There's an extra \$10 million in the budget.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

J. WALL: Oh, yes, very expensive. And, again, there is an extra \$10 million in the budget for paving because of the rising cost of what is going on – acknowledged. Fully acknowledged and fully appreciated, no doubt.

However, when we look at municipalities doing their paving – I spoke to a CAO today who was very concerned that his residents are putting pressure on staff and council because they have to relook at the amount of paving that they're able to do in their town. Something that, as the minister knows, everybody wants. Everybody wants, as my father says, blacktop, asphalt. It goes a long way and it means a lot in every municipality.

While I'm speaking to it, I'll recognize the minister and his staff for the work that was done in my district the last two days with respect to repairing potholes; that is appreciated. I do appreciate that and pass it along to your staff, please, Minister.

E. LOVELESS: I will, thank you.

J. WALL: Thank you very much.

However, we do look at what is put back on our elected officials, the responsibilities that they have, the taxation that's on our same people, municipally, with respect to what they can handle and what they're not going to be able to handle.

Mr. Chair, I have a lot more to say, but in the last minute that I have, I want to speak quickly on housing. Someone reached out to me today, after watching the proceedings in the House yesterday, with respect to unaffordable housing, rising heat costs, the inflation that's reducing people's disposable income. I know the Minister of CSSD is fully aware, no doubt – fully aware. I'm very happy, as I said, with the business coming on board to provide affordable housing in my district. More and more people cannot survive the level of taxation, the amount of inflation, the high costs that we're dealing with and right now, as I said last night, a further tax

increase is the last thing that's needed. I know that.

Mr. Chair, I thank you for time. I have a lot more to say. I'm looking forward to speaking again to the carbon tax, and I thank everyone for their attention and, Mr. Chair, of course, of yours.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Thank you very much.

I next recognize the Member representing the District of Bonavista.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. PARDY: Thank you, Chair.

I'd just like to recognize all the people viewing tonight, and those in the District of Bonavista who are not viewing the pregame of the Toronto Maple Leafs and Tampa because they know the significance of what happens here in the House of Assembly, and I think full credit to those in that district. I'm not sure of the other 39, but the District of Bonavista knows what's important, that I can tell you.

The Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board stated a theme word a little while ago, but I want to give a little story. A little short story that ties in well with her theme. There were two parents who were taxpayers, and they had twins. They had two children. One was an optimist and seen good in everything. One was a pessimist, who saw the negative side of everything. What they wanted to seek was a balance. Some balance – and here's your key word, some balance – between the two.

So here's what they did. Their children, the twins, had gone to school and they begin to prepare for when they got home. In one room, they filled the room with brand new toys. As many new toys should get into the room, they filled that room. In the other room, they filled it with manure because the balance was important to these parents.

The children arrived home. They sent the pessimist to the room where all the toys were and then they sent the optimist to the room with the manure, and they waited and they waited. After five or 10 minutes they went up, the mother and father – the taxpayers – and they wedged the door open slightly of the room with the new toys and when they glanced in, they found their son was crying in the middle of the floor. They had said: What's wrong? You have all these brand new toys. The boy's response was: I'm afraid I'm going to break them.

Then they went to the next room and in the next room, they cracked the door and they looked in and here was their other son, the optimist, was tossing around the manure. And they quickly said –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

C. PARDY: That wasn't the goal of the story – balance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. PARDY: Minister, it was balance; it wasn't manure.

Anyway, to finish the story, the boy was in tossing the manure around and they said to him: Don't you know what you're playing with? And his response was, yes, I do. But, he said, there must be a horse in here somewhere.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. PARDY: A Newfoundland pony.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. PARDY: Listen – order, Chair, because we only got six minutes left.

CHAIR: I'm still waiting for the relevant part.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. PARDY: So I share that story because as those taxpaying parents, they sought balance and I would say that many of us over on this side, I think we seek balance too. I know the budget is about choices.

I'd just like to have a few points and a few words on what people speak to me in relation to the budget. Now the minister had stated, and she stated very eloquently – nothing to do ubiquitous – but it was eloquently, she stated about the deficit was coming down. But the people in the district would say, well, the debt is going up. There's a significant increase in the debt as well. So I know that we need to find the balance. We've got to make sure that we try to reduce that deficit, but we still got to try to arrest that debt. I think that is seeking a balance.

The most significant part in the remaining few minutes I've got – we've had the Environment and Climate Change Minister came out, and one of the questions I said the other day, when I asked in an Estimates was: Have you costed what the impact would be on the households in Newfoundland and Labrador of the carbon tax? We have not yet. But just let me share with you some numbers from the parliamentary budget office, or officer, and quickly I share with you – they did it for three provinces. Alberta, they indicate that the cost of carbon taxing: \$2,282. That was the figure, the cost of the households. In Saskatchewan it was \$1,464. In Manitoba it was \$1,145.

The only thing is that we don't know what the impact is in Newfoundland and Labrador. If they can find it for three provinces, I think we need probably to keep a measure or to make sure that we've got the data on the household income. So the impact would be on someone that's earning \$40,000 or the household income of \$40,000 in the District of Bonavista, and others that would be much higher. The minister had to say, which I totally agree with, stronger, smarter, self-sufficient and sustainable. We all concur with that.

But I look at the statistics and the Minister of CSSD is looking, when we have 21 per cent of our children living in poverty and I think the St. John's Centre Member has stated that too, it goes up to 25 per cent when we're talking about below the age of five. That is significant numbers. We ought to be looking at a balance that we have to make sure that we've got a poverty reduction plan and strategy now. It probably should have been before, because this didn't happen overnight. So I would say that's another thing that I would look at, I would look

to see what measures we have in place that would reduce the poverty in our province.

The other thing that the minister had stated, and stated well, to grow the economy, but one industry that she didn't mention – and she would, I know she's a big supporter of it – is the fishery. She stated the fishery with some gusto when she read it from her Budget Speech, even though I was a little taken back because I look at it as being only \$1 billion, when I firmly believe it should be \$5 billion.

So what came out today, and I look forward to presenting a petition on Monday, fishermen Lee Tremblett has signatures with his fellow fishers and the report of the Atlantic Seal Science Task Team. We know we have an issue. They stated it here and I think I saw a little clip on NTV news while we were eating our bacon and eggs there in the caucus room.

The only thing I would say is that balance is important. The fishery is important. Growing the fishery will be one of the greatest things that you could possibly do for rural Newfoundland and \$1 billion is only a mere pittance of what it should be. I think this House, me included, do not discuss the fishery enough.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

C. PARDY: So if we want to be able to offset the carbon tax: grow the fishery. Grow the fishery and make it a concerted effort that you have to have improvements on the fishery side for rural Newfoundland. I think that would be a good advance for any plan that you've got going forward.

Thank you, Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: Now, I can't follow that. That's a bit difficult to follow, I must say, and I thank my colleague for that.

The Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology, I know he was upset that no one asked him a question. So I'll ask him a question:

How is the new *Batman* movie? Was it good? Did you see it yet?

AN HON. MEMBER: Good movie.

J. BROWN: Good movie, okay. I was going to ask the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology, he never got a question today and I just wanted to ask did he see the new *Batman* movie. Is it any good?

A. PARSONS: Yes.

J. BROWN: Perfect. There he got his question.

My colleague for St. John's Centre, and I'd be remiss, he did mention trains and it's a good thing, because as the only place left in this province that has trains, we talk about the transportation and public transportation. I think one of the greatest things that did – well, one of the blemishes on our record, as a province, was Roads for Rails. That was a bad move for this province when it comes to regional transportation. I think we didn't see the foresight there and, obviously, that's a massive infrastructure project that was taken up long before most of our times. But at the same time, it was a step backwards for this province in the sense that we lost the sense of regional transportation. I think we never really regained that afterwards. That was something that I think we can never come back from.

But at the same time, moving forward, it's something we need to do and look at as a point for some of the carbon money and stuff that we do get is a study on regional transportation, on how do we get people from one area to another most effectively. At this point in time, we see that more people want to move again, more people want to go places and stuff like that, but now, obviously, with the costs and stuff of inflation and stuff like that, we're going to be bound by that.

But regional transportation also is a great way to do our part in the sense of commuting as many people as possible with the least amount of possible energy used. And many other places in the world have excelled at it as a cornerstone of some of their identity and stuff like that. So maybe something that we do with the idea of regional transportation and the regional idea of

that is take some of this carbon money look at regional transportation and we look at other aspects on how do we start moving people around effectively in this province because it is a big issue.

I remember growing up I would spend my summers with my grandparents out around Gander and that. My grandmother lived out in Wesleyville. My grandfather, he would never drive to St. John's. No, no, no, never drive to St. John's. We used to take the DRL. So as a kid we used to take the DRL bus from Wesleyville into St. John's at least once during the summer and it was a great asset at the time. I'm not sure, unfortunately, I haven't been down there since they passed in a very long time, but regional transportation is something that people use and it's a great asset that we need to move forward. It's a great way to start doing our part and to get people moving and stuff like that again. So that's one aspect of it.

Another thing I do want to touch on, again, I've said it before, is we have some very big players in the world markets right now that are here in our province, that are making their own strides forward to do their part. And it's because, at the same time, we look at other jurisdictions who have imposed carbon taxes onto the market are forced now to reduce their carbon footprint and to reduce their greenhouse gases in order to even sell their product in certain markets.

So now we are in a position there that we are going to see billions and billions and billions of dollars spent in this province on infrastructure upgrades, electrical upgrades and production upgrades in the next five to six years. We see that these extra things actually will generate actual work and projects in this province. So there are good things coming. There are things that are coming that we are forcing industry to do. And industry hoarded the money to do it. They have the money to do it and we have to use levers and means to force these large multinational corporations to actually invest in regions and industry.

There is good behind this; there is good intention behind this and we have to continue to use it more and more often. So I think it's going to be wonderful. I think there's going to be some great things moving down forward.

I want to say it's important and it's very worthwhile at the end of the day. The thing that we keep doing is we conflate two things: we conflate the idea of carbon tax, also the ongoing issues with inflation, but also poverty. I think what is more or less happening now and what we see is a lot of these issues were always underlying issues in society that we were not addressing correctly and now we see them come to the surface.

This is where we actually have to make real investments and real contributions into society to start raising people up, so things like this has happening. And with a global world and a global market and being a part of the global community, things that happen outside of our own borders have a very big impact within our borders. It's not that this idea of what one can do; it's how one government shelters their own people from global issues.

Obviously, we did not do a good job, sheltering our own people right now, but we can fix that. We should address it as expediently as we can, by finding ways to shelter the people that are most vulnerable in our society. It's been a long-standing issue in this province. We know that housing, seniors and other social issues are not new; it's things that we've known that's been around. It's just being conflated obviously by the global thing.

Now what we need to do is actually invest in our people. Invest in ways to help them in day to day. I've outlined some stuff today, and we should look at stuff that we can actually do to put money back into people's pockets, find housing for those who need to be housed and to make sure that there's actual food, affordable food, affordable living, and affordable life available to people, especially seniors.

People on fixed incomes seem to be, right now, the hardest hit people in our society. Especially those who never had the luxury of having a work punch in, or anything like that, people who are just on old age, CPP, and stuff like that. They seem to be ones that tend to be the most negatively impacted right now, and they need our help. Not just in small gestures, but in larger ways, especially with housing, medical care. Some of them can't even get the drugs that they need. Some are pill splitting and things like that.

There are a lot of things that we could do as a society, and it's one of those long-term things: pharmacare, dental care, supporting those initiatives from the federal government; more wraparound supports when it comes to housing. These are things that would do a world of difference and shelter people from some of the stuff that's going on right now.

My hope is that we can do more right now, and we should do more right now. We should look at the bigger picture of things on, going forward, how do we make sure that when there is something happening halfway across the world, the ripple effect doesn't hit us as hard as it did right now. We left ourselves wide open, and we have no one to blame but ourselves, really, at the end of the day. What we need to do is invest in people and in ways to (inaudible).

We need to move forward. We need to find ways to find more long-term needs, more long-term solutions and make sure it doesn't come back to hit us again and again.

With that, Chair, I take my seat.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: I next recognize the Member for the District of Terra Nova.

L. PARROTT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My House Leader said I had to follow the Member for Bonavista and while I'll say I'm not going to talk about playing with manure, I believe there might be a horse in the room here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

L. PARROTT: We've said, several times, that this bill is not about climate change and I will say the reality of it is that there is nobody in this whole House, I don't think, that doesn't believe climate change is a very, very serious issue, without a question.

I think that people who deny that climate change is happening right in front of our eyes have their eyes closed. I don't necessarily like how it is reported sometimes, based on per capita,

because it is the world we're trying to fix, not individuals. I think that if we look at it more from a geographical standpoint, it will give you a better picture of where we are, not only as a province, but as a country.

We're here talking about this carbon tax bill; again, not because we don't understand that this is a federal bill; not because we don't understand where the money is going and where it ends up. It is about the struggles that people are facing today and the reality of the struggles that people are facing – I've got oodles and oodles of messages that I got literally this evening of people struggling and it is quite shocking what is happening.

So we're clear, when I talk about what is going on here and we're here tonight talking, I'm not for one second suggesting that we have to axe carbon tax. What I am saying is that we have to find a way to do more for people. We can call it whatever we want. We understand the deal with this carbon tax bill; we know where it came from.

We sit here and we bragged about a made-right-here solution; well, I'll tell you the people in Nova Scotia are paying, I think, 27 cents a litre less on fuel than we are and they have a made-right-there solution. I can also tell you that it doesn't cost 27 cents a litre more to get it to Newfoundland than it does to Nova Scotia because the fuel in Nova Scotia isn't coming from Saint John, New Brunswick, and we all know that. It is coming from the same place as ours is coming from, so we need to find a way to do better.

Part of that is to look at our seniors and our low income and I know we made an attempt and we're trying to do things and I had an interesting conversation with the Minister of Environment this evening. I asked a question and he said the discussion is ongoing. But think about this – and certainly if you have ever worked on a town council, if you were a mayor, or if you worked as an employee for a town, municipalities depend, clearly, on gas tax. Pretty much every municipality in Newfoundland would fold tomorrow if they did not get gas tax. I haven't heard one person, not one person, say that there is a replacement for gas tax when these electric cars come on line.

So maybe, as a government, maybe as a province we have to be going to Ottawa and saying, why don't we transition the two, and maybe that's something we can give back to the people. Maybe that's a solution for right now. Maybe that's our John Crosbie argument. Maybe that's what we do there and we say: How do we come up with a solution?

But once municipal gas tax goes away, once we switch from carbon-based vehicles to electric vehicles, it will have an astronomical effect on municipalities, not just in Newfoundland, but my concern is Newfoundland. My concern is this province. I ran to represent this province. When we sit in this House and we talk about Saskatchewan, Ontario or anywhere else in Canada, I get it, but we're different. Our population is different; our geography is much different.

I said yesterday it's disproportionate how we compare ourselves to other provinces, and that is our biggest problem. We are not other provinces – we are not other provinces. When you look at us, and you look at – actually, the Minister of Finance gave a great example today when she talked about the vastness of our road network. There's no other province has a vastness like that, especially if you do it based on per capita.

You think about what we have to upkeep, it's really, really phenomenal. I believe it's 11,000 kilometres of pavement and 9,000 of asphalt, or somewhere around that. The Minister of Transportation can correct me, if he knows the correct stat there, but that's very close. It's huge.

Then we sit back and we say Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI or Ontario. Everybody has problems, folks, make no mistake about it. The war the Ukraine has affected – listen, the war in Afghanistan affected everything. Snowmageddon affected everything. COVID has affected everything. But what we are supposed to be doing is trying to look for ways around that and helping the people that are hurting right now.

When I get a message from someone and it says, I'm a single mom working, making more than minimum wage, and I'm at my rope's end. I don't even make it from paycheque to paycheque anymore. I'm dipping in to a

personal line of credit, just to pay my bills. I'm so disappointed in the way we have to live. Never in my wildest dreams did I think it would come to this.

Next one: I'm a single parent working three jobs so my daughter can participate in extracurricular activities. With gas going up again tonight, I'm wondering how to make time to get a fourth job. I work for the provincial government and approximately one-quarter of the staff in my office work from home, saving them \$500 per month. I spend that money just to get to the office. It's simply not fair.

These are the types of things that we can solve. I can go on and on and on. As a farmer in this province, we're at a point now where we are trying to figure out if we can plant a crop this year, if we can feed our cows from one week to the next. Our costs have almost doubled in the span of a year. We can't get people to work, and if we can, then we have to pay them wages most of us can't afford. You said a couple of times about people not knowing if they can buy milk. It's to that point now in this province and we don't know any longer if we can produce milk for people to buy.

Paying 85 per cent fuel charge, which is something I talked about yesterday, on everything to have to touch on top of the record grain and fertilizer prices, is making this the scariest time in our farm's history. When you start starving people that feed your society, you're going to have big trouble. We're parking tractors and sending people home because the cost of fuel is so crazy. We should be gearing up for spring and working. But we can't. Animals are leaving the Island by the truckload because people can't afford to feed them. Our little bit of food security we were building is quite simply being destroyed.

I've got maybe 50 or 60 of those messages that I got today. And I suspect that everybody in this room is getting those same messages. I'll say this, those are messages that are coming to me personally; I'm willing to bet you that if you go on people's Facebook pages and you scan the messages that are there, it's frightening. And it's not people saying that they don't want to pay 11.05 cents in carbon tax. It's not people saying that it's a two-cent increase in carbon tax. It's

people saying they can't afford to buy milk. It's people saying they can't afford to go see their doctor.

And that is what we need to recognize as a Legislature. That's why we're talking about carbon tax. It's not because we think that we can take the 11.05 cents and give it back to the people. It's because we know we have a responsibility to find an alternative to that. That's why we're having this discussion. Quite frankly, I believe we can find that solution.

Yesterday, the Minister of Finance quickly quipped that she would look at a home heating rebate. We don't need to look at a home heating rebate; we need to implement one now.

It's astronomical what people are going through and we all know it. I'm certain we all know it. We sit here and we quip back and forth, but that's part of our job. It's kind of funny when I think about the budget – I voted against the budget tonight, for the record, and I did it for a reason. I kind of laughed last night when I was sitting down and the Minister of Environment quoted Ben Parker. So I'll give him a quote about the budget. My quote about the budget and I'll tell you exactly who said it: Yabba-Dabba-Doo! Fred Flintstone said that.

It's absolutely ridiculous. At the end of the day, when we look at what's happening with people with regard to health care, with regard to child care, with regard to people's finances, their ability to get the services that they need, it's just quite simply not happening. When people are working multiple jobs or quitting jobs – even worse, people quitting jobs because they can't afford to go to them – it speaks volumes. It speaks in a way to us that it should tug at our heartstrings, it should make us go home at night and actually be sleepless. Because we're all pretty comfortable, at the end of the day. Nobody in here is wealthy. I believe that we're all here for the same reason and I believe that we're all here for the right reason.

But at the end of the day, the people that we represent need help and we have an opportunity in this sitting of the Legislature to provide that help. We need to plan for the future, but the future for the people that are hurting today is slipping away from their fingers. And if one

single person, one person has a mental health breakdown, commits suicide or dies because they feel so down and out, it's our fault. At the end of the day, we need to do better and we have an opportunity to do it.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Thank you.

Any further speakers?

The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

I'll only take an hour. No, I won't.

Mr. Chair, I move, seconded by the Deputy Government House Leader, that this House do now adjourn, but in doing so, I hope everybody goes home and watches the hockey game. I think the Leafs might win tonight.

Oh no, sorry, Mr. Chair, I got ahead of myself. I forgot, I need to rise the Committee. Then I can talk about the hockey game.

CHAIR: The hon. the Government House Leader for (inaudible).

S. CROCKER: I move, Mr. Chair, that the Committee rise and report just a little more progress and ask leave to sit again.

CHAIR: It is moved and seconded that the Committee rise and report just a little more progress.

Do I have the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

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

SPEAKER (Bennett): The hon. the Member for Lake Melville and Chair of Committees.

P. TRIMPER: Thank you, Speaker.

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

SPEAKER: The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that they have considered the matters to them referred and directed him to report that they have made a little tiny bit more progress and ask leave to sit again.

When shall the report be received?

S. CROCKER: Now.

SPEAKER: Now.

When shall the Committee have leave to sit again?

S. CROCKER: Tomorrow.

SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

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

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

I'll make a second attempt at this.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Deputy Government House Leader, that this House do now adjourn.

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.'

AN HON. MEMBER: Nay.

SPEAKER: Motion carried.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: This House do stand adjourned until tomorrow, Monday, at 1:30 o'clock.

I wish everybody a safe and enjoyable weekend.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Monday, at 1:30 p.m.