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Speaker: Honourable Scott Reid, MHA

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The House met at 1:30 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Reid): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: Today, we will hear Members' statements by the hon. Members for the Districts of Mount Pearl - Southlands, Placentia West - Bellevue, St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows, Harbour Main and Torngat Mountains.

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

MR. LANE: Mr. Speaker, long-time Mount Pearl residents Pat and Doreen Walsh have many reasons to be proud of their son, Dr. Stephen Walsh. One of those reasons would be his part in developing a promising COVID-19 vaccine.

Dr. Walsh grew up in Mount Pearl and graduated from O'Donel High School in 1990. His studies brought him to Dalhousie University in Halifax, and he later gained his medical degree at McGill University. Dr. Walsh now lives in Boston and is a member of a research team that is in the final phase of human testing on a promising COVID-19 vaccine.

Mr. Speaker, for a small province of just over half-a-million people, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians continue to punch well above their weight, whether that be in business, the Armed Forces, sports, the arts and every other aspect of human achievement. Dr. Stephen Walsh is yet another example of one of our very own excelling on the world stage, in this case, in the field of epidemiology.

I ask all Members of this hon. House to join me in congratulating this exceptional Newfoundlander and wishing him all the best with this critical research.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I sit in this Chamber today to speak of a great lady, Mrs. Juanita Gilbert. Mrs. Gilbert has been a resident of the local service district of North Harbour in my district her whole life. She spent her childhood here. She met her husband here. She raised her family in North Harbour. She's a wife, a mother and a grandmother.

Over the years, Mrs. Gilbert has been witness to many advancements in modern-day living: the evolution of electricity and indoor plumbing, the transition of the washboard to the washing machine.

I've been told one of Mrs. Gilbert's favourite pastimes is to sing and that her voice is much like that of a lovely songbird.

Mrs. Gilbert celebrated on October 27, 2020, and I ask my fellow colleagues to join me today in wishing Mrs. Juanita Gilbert a very happy 84th birthday.

Happy birthday, Mrs. Juanita Gilbert.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows.

MR. MITCHELMORE: Mr. Speaker, it is pleasure to recognize a strong woman, Mona Snow of St. Lunaire-Griquet, who, like her mother, has taken the reigns of volunteerism and does all she can to help her community and those in need.

From her involvement with the fire department, Salvation Army Thrift Store, or helping those travel for medical appointments, she is a fundraiser extraordinaire.

Mona serves as president of the firettes and has worked hard to fundraise with her team to help support the fire department purchase equipment and contribute towards a new pumper truck,

which was delivered to Fire Chief Tyler Hillier earlier this year.

In July, Mona took up a new initiative with Wendy-Dale Woodford, Triffena Simms Roberts and Rona O'Rielly to raise funds to get reusable water bottles for the students at Truman Eddison Memorial in Gunners Cove and White Hills Academy, St. Anthony.

These women recently made the presentation of 375 reusable water bottles to all the students at these schools. I want to thank all individuals and organizations who supported by donating towards this cause.

I ask all hon. Members to congratulate Mona and these community-minded residents for giving of their time to help our students and those in need.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

Today in this hon. House, I'd like to reflect on our Royal Canadian Legions, our veterans and this year's Remembrance Day and how different this day will be celebrated throughout our country, province and even our own districts due to the global pandemic.

The Legion is the largest veterans support in the country who mostly operates off poppy sales. My District of Harbour Main has two Legions: Branch 64, Holyrood and Branch 65, Brigus. They are planning for a much smaller, yet heartfelt, intimate ceremony this year. There will be no parades and only public laying of wreaths of the Legion, provincial and federal governments.

Our veterans are an important part of our history. This is a time when our veterans have been isolated for months and I would encourage each of us to thank a veteran when you see them in your communities over the coming weeks.

This year is the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War; 75 years of peace because of our veterans. It's truly remarkable.

I ask all Members to please join me in thanking our Legions and our veterans for everything that they do to remind us: Lest we forget.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today, I pay tribute to Rod Pilgrim of Nain, Nunatsiavut. Rod Pilgrim is known for his mechanical knowledge, but especially for his kindness. You can't find many people in Nain who Rod hasn't helped.

Rob Pilgrim moved to Nain in 1974; there he found a home. He worked with Newfoundland Hydro for over 39 years before retiring. His ongoing volunteer service is amazing: serving on the Canadian Rangers for 12 years and he was heavily involved with the Nain recreation committee back in the early days when activities were primarily at an outdoor rink. Rod severed with the Nain volunteer fire department since 1975. He continues to serve with the Nain-Torngat housing committee for over 15 years and is also a long-serving director of the Martin-Martin Group Home; all volunteer positions.

What sets Rod apart is the time he puts in to helping people. He fixes appliances that otherwise would have to be replaced at great cost to residents: fridges, stoves, washers, dryers and furnaces. He gets calls in the middle of the night; if a furnace is not working waterlines may freeze. Often he keeps a wait-list because he's so busy. Sometimes when a part isn't available in Nain, he checks scraped appliances for a part to tide people over; all service volunteered. He will not take a cent.

Please join me in applauding Rod Pilgrim's contribution to his community of Nain.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

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

MR. HAGGIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today in this hon. House, I would like to acknowledge Newfoundland and Labrador's 23 regulated health professional governing bodies. They have gone above and beyond to help steer our province through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The province's regulatory boards are self-governing and act as independent entities. These boards are responsible for such matters as establishing, maintaining and enforcing Standards of Practice, providing oversight of competency skills and continuing education, and establishing, maintaining and enforcing a Code of Ethics to ensure health professionals practice in the best interest of the public.

2020 has created unprecedented demands on our health care system. The associated regulatory boards have had to adjust their processes to accommodate such things as emergency registration and licensure. They have provided guidance on protocols, and developed standards of practice for providing services, such as virtual care.

There is always a steep learning curve in response to a public health emergency. We have made much progress with regard to our understanding of COVID-19; however, we know that we still have much to learn about the virus.

We appreciate the flexibility of the boards when it comes to making changes. As we move forward, and the pandemic continues to evolve, I am confident that this province's health care community will continue to deliver high-quality care and support to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that we are in good hands.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

I, too, join the minister in acknowledging the 23 regulated health professional governing bodies who worked long hours and did everything they could to help guide our province through the COVID-19 pandemic.

This past year has created many new uncertainties and demands on our province's health care system. Things such as virtual care and new protocols have changed the way we deliver our health services. Public health emergencies like COVID-19 could not be planned for, and like the minister said, there is a steep learning curve. We must work together to learn more about the virus and develop new ways to adapt and loosen our restrictions while keeping public safety in mind.

Maintaining high-quality care is important to all of our province's residents and we must stick together and ensure workers in our health care system are taken care of. It is our front-line health care workers that ensure the health and safety of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. COFFIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to thank the hon. minister for receiving an advance copy of the statement.

Our regulated health professional governing bodies have, indeed, risen to the unprecedented challenges they have faced this year. The Third Party caucus sincerely thanks them for their unwavering dedication to our well-being and safety. We also look forward to seeing that the regulations, especially those for nurse practitioners, doulas and midwives, continue to improve so that our health professionals can employ their full skill set.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and the governing bodies.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL.

MS. STOODLEY: Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to announce that Francophone residents of the province can now access marriage certificates through a secure online ordering service in French. This is the first time that the province's Francophone residents have access to this type of online ordering service in their language.

The initiative improves the process of issuing and receiving vital statistics documentation for those requiring this service and information in French. While marriage certificates are currently the only ones available in both languages, birth and death certificates will soon follow.

Les certificats de changement de nom légal peuvent également être obtenus en format bilingue au bureau de l'état civil à Mount Pearl. Les certificats seront délivrés en format bilingue, que la demande soit faite en français ou en anglais.

Mr. Speaker, the new option is available under the vital statistics section of Digital Government and Service NL's website. Having services online is a key focus for our government. Particularly over the past several months, we recognize the importance of having services accessible in an online format for residents of the province.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage anyone wishing to access the French services to visit our website at gov.nl.ca/dgsnl.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl North.

MR. LESTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for an advance copy of her statement.

Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to see the online vital statistics services are being increased for our francophone residents. It is important that individuals can access online services in their language.

(French spoken.)

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to remind the minister that in addition to the needs of the francophone community, there is also a need to enable the Indigenous people who speak their own language such as Innu-aimun and Inuttitut.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to also highlight to the minister that online services are absolutely of no use to individuals who do not have reliable Internet access. I certainly encourage the government to prioritize improving Internet services and the inclusion of both national and Indigenous languages in the online services.

Merci, Monsieur le Président.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank the hon. minister for receiving an advance copy of her statement.

My district has a very large francophone population, so I'm very pleased to hear that services are now available in French. People should not be made to feel alienated by a system that is supposed to be meant to serve them. So this is a great initiative.

Regarding bringing more and more services online, this is a great convenience for the busy public and those who wish to follow all COVID guidelines, but let us remember those who are unable to access services, that the counter services must remain available.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER FUREY: Mr. Speaker, I have exciting news to share today regarding the Flemish Pass. Equinor and its partner BP have made oil discoveries at Cappahayden and Cambriol prospects, which were drilled this past summer by Transocean Barents.

I congratulate the team who worked on this drill program. They successfully executed a safe campaign – even as they faced additional challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I also wanted to share that yesterday the C-NLOPB issued a significant discovery licence to Equinor based on Harpoon O-85 exploration well. The two discoveries Equinor announced today, along with the Harpoon significant discovery licence, will potentially accelerate the development of the Bay du Nord Project and bodes well for Newfoundlander and Labrador's offshore future.

Mr. Speaker, the magnitude of Newfoundland and Labrador's resource potential continues to grow. Just last month the 2020 oil and gas resource assessment showed a combined resource potential of 63.6 billion barrels of oil and 224 trillion cubic feet of gas in just 10 per cent of the province's offshore.

This government is committed to ensuring the continued success of our offshore oil and gas industry and to maximizing the benefits of our industry to the people of this province.

There are a number of creative solutions we are implementing to help sustain the offshore oil and gas industry.

We now have a new regional assessment process that maintains the strong protection of the offshore environment while significantly shortening timelines for exploration drilling program approval.

Also, we recently announced an offshore exploration incentive to encourage more wells to

be drilled – enhancing global competitiveness at a critical time and positioning the province to realize its significant resource potential.

Mr. Speaker, by investing in offshore exploration, we are encouraging offshore exploration drilling – leading to discoveries like we saw today.

Thank you so much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: I thank the Premier for an advance copy of his statement, Mr. Speaker.

The discoveries announced this morning by Equinor are indeed good news for our offshore industry. They are the result of diligent and strategic seismic data collection, geoscience and exploratory drilling carried out by hard-working Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that we have tremendous oil and gas reserves on our offshore arena, but it's up to the government to ensure that we're globally competitive and can attract international investment in order for this potential to be realized.

It's my fear, Mr. Speaker, that this Liberal government is simply not doing enough to turn discoveries, such as these two, into oil-producing and job-creating projects.

I'd also like to take a moment to encourage to be proactive and encourage the development of our offshore natural gas potential.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Premier for the advance copy of his statement.

It's great to see work being carried out to inventory our offshore reserves and done so in a safe manner.

In this world of lower oil values and pricing wars taking place, we need to find ways to stay competitive and take opportunity with what we have currently in our offshore without compromising our safety and our environment. We have a lot of workers counting on us.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, gas prices on the Island are up four cents today as a direct result of the closure of the Come By Chance Refinery and the necessity of having to import gas into this province. Yesterday, we unanimously agreed to end poverty in this province. This is not a good start.

Will the Premier admit that government's failure to secure a future for Come By Chance is now impacting the whole province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Obviously, when there's a change in costs we, as a government, are concerned for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, but the reality is, as the Member opposite knows, the PUB is an independent authority with the expertise to review applications and make judgments, accordingly.

We are working every day, the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology is working relentlessly with the current ownership of the Come By Chance Refinery and potential buyers to try to facilitate the best option to recognize

and realize the maximum value of this asset for the returns of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday, Liberal staffer George Murphy told people that gas would go down today. Instead, the price of, not just gas but of diesel, furnace oil and stove oil all increased.

I ask the Premier: The people of this province cannot afford any increase in their cost of living. We know that putting the refinery in warm idle will help secure a new owner and a future for the refinery. Can he explain why the government isn't providing that support?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I mentioned in the previous answer, the minister is working tirelessly with the current owner to investigate all options so that we can make sure that this asset is maintained to the point that it does deliver the maximum value and return to the people of this province. This is an important asset for this province and this government is not going to let its potential slip through our fingers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: I'm sure that Come By Chance Refinery workers are cheered by those sentiments, but I know as well they want to see action.

Mr. Speaker, most of the goods in our province, including food, has to come in via ship and truck. With this increase in fuel price, we can assume the cost of goods will increase as well.

What is the government's plan to ensure that people can continue to afford to live here?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think that we've taken several actions to ensure that people can afford to live here; such programs like we introduced in the recent budget like \$25-a-day daycare. A program that doesn't only make it affordable for people to stay here, it attracts people here; it allows them to stay here. It allows them to reach their maximum potential and contribute to the economy. It's a good social program to boot.

We're continuing to develop programs like that to make it attractive for people to stay here and make it affordable for people to stay here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: We're receiving calls from people who are struggling with the price of food and it's not just those people who may benefit from \$25-a-day daycare. This fuel increase has the potential to increase those costs even more.

Premier, what is the plan to prevent further skyrocketing of food prices in the province?

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

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

I'll jump in on this one because we're talking about the increase to fuel prices. Just to put it out there for the public so that they do understand, this was brought about because of the closure or the idling of the refinery back in March, which was caused by COVID-19 and a struggling oil industry. The reality is that with the refinery in idling, we need to import that fuel into the province. That brings about increased costs, which was reflected by the independent PUB's decision.

The reality is what we are doing is working constantly and consistently with North Atlantic to try to find a sale for the refinery. That work continues. I had numerous calls and meetings yesterday and again today. We're working with

interested parties and that's what we're going to do.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. CROSBIE: While the government is doing what the people expect it do and have a right to have them do, which is help with finding a buyer, they are going to have pay more everywhere they turn.

What's the immediate plan to reduce the cost of petroleum products in the province?

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

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

I do know that the Member opposite realizes that the Public Utilities Board, which has been in operation since 1949 and has been controlling petroleum pricing since 2004, is an independent, quasi-judicial regulatory body that handles these issues. In fact, it is not up for politicians to interfere.

What I will say is that the last time we did, we excluded the PUB from Muskrat Falls. So my question, Mr. Speaker, would be: How did we pan out with that?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. PARROTT: Perhaps if this government interfered before October 6 with this sale, we wouldn't be in the mess we're in. It's not just food; it's lumber. It's everything.

Mr. Speaker, members in my district have been reaching out to me. As of yesterday, their medical and their dental benefits have ceased. This doesn't just affect those members; it affects their entire families.

I ask the minister: What is being done with these workers to help them retain their benefits while we're waiting for a new operator?

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the question from the Member opposite.

In fact, I spoke to the union twice directly yesterday to talk about their membership. What I can say is that they did not bring it up with me then, but I will look forward to that issue being brought to my attention because, of course, we're going to do what we can to assist these individuals.

As the Member knows, and other Members of the caucus who attended a phone call with me the other evening, we are doing everything that we can to support the workers, which is why we're trying to facilitate a deal; we're trying to keep the refinery in warm idle. Again, if these issues are there, I would be interested in hearing them and doing what we can to handle them.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. PARROTT: I was at that meeting, Mr. Speaker, and I volunteered to help his department. I haven't heard a word from anyone.

Workers are also concerned about their pension, severance pay and vacation pay.

Can the minister provide an update on the pension fund for the workers at Come By Chance?

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

MS. STOODLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of the superintendent of pensions, we are working with the company and the union to ensure all the regulations and legislation around

pensions is followed. As of today, we don't have any concerns around the pensions for the workers. Our department will continue to work with them as the situation might change.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Husky has a 35 per cent stake in Bay du Nord.

Does the Premier have any assurance that the takeover of Husky by Cenovus will not jeopardize development of the Bay du Nord?

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the question from the Member opposite.

We don't have any indication that that is an issue right now. In fact, I look forward, along with the Premier, to speaking with the CEO of Cenovus. Tomorrow we're going to have a conversation. Again, while I appreciate the concern, that is not there.

What I can say is to point to the positive and promising developments that have been announced today, along with the fact that Equinor is actually consolidating their offices in St. John's. That move is happening. So I look forward to increased jobs here in St. John's with Equinor bringing their staffers here.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The CEO of Cenovus says West White Rose is a specifically good project for the province and

there is a role for government to help facilitate this project.

Premier: Have you spoken to the CEO about this?

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

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

What I can say is that we have arranged a phone call with Cenovus which we will be having tomorrow, the Premier and I. But all week we have actually been speaking to Husky every single day, working on the proposed scope of work that hopefully will see some action in 2021 under the \$320 million. We continue to discuss other options but, again, there's some positivity there amongst the troubling times that the industry is facing.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As an equity partner I think we have a big role and we need the government to step up.

Minister: What specific role will government do to help facilitate this project and get people back to work?

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

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

Again, I appreciate the question from the Member opposite because it is a good question. Government does have a role to play here. What we've been doing is I guess a couple of things. One, we've levered \$320 million from the federal government, which money will be going not just to the companies but hopefully to the workers in the form of jobs. We're looking at a scope of work that hopefully we will see happen here, and we've been facilitating that. We will also leverage that fund by bringing in, hopefully,

private investment as well. These companies want to invest in this project as well.

There are a number of things that we're doing, and a lot of it happens behind the scenes. On that note, I'd like to thank the staff of the department, as well as Finance, who've been working tirelessly day and night and through the weekends to try to make something happen for this industry.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. WAKEHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier's Economic Recovery Team has been tasked with developing a plan of action that will respond to the province's immediate fiscal challenges and plot a new course forward. Premier, just last year government paid McKinsey consultants \$1 million to do the exact same thing and chart a way forward.

I ask: Why are you starting the process all over again?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER FUREY: Thank you for the question.

The answer is actually quite simple: The McKinsey report was pre-COVID-19.

I think one of the things we can think about right now and we can all agree on, certainly, in this House, is that 2020 has showed us that things have changed. There is no road map forward. That's why we need to call on the bright people with the expertise and diverse sets of backgrounds to help us guide our way through this time of crisis, through COVID-19 and the global economic crisis. So plans in the past, every jurisdiction right now is developing new plans. We're lucky to be surrounded with some of the best talent in the world and we've tapped that to create our own plan to navigate this crisis moving forward.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. WAKEHAM: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that when a government doesn't want to make decisions they revert to reviews and task forces, and here we go again.

A Task Force on Health Care was also announced on budget day. Given that health is the largest, single expenditure in government, who will be in charge of reviewing health care expenditures, the Moya Greene team or the Task Force on Health Care?

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

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

I would draw the Member for Stephenville - Port au Port's attention to the colleague just a couple of desks down, he said in this pandemic we could not plan for this.

What we are doing, Mr. Speaker, is we are looking afresh at some of the broader issues around health with the aim of looking at social determinants of health and upstream manoeuvres that will reduce the disease burden. So of instead of being the department of illness and community services, I can actually become the Department of Health and Community Services. While they do that, we have a series of short-term measures and medium-term measures in place, such as *Towards Recovery*, which are already abolishing wait times and improving access, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. WAKEHAM: Mr. Speaker, Moya Greene's task force has been asked to review government expenditures. Health takes up 40 per cent of those.

Will the review of health care expenditures include the \$200-million savings plan talked about by former deputy minister John Abbott? In his Liberal leadership campaign he certainly gave the impression that the work had been done and the recommendations made. Will they be made available to the Moya Greene team?

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

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

Over the years, there has been a variety of proposals submitted to the Department of Health. The Member opposite in his previous life may have had a finger in that as CEO of Labrador-Grenfell Health.

From my point of view, we are open to anything that will improve the health of the population. I think we need to stop looking at health as a cost and look at it as an investment. These are jobs, these are high-paying jobs and they invest in the future of the people of this province, Mr. Speaker. They do it in a way that benefits us all and I think we need a little bit of a mind change.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. WAKEHAM: Mr. Speaker, the minister is right; I am familiar with reviews that have been done in health. I certainly know and that's why I'm confident that they were done and that they do exist.

Again, I ask the simple question: Is Moya Greene tasked with reviewing health care expenditures?

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

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

The Member opposite will also know that of all of the ABCs in this province, the regional health

authorities and now the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information, is actually reviewed on a very regular basis. There are at least monthly reports on line-by-line items of every item of regional health authority expenditure, Mr. Speaker.

I would argue that is why our health care costs have not risen at a rate that even matches inflation. Within four years, we'll be amongst the best in the country, Mr. Speaker, from the worst in the country. That's happened since 2016.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

Beginning in August of 2016, journeypersons in Newfoundland and Labrador had an expiry date attached to their certificates of qualification, requiring renewals every five years at a cost of \$50. This expiry date has now been abandoned by the department.

I ask the minister: Why was such a policy adopted?

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

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, it is always useful to have information available on apprentices to be able to understand exactly what the labour force component of our apprentices is. If the hon. Member has any questions or has any concerns that he'd like to highlight to me, which he has not done so already, I'd be more than happy and willing to accept them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. P. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I believe I'm highlighting them right now and I'll continue on doing so.

Mr. Speaker, these expiry dates, which were added by this Liberal government, cost journeypersons' jobs, cost journeypersons' post-journey training opportunities.

What does the minister say to these hard working men and women?

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

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, if there are any incidents of any individual, any apprentice that has experienced a difficult circumstance, if the hon. Member would like to bring them forward – certificates and renewals are available and they can indeed be done and they've been done on a regular basis.

If the hon. Member has any questions, he has not brought them to my attention to date, but I would appreciate receiving them at his convenience.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I guess emails don't count because I've been copied on emails that have gone to that department asking specific questions around this. There have been substantial fees collected – substantial fees – and I learned through Estimates from approximately 11,000 journeypersons

Will the minister refund these fees for a policy that should never have been put in place?

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

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, again, if there's a specific instance where there has been a harm that has been conducted or a harm that has been followed because there has been a delay, I'd be more than happy to review on a case-by-case basis, those circumstances.

Again, the hon. Member is not bringing forward any specifics so it's very difficult to deal with a notion which is ill defined.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. P. DINN: Mr. Speaker, I don't accept that answer. It's the same answer for the last three questions.

We are here in an economy that's dying. We have individuals and tradespeople who are not getting jobs. They're down and trying to get up and this government is holding their foot on their neck by these policies.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P. DINN: He's waiting for me to call him. There are people who have already called and contacted; no answer, nobody home.

Who is going to deal with these individuals, tell them why they didn't get jobs because of this? Tell them why they didn't get post-secondary training because of this and refund \$50 that is more important in their pocket than ours?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BYRNE: Mr. Speaker, I think the rhetoric is advancing here. What we want to do is be able to get to the heart of an issue and find a solution. If there is a specific issue that can be dealt with, the hon. Member in this House can be assured it will be dealt with.

I think a more constructive dialogue, which reduces the rhetoric and provides some more collegial attitude and approach is a better approach to be able to support our apprentices and those that require our help.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In Question Period yesterday, the Minister of Transportation told me that I had to reach out to the federal government regarding the Nain airstrip. I tell this hon. House that I had already met with the federal MP and Nunatsiavut Government on this issue and the sole hang-up rests with the provincial government on moving this file forward.

I ask the minister: Why is the federal MP and Nunatsiavut Government so frustrated with your department on stalling on the pre-feasibility study?

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

MR. BRAGG: I thank the Member opposite for the question.

I'm not sure stalling on the pre-feasibility study would be how I would term it. This was only announced; the budget was only just approved a few days ago.

When I was in Labrador about two or three weeks, we took a tour of the possible site where the road could go so I could get a feel for it. The people in my department will certainly get to the pre-feasibility study in time. We will include the people of Labrador in that study, in consultation.

Mr. Speaker, all I can say to that, I guess in due time we will get to it, but have a little patience, please.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. EVANS: I think, actually, Nunatsiavut Government and the Labrador MP will be shocked to hear your answer – actually, I think they should listen to it – because this has been ongoing for years now.

In actual fact, the Nain airstrip has been studied several times: no night lights, no ability for medevacs to land or take off at night, life at risk. In actual fact, to hear your answer is unacceptable.

When is this government going to actually commit to the feasibility study before somebody actually dies? When?

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

MR. BRAGG: Mr. Speaker, I will apologize because I misunderstood the first question. I thought the pre-feasibility study she was talking about was the road to the North, so I will apologize for that.

On the Nain airstrip, I haven't had the luxury yet to fly into Nain, but my briefing this morning assures that to move the Nain airstrip, we would have to go the other side of the mountain. The Member opposite would understand what that means, I'm sure.

The airport that was initially put in Nain was done 100 per cent by the federal government. Any major improvements there will require the input and the funding from the federal government, Mr. Speaker, so I guess we look forward to conversations on that in the coming weeks.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. EVANS: The federal MP has committed the federal government for the feasibility study. They've actually even offered to increase the cost-sharing ratio just to get the provincial government to agree to the feasibility study. We're talking about a feasibility study; then the road has to be constructed up to the airstrip.

This is life and death, in actual fact. You cannot land or take off after dark in Nain, Mr. Speaker. It's critical. This provincial government has to commit to the feasibility study.

So a yes or no: Are you going to commit to the feasibility study or are you going to let people's lives be at risk?

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

MR. BRAGG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I guess further to the last question, in the early '80s – and I could be corrected on this – in which the federal government built a number of airstrips on the North Coast of Labrador, the coastal communities. Nain is an airstrip that can only be classified as only if you can safely land during daylight hours with suitable weather conditions. My understanding is you almost take off into a mountain face.

Right now, for that airport in Nain the hon. Member is talking about, no, there cannot be a fixed wing that will come in after dark, but the sources of the search and rescue would come into assistance, should we ever need them, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. TIBBS: Mr. Speaker, ambulances in Grand Falls-Windsor are being delayed because staff are not available to respond to emergency calls.

What is the minister going to do to fix this situation?

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

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

The ambulance service across the province is divided into three providers: there's the regional health authority, there are those that are done by community ambulance operators and there are those that are performed by private operators. If the Member opposite has a specific instance where a private operator has run into some difficulties, I would be delighted to investigate it for him.

Having said that, I have not been made aware by the regional health authority or the Member opposite of any issues with ambulance response times in the community of Grand Falls-Windsor, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Time for one quick question and a quick answer.

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

MR. TIBBS: Mr. Speaker, I'm letting the minister know now. We have a large area; we have one ambulance crew on for 16,000 people in Grand Falls-Windsor and another so many people in Bishop's Falls. From the Buchans Highway down the Bay d'Espoir Highway, we have one ambulance crew and the people of Grand Falls-Windsor don't realize that, I don't think.

Does the minister think that's adequate for such a big area?

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

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

The ambulance service across this province is moving to a performance-based system. What that means is there are criteria around response times. Once again, I have not been made aware in regular reports of any issues with response times in Grand Falls-Windsor as a town.

If the Member opposite has an issue, all he has to do is walk across the House with the details and I will look into it for him. He has not done that, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. COFFIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are 60,000 people in Newfoundland and Labrador who are making less than \$15 an hour. A recent survey from \$15 and Fairness shows that over 91 per cent of respondents are in favour of increasing the minimum wage to \$15.

I ask the minister: How will he ensure workers in Newfoundland and Labrador will earn a living wage so they are able to build a bright future for them and their families here?

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

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

May I begin my remarks and response to the hon. Member by saying a thank you to both parties of the Dominion, Loblaws, Unifor labour disruption who are back at the table today. Much of this conversation today is around providing workers with adequate income.

I will note for the hon. Member that this House voted unanimously last night to embark upon a process to investigate guaranteed annual income. That will be an important piece of work. I appreciate the fact that all Members came together to examine a problem, because all Members thought that that was a potential solution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS. COFFIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will remind the Member that a guaranteed basic income is not a substitute for a living wage.

Mr. Speaker, P3s are being approved in this province without full disclosure of long-term costs. As keepers of the public purse, we have a duty to know what the Liberal government has gotten us into.

I ask the minister: Will he table the P3 contracts in this House?

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

MR. BRAGG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member opposite for her question.

I guess it goes without saying that there will be some skeptics when it comes to anything that we try to do and develop. That would be the job of the Opposition and the Third Party to try and root out where there may be a problem.

We are building valuable infrastructure in this province, Mr. Speaker, using the P3 platform. A report came out a while ago that said it was sole-sourced. We do not sole-source. The fairness advisory is looked at; we do our due diligence. I'm going to throw a number at you. The newest one, the Corner Brook acute care hospital, over the 30 year lifespan it's looking at a saving there of \$131.9 million – a saving of \$131.9 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Education: Can he tell us which schools and how many students and teachers have their Chromebooks and laptops in hand, how many more we have to procure to fully supply the education system, and when will these Chromebooks or these devices be in the hands of teachers and students?

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As the Member knows from a previous answer in this Legislature and public comments, we are expecting the Chromebooks, Mr. Speaker, I had indicated before the end of the year. It's probably going to be November before the entirety of the Chromebooks are secured and they're able to be uploaded and serviced and ready to be sent out and put in the hands of students from 7 to 12.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

News came this week that as a direct result of the Come By Chance idling, the gasoline and home heating fuel costs have increased.

What is the minister going to do to ensure that the people of this province are able to afford to heat their homes this winter?

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the question from the Member opposite.

As I've stated earlier in this Question Period, the reality is that this cost increase, which was sanctioned by the independent PUB, has been caused by the refinery being idle due to COVID and the issues in the oil industry. What we are doing as a government is trying to facilitate and broker a deal for this refinery so that it will be producing again which would see hopefully positive results.

I would point out to the Member that I do not believe it would affect his jurisdiction, though. So that would be good news for his residents.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Notices of Motion

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

MR. CROCKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice of Bill 52, An Act Respecting The Tourism Accommodations Act.

MR. SPEAKER: Further notices of motion?

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. CROCKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow move, in accordance with Standing Order 11(1), that this House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 2, 2020.

MR. SPEAKER: Further notices of motion?

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. CROCKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that on tomorrow I will move, in accordance with Standing Order 11(1), that this House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 3.

MR. SPEAKER: Further notices of motion?

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Petitions

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

MR. CROSBIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a petition to present. Federal participation is necessary to support the West White Rose Project and Newfoundland and Labrador's offshore oil and gas industry. Thousands of jobs are at risk and 30 per cent of our economy is based on the oil and gas industry. Any economic recovery is dependent on a vibrant oil and gas industry.

This economic activity will create – over the next 30 to 40 years it will enable the province to transition from fossil fuels to greener alternatives with positive impact on the environment. This industry employs thousands of workers, both directly and indirectly, which will provide financial stability and helps to ensure the province's long-term sustainability for the future. This industry has provided, and will provide into the future, billions of dollars to

assist in providing the goods and services for the people of the province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to table this in the House of Assembly. The names and addresses of every person will be available to the public. The petition is to urge the government to nationally champion the benefits of oil and gas to the federal government for their support to restart West White Rose and our offshore exploration and development industry.

To address this, Mr. Speaker, this petition has been circulating, driven, I believe, principally by a former mayor of St. John's, Mr. O'Keefe. What I want to say is that the Liberal government here has been pleading with the federal government since March. They haven't been leveraging anything as referred to by the minister, rather they've been pleading. What they got for their efforts of pleading is \$320 million, a smaller amount. Compare that to the funding provided by previous federal governments for Hibernia, the cornerstone financing for Hibernia, that package was worth 10 times as much.

This is a gesture which I called accurately, I believe, hush money. Enough to keep people quiet for a period of time. This is all that the Trudeau government will do for this province when it comes to the offshore and assistance to keep the offshore alive. The difference between the PCs and the Liberals is that we see what a crumbling offshore is doing to the men and women who work, their families, their mental health and the level of poverty that's increasing as we speak, and we would do something about it. What would we do? Instead of taking crumbs from the federal table we would champion the interests of this province in the country.

Failure, Sir, is not an option.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm presenting a petition today on behalf of the citizens of the Town of Sunnyside. The reasons for this petition, Mr. Speaker, are that the Town

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

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

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

Therefore, we petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows: We, the citizens of Sunnyside, urge the government to approve the boundary extension for the Town of Sunnyside.

As for the stability and the reason why the town wants to extend the boundary, Mr. Speaker, one is obviously fiscal stability. It can obtain reasonable and additional revenue from construction activities, less dependency on provincial and federal taxpayers for infrastructure development.

Another one is the preservation of landmarks, which we all know is very important in this day and age. It's the ability to implement appropriate policies and regulations contained years ago with evidence of housing to the Dorset culture, a Paleo-Eskimo culture. Many artefacts have been found dating back 4,800 to 5,700 years ago.

The other thing is the inclusion of the protected watershed. It is very important that they get to protect their domestic water supply. There are historical ties. It includes many of the coves and

inlets in Bull Arm that were historically used by residents of Sunnyside.

Your Honour, they have very many reasons for making this extension, asking for this extension and applying for this extension. It's just that they haven't had any response from government, and we don't really understand the reason behind that. I've gone to a couple of ministers that held the department in the past and put in that request. I've always been told that it's being worked on and it's going through the climate department and everything, but I do ask the department to please get out this feasibility study, have a look at it and do the right thing and extend the boundaries of Sunnyside.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I call Orders of the Day.

Orders of the Day

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Health and Community Services, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Ways and Means to consider certain resolutions and a bill relating to the imposition of taxes on tobacco, Bill 45.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

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

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (P. Parsons): Order, please!

We are now debating the related resolution on Bill 45.

Resolution

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

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

CHAIR: Shall the resolution carry?

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

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

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this resolution this afternoon. This resolution is arising out of *Budget 2020*. For the people who are listening here this afternoon, *Budget 2020* has been supported by every Member of this House of Assembly. We voted on it now a couple of times, Madam Chair, and I think it's important to note the support and anticipated support today of this particular tax change that we're putting forward.

Madam Chair, we will be increasing the tax on tobacco by five cents a cigarette and 10 cents per gram of fine cut tobacco. This change will take effect on January 1, 2021. This is about health outcomes more so than anything.

Smoking, obviously, is a concern; it's a public health issue in this province. We know that nearly one in seven people in this province are smokers. That's about 14.5 per cent of our population. Just by way of comparison, I think the average in Canada is about 11.9 per cent. When you compare the amount of smoking in

this province to the rest of the country, we know we have much to do to encourage those that currently smoke to try and help them curb their addiction.

We have high rates of health care issues, of course, and that can be linked to tobacco use. We have the highest age standardized instance of the rate of cancer in the country at 551 per 100,000 people. The next highest is Ontario. This is data from March 2020 from the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*. Lung cancer, of course, is still the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the country, unfortunately. We also have a very high instance of the rates of heart disease, stroke and diabetes. All diseases that are related or worsened by smoking tobacco.

According to the Alliance for the Control of Tobacco, in their most recent data from 2017, those in the category – I'm going to use a couple of categories so we can see the impact – 15 to 19 years of age, current smokers, 10 per cent; 20 to 24, about 24 per cent; 25 and older, it's about 20.4 per cent; and 45 and over, it's about 19.6 per cent; 13 to 27 per cent of women use tobacco during pregnancy and women under 25 are more likely to report that they smoke regularly during pregnancy. We all know the impacts of that.

This particular tax increase is more as a deterrent to public health reasons. Public health, obviously, has been a very major and important focus of this government. On top of the public health side, there are also the economic reasons for wanting to reduce smoking rates. A healthier population means less strain on our health care system over time and it is both socially and economically beneficial to reduce tobacco use in this province. I think everyone in this House agrees that we should.

I can remember on budget day, I was asked how much I was expecting to get as Minister of Finance from this new tax. I'll use the term that a member of the media used. They said it was a big money-maker. I said it's not about the tax; it's about the deterrent. My response: I would much rather that we got zero revenue from this new tax; I would much prefer – I think most everyone in this province would much prefer – if we got zero revenue from this tax. That's not

likely because we don't live in a perfect world and we know that there are people that have addictions to smoking and that will continue to have addictions to smoking despite best efforts to ensure that we help them not have that challenge.

The goal then, I guess, is not revenue, but if I was seeking more revenue, this wouldn't be where we would look to get the most revenue. It's more that I ask for support of this motion to help with having healthier outcomes for this province.

Madam Chair, I have reams of information and I know Members opposite know this and other people of the province know this. Certainly, the concerns are around the public health and certainly not around this tax. I can tell you that our tax rates that we've just increased do not make us the highest in the country. We do know that places like British Columbia and others are higher. Manitoba, for example, have higher tax, slightly higher; not much higher but slightly higher tax. We really want to make sure that we are – we're trying to ensure that people – it's a deterrent, it's the only way to describe it.

Obviously, we would want more people to focus on the stop-smoking programs. I know in *Budget 2020*, we also allocated, I think it was – if my memory serves – \$1.7 million for stop-smoking campaigns and we want to continue to focus on helping people to stop smoking.

I would say, Madam Chair, that is the aim and goal of everyone in this House and the aim and goal of the stop-smoking programs that we have put in place and that are available through the alliance on tobacco.

Madam Chair, I will also say that following Royal Assent – and this is for my colleague from Labrador – the rebate in the border zone regions would be similar so the regulations will be gazetted around the time that this is impacted so it won't have any disparaging effect for border zones. I know that's important because, of course, Quebec and Labrador share a border and we do recognize that border zones are a challenge. That would just follow the regulations. I point that out to Members of this House that are impacted by that.

I've already said this, but the 2019 Canadian Tobacco and Nicotine Survey showed that about one in seven people in this province are smokers, 14.5 per cent. I encourage them to utilize the programs, the stop-smoking lines, whatever help and assistance that we can give as a government or community can give. We will certainly be there to help them with this serious addiction. I know how troubling it is.

I had a family member once who told me that smoking was one her hardest addictions and something that she would wake in the middle of the night to have a cigarette. That's how strong this was. I can tell you after repeated attempts, she was successful. Now, I think, 20 years' later, she's in much better health and much better shape because she was able to kick that addiction. It's difficult. We recognize how difficult it is, that's why we put millions towards supporting programs to help with stop smoking.

I encourage people to take advantage of those programs. I encourage people to work towards better health. I know the Minister of Health and Community Services would encourage people to do that as well. I think this is very interesting that the people who are smokers are more impacted by things like COVID-19. So we do encourage people to take advantage of those programs.

With that, Madam Chair, I'll stop speaking because I know Members opposite will want to speak to this particular increase in tax. Again, I say, we're not the highest tax in the country, we're pretty middle of the pack, but it is to try and be a deterrent to smoking.

Again, I refer people to stop-smoking lines, to the different programs that we have available through government. We're there to help them with their addiction.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Thank you.

Order, please!

The Chair recognizes the Member for Cape St. Francis.

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: It's a privilege again today to speak and represent the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis and the beautiful people in the District of Cape St. Francis.

I'm going to speak a little tiny bit about Bill 45 first and then, as you know, this is a money bill, so we have the opportunity to speak whatever we please on things that are important to us.

I know that this is important for the health of individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador. I think we've come a very, very long ways when I look at smoking in this province. I know you can't go into people's homes anymore, you never see anybody smoking in their homes, they move outside. I just recently went on a moose hunting trip where we separated the trucks by non-smokers and smokers. It's just the way things are today.

I know that 5 cents doesn't sound like a lot, but for a person that is smoking a pack a day, it's quite a bit of money for them. Still, listen, I'm hoping that it will encourage them to find some way to stop smoking that pack of cigarettes a day. Because not only do cigarettes affect the individual, we've realized in the last number of years how much it affects the individuals around them.

We all see it – when you see children around smoke. It's one of my pet peeves that really, honestly, it gets to me. Honestly, I believe there should be a charge against it, because we are definitely affecting people around us. I don't like smoke, I really don't. I've never smoked a cigarette in my life. I tried it once or twice, I have to say that. I tried when I was in Grade 8, I think it was, but I got sick. I had a couple of drags and it didn't taste so good, so I never tried it after.

People do smoke and it's an addiction. It's no different than alcohol or drugs or anything else. It is an addiction, and anything we could put in place for them to stop on that addiction, then we should be doing it. I think five cents is not a big thing, but for a person that's addicted to

cigarettes it may be a real big thing because of the cost. A pack of cigarettes, I think, costs around \$10 a pack or probably \$12 a pack and a person who has that habit for every day of the week, I could just add up the payment. It could be almost a mortgage payment a month.

I encourage and I applaud the government for the five cents if that's what it takes to help, but there should be something put in place so that the people that are smokers that we can help them to get off and stop smoking. The same thing we would do with people that are alcoholics or into drugs, that we should be able to do it. That's where I think our five cents should be going towards, because at the end of the day that five cents will be savings on our health care systems. As we know, smoking is one of the largest causes of cancer. So if we can stop people from smoking then hopefully it will save us in the long run on our health care costs.

Now, Madam Chair, I wanted to do something today and I didn't know how to do it first when I was going to do it, but I just wanted to do it here in the House of Assembly and I will do something later on on Facebook. I want to let the residents know of the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis, and all my colleagues in this House of Assembly, that I will not be seeking re-election when the election is called in the upcoming election.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: Thank you very much, I appreciate that.

I'm after having four elections, and I really have to say that with every election the numbers increased. So I really have to say that I really appreciate it, but the numbers increased because of the great team I had and the number of volunteers I had over the years. It's something for a lot of you new politicians that are here, it's when you're working on the ground with people and you help people, they'll help you. That's how Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are. We're a very generous group of people and we support each other.

I have to say that over the last four elections, I've learned a lot. The first election I was like a deer in headlights. I was frightened to death

knocking on people's doors, hoping that someone wouldn't slam a door in my face. I had one door slammed in four years, so it wasn't too bad, but I learned a lot.

I learned a lot from people knocking on doors and their concerns and I learned that we as people – people love to talk to you and they love to vent and be able to get their concerns. As politicians, we have to have very thick skin sometimes because sometimes it's not how you fix the problem, but it's listening to the person that has a problem and that they feel great about that.

I really have to thank the people in Cape St. Francis. I have to say, it's a Tory district. It was St. John's East Extern and it's the only district in the province that has stayed PC since Confederation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: In saying that, I have to say, when I first came in here I had some big shoes to fill. I had the former MHA and good friend, and friend of a lot of people in this House, Mr. Jack Byrne, who was a great man.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: Jack was the person who encouraged me to get into politics. He called me up – I called him actually. I helped Jack out with a few campaigns. I called him up one day and told him I was interested in running for a councillor in Flatrock. He said, no, I want you to run for the mayor. I said, Jack, you're nuts. I'm not going for mayor. I'll go councillor. I'm not going at that.

That night when I got home, Jack was after calling my father and telling my father that we need Kev to run for mayor. So between two of them, they got me involved in politics. That was the other fellow – the shoes I had to fill. He had size 15, but I didn't get that far with it. They were two very important individuals that helped me along the way and I looked up to. I really hope that I did my best like they did.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: As politicians, we know we come in here and we do our job but every one of us, and any former politician, realizes we can't do anything unless we have good people around us. I'm very fortunate to have good people around me. I had two previous constituency assistants, Veronica Kirk and Sylvia Whelan, and they did a fantastic job for me.

The last 10 years, I had a lady, Barb Cadigan, who is one of the nicest people and the most caring person I think I've ever met. I'd like to thank her publicly because I know when everybody calls in, they say what a sweet lady she is, and she is a sweet lady.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: Also, we banter back and forth here in the House and we ask questions and you answer questions. Ministers will sit down with a bunch of staff every day. We'll sit down with our staff every day and go through questions and whatever. They'll give us guidance, whether it's a response to Ministerial Statements or anything in this House. The staff that I've been involved with over the years have been fantastic, on both sides. I was in government and in the Opposition, but we have fantastic staff and I want to thank every one of them because only for them we couldn't do the job we're doing also.

I want to mention one person in particular who guided me. She's going to get mad with me, but I don't care. There's one person in our staff that really guided me over the years and I really want to thank her. Her name is Laurie Bonia. She's fantastic and she's done a fantastic job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: To all my colleagues here in the House of Assembly, on the other side of the House here I have most of your cellphone numbers and I'm going to keep them because down the road I don't know what I might need. I know we fell out, some fellas, and some of us had our disagreements, but I respect the job you're doing because I got nothing back than respect from you people. I really appreciate that. That's how we should be operating in this House of Assembly is respect for each other.

To my colleagues, like I said, across the way and the independents and the Third Party, I have nothing but good to say. It's just unbelievable how we've been treated over the years. There's no one over on that side of the House or here that I can't go to and talk. When I leave here, I consider you all my friends and you always will be. That's the way it is.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: It's only 12½ years, but I've gone through six premiers in 12½ years. So get used to it. There's going to be a change every now and then with the premiers.

I'll tell this little story now because most of the people on this side say, Kev, you can get up speak any time you want. You can do it any time. That's because you're here so long, but the first time I ever had to make a speech in the House of Assembly, I was that nervous I couldn't go to sleep the night before. My knees were going back and forth and I was looking at the clock, counting down to know my speech is coming along. Keith Hutchings walked across in front of me and popped out my microphone. I'm not going to tell you what I said to Keith Hutchings, but he put back the microphone very, very quick.

To the new Members and people here in the House of Assembly, this is not an easy job, to get up and do what you do every day. I look at social media sometimes and I say: Why don't you take that job? Go ahead and try it, see what it's like.

For my colleagues here on this side of the House of Assembly, listen, you're doing a fantastic job. It's an absolute honour to be here with this group of people. It's one of the best groups of people I've ever met in my life and it's an absolute privilege to be working with you guys. I'm not giving up today. I'll be here until the next election and I want to continue to work with you people.

I just have to touch on my family. We all have to realize the toll is on us sometimes, but the toll is on our family all the time because we can respond to whatever it is. They look at dad, they look at mom, they look at aunt, they look at the uncle and it's hard sometimes on them. I'm very

fortunate, very fortunate to have a partner in Denise. She's fantastic. She supports me like you wouldn't believe. A greater lady I could never ask for.

Then it comes to my two children, David and Nicole. David and Steph, Steph is David's partner and Nicole's husband is Kevin. They have been with me all the way. A lot of nights we get home and I'll find my supper in the microwave. I really appreciate that because I know they got my back.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: But with politics and everything else, the one thing that they've given me is two little grandchildren Sam and Olivia. I can't wait to retire to pick them up at school or drive them to school or be there everyday with them. That's it for thank yous.

I just want to thank everybody in the House of Assembly.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Order, please!

I also want to extend my congratulations to you, to the Member for the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis. In my time here, I can genuinely call you a gentleman and a friend. I wish you all the best.

I think I speak on behalf of the entire House of Assembly, you will be missed, Sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The hon. the Government House Leader.

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

I was going to take some time this afternoon and talk about my district for 10 minutes, but I'm going to change topics. I'm going to pivot right quick and talk about the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis for a few minutes.

Madam Chair, the Member opposite – and I think I can speak for our entire caucus when I say this – has been nothing more than a gentleman to every single one of us, every single day.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CROCKER: He mentioned the shoes that he had to fill, and I didn't have the opportunity to serve with Mr. Byrne, but I can assure you whoever comes after you, Sir, will have equally as large shoes to fill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CROCKER: I spent about a year in Opposition and then I was lucky enough to get re-elected and come to this side of the House. I got appointed minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, at the time, and I quickly learned that the Member for Cape St. Francis had a very, very, very big passion for fisheries. He was my first critic. I can remember coming in here for my first Question Period as a minister – pretty freaking nervous. I don't think he asked me a question for the first few days, but it wasn't very long and he started asking me questions.

I'm going to tell a little secret, now, first, because he was new to being a critic too, and I think being a critic is something that brings a skill with it as well. He, very early on, used to give me a little signal – two. That meant he had two questions for me. Now, he wouldn't tell me what they were, but he'd give me a little heads up early on that he had two questions for me. For a nervous new minister, I don't know if that was good or bad, because you knew there were questions coming that day.

He's always a great guy to have a chat about fishing or hunting. A few weeks ago, as we were planning the fall calendar, as the House Leader opposite would attest, there were certain things that he wanted us to make sure we were able to maintain in that calendar. One of them was his tradition of spending some time each fall, I think, in –

AN HON. MEMBER: Millertown.

MR. CROCKER: – Millertown moose hunting. He claims that they were successful this year,

but I have seen no proof; no, haven't seen any proof that they were successful. He tells me that fish puddings are great; haven't seen any proof of that either.

Madam Chair, again, I could probably go on for quite some time, but the references the Member made this afternoon to his family and his partner, Denise – she must be made of gold. He's always had that level approach to politics, I think, and his family. I know if former Premier Ball were here this afternoon, I know they had a great relationship about comparing pictures of grandchildren. I know that's something that they did regularly.

I'll reserve some time to talk about my district probably later on this afternoon in another debate, but I just want to wish the Member opposite all the best in his future. Happy fishing, happy hunting. I'm sure we haven't heard the last of you.

I don't know if you were mayor, I know you said you ran for council. You were mayor? Maybe you'll be mayor again, we don't know, but I'm sure your contribution to your community will continue, Sir. It's been an honour and privilege to be a Member to actually serve with you, Sir.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for the beautiful District of Conception Bay East - Bell Island.

MR. BRAZIL: Thank you, Madam Chair.

It's an honour again to speak in the House. I haven't spoken in the last week, since we've come back from our break because we've had so many good representatives here speak on topics that are near and dear to them, and issues that are relevant to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I'm quickly going to talk about Bill 45 around the tobacco tax for two reasons. One is to talk about the need for us to be leaders and probably have to do some things that may not be popular with all the electorate to ensure they're as safe as

possible. While we do that, we also have to understand that people, unfortunately, have vices in their life that they need to be able to get them through stressful times and to deal with certain things in their environment.

While I'm very cognizant of the fact that smoking has an impact on people's health in a negative point of view, I do realize, for certain reasons, smoking is also a needed way of coping with certain situations. So to replace the need for tobacco, we need to find other support mechanisms.

I give credit, over the last decade or so all administrations have been very diligent in trying to find programs and services from counselling to the cessation programs, to ensure that we can get people to ween themselves off, but to do it without it being a stressful situation for them or a hindrance to their own health, mentally and physically, as they moved off.

Sometimes you have to make decisions on the best move forward and sometimes deterrents are the best thing you can do. Probably one of the best deterrents in the world is money. If you don't have it, you have to live without it. If you do have it, you want to keep it for the things that you want. The priorities normally in people's lives are a roof over their head, taking care of their families and ensuring that they can live as healthy as possible.

While nobody wants or engages or sets out to overtax people, sometimes you have to tax things for the betterment of people. In this case, I wholeheartedly support what's going here. I do understand people who may be listening to this who are smokers do have a challenge around what impact this may have on them, but I would hope that they would see the benefit around other supports and services that could help them get away, wean themselves off that so that they're healthier. More importantly, or just as importantly, I should say, from a financial point of view, this could be monies used for something else that improves their physical or mental health or their social well-being as part of it

This is not meant as a tax grab. Every time we get into a budget we always go – it used to always be alcohol and tobacco always went up

because it was a tax revenue thing. I'm convinced, and I know because of the conversations that we've had here and some of my previous work experience, this is about trying to better give people an opportunity to make decisions around a healthier lifestyle and to support that.

I would hope if there are additional monies generated that goes into programs to help people move to the next level of getting themselves off the need for tobacco or any other type of addiction that they may have as part of that. We support that.

I do understand I will get calls and emails from constituents who are going to attack the Liberal administration for this tax, but it's probably one of the few times that I will defend your administration on a policy that is a tax increase, because I do think if we do this right and we invest the monies in the right programs to support people, at the end of the day, we'll have healthier citizens. We'll have less of a burden on our health care system and, more importantly, people will live longer lives. That's what I think is more important in this House of Assembly.

Also, Madam Chair, I want to talk about my colleague from the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis as he so eloquently and honestly has said for the last 12 years. I've had the privilege of sitting in this House for 10 years with him and I do say it has been an honour.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: He talked about the jitters, and I don't care what background you come from, when you go into politics, the day you walk into a caucus room, no matter what caucus it is, you're intimidated because there are people in there that you've known through the media, that you know from their reputations who have made decisions that effected your life, hopefully, all positively, but have done things that gives them some acknowledgement, so you're in awe when you walk in.

Every now and then if you walk into a caucus room or in any environment, having a stable environment or someone who reaches out to you to alleviate that stress, it's the best thing you could ever have.

I got to give credit to my colleague. When I first walked in and got elected 10 years ago, he was the first one that came over to me. I remember he said – Kevin may not remember this – but we were adversaries, I'll say, on the ice, but maybe not as much on the ice because he played on the Avalon East league, I played some games on the Avalon West, but when we had the interlocking, whenever he come to Bell Island to play, I guarantee you when he was out on his shift, I was sitting on the bench. I made sure we didn't cross paths on that ice. That was one person I didn't want to go into a corner with. But I will tell you, I had no problems going in any other corner when it came to fighting for the rights of people or fighting for what needed to be done in Newfoundland and Labrador, having that person by my side.

He came over to me, and this is how it was, he said: Brazil, me and you got a similar kinship coming in here. He said it was about the two of us coming from a sports background. That made my stress levels drop right down. Since then, we've been good friends, working colleagues, we've socialized in a multitude of different environments and everything.

I've always taken, even as I learned more skill sets in here, to listen to what Kevin would say because it's based on sincerity, it's based on compassion, it's based on not being overly emotional, but it's totally based on finding a way to do the right things. That's a rarity in any form of politician or anything.

We all have certain qualities and characteristics, very few have all of those because, for whatever reason, we go in different directions, but he's one of the few that, I got to say, has all those characteristics. Ones that I would like to be able say I have all of those, but I know I have my flaws and I don't have all of them. He's the one, from my perspective, who set the bar; when I would sit in a caucus room, I knew, at the end of the day, if I could aspire and do and think and go home with the same mindset that Kevin Parsons has, I know I wake up every morning having no problems looking into the mirror. He helped me get to that point, Madam Speaker.

I would also say that the last few years, particularly in Opposition – while you never want to be in Opposition, for those that are over

there and new in government, you don't aspire to be in Opposition for a number of reasons. One, because you feel you can do more good in government, you're at the helm of making decisions. But in Opposition, you're always thinking about what it is that we need to do, when is it we can be complimentary, when is it we have to challenge government on policies and this type of thing?

Kevin was always the one to say: If it's a good program, if it's a good policy, if it's a good decision, don't criticize it, acknowledge that it should be acknowledged for what it is, something that's going to help people. I would grapple with that because there were some other people you would watch in different caucuses who wouldn't – it didn't make any difference if it was good, bad or indifferent, they were going to go for the adversarial approach. So he got me to think, do you know what? You come in here honourable; you want to leave honourable.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BRAZIL: To do that, you have to stand for conviction and you have to stand for the right things. He's been the epitome of that. He's been the person who has been strong and stellar. The one thing you don't want to see in Kevin Parsons is to see him mad. I've seen him mad once and it's not the side you want to be on. Even when he's mad, he's very articulate; he's very sincere, but he will make sure he gets his point across. He only gets upset when there's something he thinks is an injustice being done. I saw that as part of his character.

Madam Chair, I would like to end by saying two quick things: To my friend and colleague, thank you. It's been a pleasure. The nights at 3:30 in the morning when we're here trying to figure out are there any wings in St. John's that we could get when we were doing our filibusters – would be funny, as you're going 10 minutes in and out – but those were enjoyable days. When you can laugh when you're exhausted, when you can get emotional and cry because there are certain things that you are so passionate towards what you feel that it has an impact on you emotionally.

I want to say – and I would think everybody in this House would agree with me and I know

people who have served with Kevin in the past will agree – we are all better people for knowing Kevin Parsons.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

MS. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

The discussion and debate in the House around Bill 45 has certainly taken a little bit of a turn today. I would be remiss, I guess, as one of the folks who've been around for a longer time in this House if I didn't weigh in and say a couple of words as well.

I say it all the time: There's something about endings that cause us to go back and reflect on beginnings. As I've listened to the last two or three speakers, I, too, have gone back. My days in 2013 and '14 when we were a small Opposition, we would come in each day and look at this large number of people in government. No matter what party you're a part of, we all bring different personalities, different strengths. There are some, perhaps, when we walk out of the House that truthfully you don't stay connected with, but then there are some that you think about them and they certainly walk out with their integrity.

I can think about a conversation sitting beside that wall one evening that I had with Kevin O'Brien. It was his last day. I believe it was between 11 and 12 years that he served. I said: Well, Kevin, you've always been good to me. He was in Municipal Affairs and with 18 communities I had lots of needs. He said: When I walk down those steps today at 5:30, I'm going to hold my head high. I had a great relationship with Kevin O'Brien; I had a great relationship with Clyde Jackman and with Keith Hutchings as an Opposition MHA. There were a number of them that were very good to me.

Like the Member for Cape St. Francis that we're talking about today, just in my short time, seven years, we are on the fifth Premier. The only thing truly, as I say all the time, constant around here has been change. During that time, the

Member for Cape St. Francis – and it's kind of nice, I think, that he's sitting here and he's hearing these things today, because far too often we go to a service for someone and there are all kinds of nice things said about them that they don't hear. I'm a big believer that if we feel a certain way about someone – life is very uncertain – we should tell them today. He's been very, very respectful to me. I'm going to miss the little videos of his grandchildren. Just big enough to toddle and going home when they surprise him with pumpkins and Halloween things already set up.

I recently read a quote somewhere that said: Be the kind of person that makes other people want to up their game. I believe that the Member for Cape St. Francis has sort of shown many of us here in the House how it is. We all have a role to play, Opposition has a role to keep holding government to account, but at the end of the day we come in here and we are wives, husbands, sons and daughters. As the former Speaker that I served with said to me: You need to be able to go home, look in the mirror and live with that person at the end of it. I think that's what the Member for Cape St. Francis has shown all of us.

I wish him many healthy years into his retirement and many years with his grandchildren. The Government House Leader talked about him having secrets. Well, I'll tell you, he's pretty smart because he visited my District of Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair and when he came back he said: I knew what I had to do. When I showed up he said: I knew you had strong support so I told everyone you were a very good friend of mine. He said: I had great treatment the whole while I was there. I do wish him very well.

I'd be remiss, Madam Chair, if I didn't speak for a moment to Bill 45. Smoking is an absolute terrible addiction, as we've heard the Deputy Premier and the Finance Minister share. We all know people that have been impacted by smoking. It's important as a government that not only we would increase a tax on tobacco as a deterrent with a desire that more people would stop smoking, but it's absolutely critical that we have supports in place to help them in that process. Sometimes people are trying to stay away from sweets or desserts or eating late at

night because we want to live healthier. We know how hard and difficult that is. But I've heard many people say with all of the chemicals that are in cigarettes it's so much harder.

I myself don't know. I know my mom, who's now a retired nurse – I had difficulty when I was younger trying to accept the picture of how a nurse could sit out on the steps on a beautiful sunny day and have a cigarette, but it was an addiction she had. She's been quit for a long, long time. She tells me she's a walker and a very healthy person now. She tells me sometimes even when she's walking she'll pass by someone sitting on a park bench having a smoke and all these years later she'll stop and she'll inhale; it smells good to her. I don't get that. I'm making the point that it's a terrible addiction.

That's why myself and when I was in Children, Seniors and Social Development for three years – we are supporting a number of groups. We have the Smokers' Helpline. The Minister of Health and myself had the opportunity to attend an announcement at the Fluvarium where we are continuing to support groups like the Alliance for the Control of Tobacco that are doing some really good work, not just around helping people to stop smoking but, more importantly, to prevent them from starting.

We have so many of our wonderful, bright, healthy young people – our future – that are coming up. It only takes that one time out a little bit bored, someone offers you a cigarette and you take and you end up on a wrong road, as my grandmother would often warn me about when she was raising me. It's important that we have those supports in place.

Also, important that in Labrador – and the Finance Minister has already articulated it very well and I won't go into the detail – when you represent a district like I do that starts at the Quebec border, L'Anse au Clair, my first community heading north, if we don't put mechanisms in place that support those businesses on the border, then we know that the business is going to go into another province. I appreciate the lens in this government that's always put on that in supporting the businesses, whether it is in L'Anse au Clair or it's in Labrador City.

I do support Bill 45; I understand why we're doing it, Madam Chair. I'm also pleased that as a government we're going to continue to have supports in place to help people give up that terrible addiction so that at the end of the day, as my colleague in Health says, we will be talking more about people in terms of their wellness, as opposed to their illness.

Thank you for the opportunity, Madam Chair, to speak for a few moments to the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I think when I spoke previously I mentioned the whole notion of chewing tobacco. It's interesting, even in my family I do remember my parents at one time smoking. I spoke to my mother about it after. I said: I vaguely remember you smoking at one time. Sure enough she did. When my father would come home from work, they might have a cigarette. I was very young, obviously, but it stuck in my memory because they smoked and then they didn't.

It's interesting, you look at the amount of money that goes into smoking-cessation products, yet I think statistics show that most people give up the habit of smoking cold turkey. They quit it cold turkey. They put it down and that's it. Others, I can tell you it's in social events only. I never took up the habit. Some of my siblings did, but for the most part none of us really in the family smoke.

As a teacher, I saw it first-hand. As I said, most of the supervision that would take place during recess or lunchtime, especially in junior high and high school, was around making sure that they weren't smoking in the doorways and so on and so forth. You could drive them to the end of the school property and that's where they would go. Then, there's a constant battle after that and, yeah, sometimes smoking in the bathroom as well and so on and so forth.

You pick up that habit at a young age. It can be a very addictive habit, especially if indeed the person has mental health issues – anxiety, for

example. Sometimes smoking then becomes that way to deal with that anxiety, to provide that calm. You're hooked into a habit then that will have repercussions, certainly with your lungs and other organs within your body and your overall length of life and quality of life.

I remember in junior high I was up the shore at the time and we got talking about a lot of the kids who were smoking. How much do you smoke? Some kids smoked a pack a week; others, probably up to a pack a day, Sir. We started crunching the numbers of how much money you're spending then in the run of a day, a week, a month, a year. That's when it became relevant or concrete to them in terms of the financial impact: What else could you do with the money that you spent on cigarettes, if you weren't smoking? For a lot of them, I do remember, that's one thing that did stick with them years down the road because there is a financial cost that goes with it.

I don't always look upon taxes as a grab, as a money grab. I think in many ways when I look at taxes, it's the privilege I pay – it's what I pay to have the privilege of living in this country, to live in this province, in this city because I want roads. I want hospitals. I want schools. I want safety nets that make sure that people don't go hungry.

I have family down in the States where you have to have your own personal insurance plan to get into a hospital. Maybe the taxes aren't high, and I've heard people who've visited the States say how cheap you can get things there. In the end, here's how I would look at it. If you're paying in taxes to put services in place or you're paying in insurance premiums to provide those services, you're still paying, it's still coming out of your pocket.

In the end, what I'm looking for is: How are we using those services? When we're looking at increasing the revenue on tobacco and cigarettes, we're putting a tax on the product that has severe negative implications for the health of the person smoking and for society, at large.

I do remember at one time, and I'm sure many here can remember, when I first starting teaching people smoked on staff during the lunch period. If you went downtown, you did

come home smelling something like a perverted kipper, in many ways, you could peel the smoke off; you were inhaling it anyway.

That's one that will go down in *Hansard*: perverted kipper.

AN HON. MEMBER: Take it back.

MR. J. DINN: No, I'm not taking it back. It's mine and I own it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. J. DINN: It's interesting how even on an airplane – I like that you could smoke on an airplane and then it came to a point you had a smoking section. You could be one seat behind the smoking section. I don't know what the magical thing was, but, obviously, smoke didn't go past seat 30 or anywhere else. We know it didn't make a row of beans.

I remember one school where we set up a booth for teachers on staff who smoked. There was a glass panel there, which when I looked back on it, it was like they were in their own little aquarium, in keeping with the fish analogies here.

What started to happen after a while, you could sort of see the public awareness campaign came to the point where smoking had these negative health effects, that it was all right not to be smoking. It came to the point where to get on a plane and not see a cigarette lit up is normal.

I don't know if you remember when we were talking about banning smoking in all indoor places, public spaces that the sense was that bars and restaurants were going to suffer greatly for it. I don't think so. That was the main argument.

I think in many ways, if we're looking taking this money and if this is going to go into smoking cessation ads, if it's going to go into treatment and so on and so forth and it's going to benefit the general well-being of our province, of our people, then that's great, let's do that. I think that's money well collected and money well spent because the companies are still going to make money.

I did want to leave this to the last two minutes because I'm waiting for my colleague for the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis and the beautiful MHA for Cape St. Francis, because my first dealing with the Member was my first summer when we had a conference over in Niagara Falls. That's when I really got to know this gentleman.

What I liked about it – in some ways it's often said: Jim, it must be interesting around the dinner table with you on one end and Paul on the other end. I said: Do you know what? We have a lot of stuff in common. We don't talk politics. It's family. We're probably closer aligned in areas than we think.

I will say the same for the Member here in that we actually spent a lot of the time hanging around that time. I know my wife and his partner hit it off pretty well because they had the same great interest in wine –

MR. K. PARSONS: And shopping.

MR. J. DINN: – and shopping, and we had the car so it was fantastic.

One of the things I enjoyed most about the NLTA and the Canadian Teachers' Federation and Education International was the sense of camaraderie, the collegiality that you would see there. Regardless of differences, you can still get along with each other on a personal basis.

I know this is theatre here, in many ways, but I can tell you that behind the scenes we come, we have parents, we have children, we have grandchildren, we have partners, we have neighbours, we have friends in our lives and I would say, regardless of our political stripe, we're coming at this with an interest to help people. We have a different lens at which we look, but at the same time what motivates us is people.

I will say this about the Member for Cape St. Francis, the people of his district, people in general, they are his motivation.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Minister of Finance.

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

I wanted to add to the chorus. I consider the Member for Cape St. Francis a friend. I had seven years, I believe, I lived in Torbay and I knew of the gentleman then. We share a lot of common friends, a lot of common relatives, I would say, and I know he knew my father-in-law, so we hold a special bond in that sense.

Madam Chair, I've always found the Member for Cape St. Francis as not just a gentleman, but a man with great integrity and great strength. I know that there is an expression or someone once said that "Integrity is the most valuable and respected quality of leadership. Always keep your word." My dad always said that as well, and I hope I can live up to those ideals and I know that the Member for Cape St. Francis always does.

I wanted to join the chorus of congratulations to the Member for Cape St. Francis to thank him for his incredible and valuable representation of the people of Cape St. Francis. I know he's truly loved in that area of the province and, indeed, all over this province.

I hope that you remain in contact and in connection with your friends here in the House of Assembly. You've made a difference, Sir. I hope all of us can make the same proud mark on the people of Newfoundland and Labrador that the Member for Cape St. Francis has done.

Thank you for being here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS. COADY: Now, Members of this House would be surprised, I think, based on how much I've been speaking to this budget, but I have not had the opportunity to speak to my district. So I would like to have a few moments this afternoon during this debate to talk a little bit about, and I won't steal – the Member for Cape St. Francis always calls it the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis. It's his but I will say the hard-working, industrious and capable District of St. John's West. I thank the people of St. John's West for

their ongoing support and friendship. I have a lot of friends in the area, a lot of people who mean a great deal to me. It is a place that, I think, brings a lot to the City of St. John's.

For those who don't know it has a relatively small footprint. It goes from Kenmount Road to Topsail Road, all on the west side of the Crosstown Arterial. There are incredible people who live in that district and contribute an awful lot to our communities. People like nurses, teachers, professional civil servants, lawyers and doctors – people of all walks of life who've gathered together in communities.

I've been at every single door multiple times, Madam Chair, as we all have done in our districts. I've had the opportunity to meet all of the members of my district in some way, shape or form over the course of the last five years and indeed when I was a Member of Parliament representing the same area. As I said earlier, they are industrious people. They work very hard. I think this budget really does resonate with the people of my district because it is a stable budget in very unstable times.

We all know that we are working our way through a pandemic. I want to thank the great people of St. John's West and indeed all the people of the province who have listened intently to Dr. Haggie, the Minister of Health, as well as Dr. Janice Fitzgerald, our chief medical officer, and really made sure that we protect one another from COVID. I appreciate people wearing their masks; I appreciate people keeping their social distance. I appreciate people keeping their hands sanitized and clean because it has made a tremendous difference in our community.

I know we're coming into the Christmas period now; I'm quite excited about the possibility of seeing people during Christmas, of being with friends and family. If we keep each other safe, hopefully we'll be able to celebrate Christmas and be able to be in each other's company.

I did note yesterday that a number of countries – Germany and France, I believe – went back into lockdown and went back into strict protocols because, of course, the increasing number of cases around COVID. I wanted to recognize the people of my district, as well as the people of the

province, and thank them for their efforts. I, again, want to recognize the Minister of Health, the Premier – both the current Premier as well as the former premier – as well as the chief medical officer. I thank them for their leadership and guidance and thank them for the efforts that they have made, the time that they have spent and the deliberations they have made. I'm so proud of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I'm also pleased, Madam Chair, that we are moving our way through the budget. We've already had two budget votes and today we are debating the tobacco tax increases. Nobody likes increasing taxes, but I think everybody in this House, and hopefully everyone in the province, understand that this is important. It's important for health reasons; it's important that we ensure that we discourage people from smoking and put monies, of course, towards prevention of and reducing tobacco usage as well vaping usage.

We are discussing that bill this afternoon here in the House. I made a small error when I spoke earlier. I said it will be implemented on January 1. In the budget, of course, it was October 1. I guess I'm thinking forward but it was implemented October 1. If this passes today, that will bring the ability to recognize that tax. I did say earlier, of course, that this does not impact border communities. We will find a path – we have a path forward to ensuring that border communities remain with a rebate in a similar fashion as they do today.

I wanted just to take a few moments this afternoon again to talk a little bit about my district. A lot of the supports in the budget are for my district, or for all our districts: supports for families, like the \$25-a-day child care; and supports for jobs and the economy, like the COVID small business fund. I know a number of small businesses in my community have already made application to that program. It's a very simplified program and portal through the Department of Industry, Energy and Technology, Madam Chair. They are able to put in their application and they'll get their rebate. They will get their stipend very, very quickly and very, very easily. It's great to have that program available.

There's also funding, of course, and supports for health care. I just spoke a little bit about

COVID. There are monies available in this budget to ensure that we can do further testing, make sure that we have the personal protective equipment that we need, make sure that we have a safe restart to schools, which I'm thankful to the Minister of Education for ensuring that. So far I think the schools have done a marvellous job, the teachers have done a marvellous job and the administrators, of ensuring that children can get their educations and do so in a safe manner.

Madam Chair, I will rest on my comments, but thank again the great team at the Department of Finance for all the work that they've done in this budget. I thank them for a very stable budget in very unstable times. I again thank the people of this province for their efforts around COVID. I especially want to thank the good people of the great District of St. John's West for electing me, for giving me the opportunity to represent them, but also giving me the opportunity to present this budget today. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm going to take a few minutes now to speak to this bill, which I will be supporting, as will everybody else in the House of Assembly I'm sure. Before I do, though, I guess as the – I believe I went through it one time. I believe in terms of seniority in the House of Assembly – not necessarily by age but seniority in the House of Assembly – I'm number five on the list. So I've been around a while and –

AN HON. MEMBER: You had hair.

MR. LANE: What's that? I had hair? I had a little bit of hair when I got here. What I had was brown at that time, not grey.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

CHAIR: Order, please!

MR. LANE: I say to my colleague to the right, he'll be thrilled to know I'm not going

anywhere. I'll say that right off the bat: I'm not going anywhere. Pending, of course, the decision of the people of Mount Pearl - Southlands at some point in time, but I'm feeling pretty good about that one too.

As someone who's been here for a fair amount of time now, I've gotten to know a lot of Members in this House of Assembly. There have been a lot of people come and gone. Some people are here for a short time and there are some people who've been here for a very long time.

I would suggest that the Member for Cape St. Francis could definitely be here, I'm going to say, as long as he wanted to be here. He's obviously making this decision on his own terms, when he feels it's best for him and for his family but I really believe that he would have absolutely no problem in the next election and the next election after that. I really do.

I certainly want to take the opportunity to congratulate him on the last number of years in serving the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and, in particular, the people of his district. I didn't know his father, but I did know Jack Byrne. Jack was a great man so that district has had solid representation for a very long time, including this gentleman over here, the current MHA.

For a period of time we served in caucus together. I always found him to be a good guy, I still do. There's no doubt there was a period in time when I left, he was a bit mad at me, I understand that. They all were, I don't blame them. Nobody forced me out, I made my decision. As they say: I made my bed, I had to lie in it and I've lived by that decision; really no different than what happened in 2015, some of the people over there were mad at me. That's fair enough.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. LANE: Except for the Member for Bay of Islands. No, he was mad at me, too.

Do you know what? At the end of the day, that's politics. It's the life that we choose. We all understand how it works. We all have to do what we feel is best for us and for our district at the

time. That's what I've always tried to do and I know that's what the Member for Cape St. Francis always does.

Similar to what the Member for Conception Bay East - Bell Island said, I always enjoy – and I mean this sincerely – listening to the Member for Cape St. Francis when he speaks. I don't mean this in any disrespect to any other Members, I really don't, but there's just something that comes across to me, and I'm sure, obviously, to his constituents, comes across as always being totally genuine. It never comes across as somebody who's using key messages and speaking notes and all that kind of stuff.

Everyone here knows what I mean when I say that. You can tell that every word he says, he means. You can tell that every word he says, he means. Whether it's good, bad, different – that doesn't mean I always agree with everything he always says, and that's the way it goes, or anybody else in this House. I'm sure there are lots of people would say they don't agree with a lot of the stuff I say and that's fair enough. That's democracy. That's what it's all about.

I have to say, and give the man credit, when he speaks, I really believe that he means every word that he says. I really do believe that when he talks about the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis and he talks about his constituents, he really believes that.

There are some people who go through here – and I would say that sometimes people who last the longest, the people who have the most longevity in this House of Assembly, are what people would refer to as good constituency people. That's the bottom line, that's the secret.

It doesn't matter what party you're with or if you're with a party or you're not, it doesn't matter; the bottom line is the people who have the most success in this House of Assembly have always been known as good constituency people. Whether or not you have a portfolio as a minister or this or that or anything means nothing. It means nothing to the people in your district. What matters to the people in your district is that when they phone your office, they get a return phone call. When they come to you

with an issue, you do your very best to solve that issue for them.

Can you solve everybody's issues? Absolutely not. It's absolutely impossible. There are some people who come to you with stuff that's unrealistic. There are some people who come at you with stuff that you really feel bad for them and you wish there was something you could do, but the rules are what the rules are, the legislation is what it is.

You can come, bring it up here in this House of Assembly and say the rules should be changed, but you just don't have the ability to change it. I always felt and feel that when it came to those types of issues, he obviously is a person who was there for his constituents.

I know when I hear him talking about all the things going on in his district and the seniors and stuff like that, it's because he's there. He's a guy who's on the ground with the seniors at all of the functions in his district and mingling with the people, as he should be.

I don't want to give the man a swollen head or nothing here now.

MR. K. PARSONS: Go ahead.

MR. LANE: He said go ahead, but it is true. I try to call it as I see it and that's how I see it.

I think that the District of Cape St. Francis has been served well for a very long time from his father, from what I understand by reputation, never knew the man; certainly from Jack Byrne who I did know and had the utmost respect for. I can say that the people of Cape St. Francis were served very well by Kevin Parsons and I have no problem saying that to anybody.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: Just out of curiosity, I'll also throw it in there that he also solved a little bit of a mystery to me because on Facebook, one of my Facebook friends is Chris Andrews. He got his hair cut and a shave recently and he posted on Facebook. Who knows, that might be the reason why. Maybe he knew something then that we didn't know.

Anyway, I do, Kevin, want to wish you – I don't care about the rules on the name – I do want to wish you well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: One of the things that we all have to remember here is that we're all Members, if you will, we're a special group. This is a very special fraternity. Just think about it. There are only 40 people at any given time that are elected to have the honour to sit in this House of Assembly, just 40. If you look at how time goes on and there are people who've been here and who've since passed on, the number is not large in this province. We all know that all politicians, sometimes we get a bad rep; sometimes we deserve it. No doubt there are times we deserve it, but we all get a bad rep.

I've often said sometimes when we're here tearing strips off each other and so on, I think we have to remember the fact that we are all alike. We were all elected to do the same kind of work for the people in our district. We all have families. We all know what it's like to face controversy. That's why any time anyone has ever been in this House and has faced any controversy in the media or in the House or wherever, I've never gone on to try to jump on that because I just think it's wrong because it could be me tomorrow. It was me. I've been the centre of controversy. You're here long enough, there are going to be a number of other people that are going to be the centre of controversy.

We have to support our district, but we also have to try to support each other and remember that we're all here together. We're all here to do the best we can for the people of this province.

I'll leave it at that, Madam Chair. Once again, I wish the Member all the very best with his family and those grandkids.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the Member for Exploits.

MR. FORSEY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'll start off on Bill 45, but it seems like everybody is taking a chance to get up on Bill 45 and moves on to something else, of course, and it's something very important.

Anyway, Bill 45, Madam Chair, the increased tax on cigarettes, it's been a known fact that cigarettes are certainly a health hazard. It causes a lot of diseases, heart attacks and whatnot. Cigarettes now are probably expensive enough.

I know in my district, talking on Saturdays or whatnot, when you go to somebody's shed they say: B'y, I wish I could give this up. So probably this might be that extra boost now for them to give it up. Maybe in the process, as I've heard mentioned, there should be some help there for them, aid there for them to probably ease a little bit better, I don't know.

I heard the Member for St. John's Centre say that everybody quit cold turkey. I've heard that before as well and then probably others say it's not that easy. Maybe some people do need help. Maybe some people can quit cold turkey and I'm sure they will. Whatever reasons, whichever way they're going to do it. Probably now with the cigarettes going up, that amounts to probably \$6. That would give them an extra boost to do that.

Not only that, the younger people of course learn from parents. They learn from other people in society. When they see their parents are not smoking, when they see their grandparents not smoking, other people around them not smoking, it gives them the incentive then – they don't even know anything about it probably – to keep away from the smoking. That way they don't have to put up with that addiction for the rest of their lives as well. This tax is a hard tax but if that can help our health in the long run it's probably a good thing. It can get people away from smoking and alleviate some of the pressures on our health care system as well.

Madam Chair, not only that. I wanted to take a few minutes just to mention the Member for Cape St. Francis. I'm going to tell you from my point of view I only got here probably 18 months ago, but it's been certainly an honour and a privilege to work beside the Member for Cape St. Francis.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FORSEY: First when I came in and you're in the caucus room and you're sitting around, you didn't know this one, didn't know that one. Now, in the meantime, I do feel that I do know the Member for Cape St. Francis because I heard a lot of stories about him.

As you know, there was another fellow from Exploits who sat in the same chair. It was my brother actually. When he came home we'd never talk about politics, he was always talking about things he did while he was down with the Member for Cape St. Francis for a Saturday night or a weekend. That's all I ever heard about that part, so I do feel I know him. I'm sure he sends along his best wishes as well to the Member for Cape St. Francis.

Again, like I say, it was an honour. When you're sitting in the caucus room or sitting in the House of Assembly – and I've seen it – the Member can set the tone. He really can. When he's in that caucus room, when he speaks everybody listens. Everybody knows that what he says he means it. He's dissected it. He'll give you an answer that's proper. He's not just fooling around with you; he's not just leading you astray. He's giving you a proper answer to each one of us individually or as a caucus.

I've also seen him set the tone in this House of Assembly. I saw it a couple of times actually. You'll hear a lot of jibber jabbering sometimes and some heckling and that kind of stuff when somebody is speaking, but when the Member for Cape St. Francis gets up to speak this House goes quiet. It really does. Everybody is listening to him and everybody knows that what he's saying he means. He's bringing everything for the province, for his district that's supposed to be and he's respected by every individual in this House of Assembly.

I've only been here 18 months. If I can only get to be half –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. FORSEY: It's not like me. I don't have that, Madam Chair. I'm going to be a while. Again, he does control his way of speaking from the House.

It is an honour, Madam Chair, to get here just to acknowledge him, to sit beside him and to have the opportunity to be a part. As I started, if I get to stay for a while in this House of Assembly, if I could only be half the politician that the Member for Cape St. Francis is, I'll be an excellent politician I guarantee you that. Other than that, Madam Chair, I'll give someone else a chance to talk about Bill 45 and other things.

Thank you, Madam Chair, and I'll let it go at that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for Ferryland.

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

I just want to touch on Bill 45 first – I guess a few smoking stories and stuff like that, but I'd certainly like to touch on that first. When I was young – I'm going to say 15 or 16 – we rolled cigarettes for our dad. He smoked three or four packs of cigarettes a day. Those days are gone I'm sure, but we did that when we were young. Looking back at it, it was unbelievable that we did it.

When I started to, I'm going to say, court my wife now – when we first started going out she used to smoke cigarettes. She smoked two packs a day. When I'd go to hockey or wherever we'd go she'd say: When you go in the store can you pick up a pack of cigarettes? I said: No, I don't smoke them; I'm not buying them. That's the way I was with smoking and that's the way I grew up.

She decided to quit. I didn't force her to stop. I just didn't buy them and I won't buy them to this day, no matter where we go or what we do. If we go on a hockey trip or a golf trip and somebody says pick me up a pack of smokes, I say, no, I'm not picking up smokes. That's one thing I don't do.

Putting a tax on it – there's no doubt about it, when somebody is smoking it always seems like it's against the person that's smoking and they always feel that way. I'm sure that when we look at it, no matter what tax you put on it, when

these people have an addiction, if you put that \$10 a pack more, these people are still going to have it and they still want it. That's the other side of it. We should look at that and get them some help along the way and hopefully some program of some sort that can get these people away from that habit.

I'll tell another story on smoking. I worked at a car dealership and when I started in there as a salesperson, every salesperson had their own office and every salesperson had their own ashtray in their office at the time. When customers come in, they sit down and have a cigarette. So you're talking about smoke in a room and smoke in a building, people would just sit down and smoke cigarettes. That was the way it was. It's certainly changed there's no doubt.

When they stand out in a show room – and we often did it when you're not busy and it's a snowy day. At that time they'd stand out there and tip their ashes down in the back of a truck. That was just the way it was. People smoked and especially salespeople. When they're not always busy in certain types of weather and certain days they would leave. Whenever this new rule came in that you couldn't smoke in a building, these people would leave and go out in the drifting rain and a blinding snowstorm outside to smoke a cigarette.

It is an addiction. So we just have to look at that and, hopefully, garner some support from that as well, to take care of these people as best we can. You can't just drop this habit overnight. Like I said, people just got to have it, no matter what the price is, they're going to get it and that's the way it is.

I'm not going to take too much time either here this evening, just to give everybody else here a chance. I'll speak on the Member for the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis. We do back a long ways. Of course, when I get to talking about stuff, sometimes I get a little emotional and that's just the way it is, I can't help it. It's a family trait, I'm going to say, you see me over here wiping tears from my eyes every time somebody brings up a kid or someone sick. Sometimes I'm embarrassed about it but I can't help it, that's the way I am. That's the way it is. I call it a bad trait. Every time I go somewhere else somebody loves it but

I don't like it, but that's the way it is. Especially when you bring up kids.

We go back a nice ways. I'm going to say I played hockey against him, and God knows we hated each other when we played hockey, I can tell you, Flatrock and Southern Shore was a big rivalry. The only thing that I hoped is that I was quick enough that he couldn't catch me. We had some good battles I have to say and it went on for a good while. I'm going to say seven or eight years for sure.

When you look at other teams – I've played sports a long while and you respect the other team. Yes, we hated them when we played them, not him personally, but we hated the other team. If you're going to play someone and try to win, you hated them and that's just the way it was, you're trying to win.

When I finished hockey and looked back at it and went to work where I was at Hickman Motors, at the time, I said: B'y, you should meet some of these guys. I'm out playing golf with one guy or playing hockey now on the side as a game of fun. I said: B'y, he's a good fella. The boys into Hickman's said: B'y, you're going to roll over in your grave when you dies talking about them fellas like that, as much as you hated them when you played. I said: B'y, you just have to meet them because they're only doing the same thing on their team as we done on our team. We played to win and they played to win.

You could get no more respect from a person or a team than Mr. Parsons, I can tell you that. They had a great team. The same as we had. Like I said, we fought tooth and nail.

I ran an election, he called me and wished me good luck. I never hung around with him before I came in here, really. We knew each other, we knew each other just distantly, but it's unbelievable how close I've got to him since I got in here. Just to call you when you're running your election, you should do this and you should do that and make sure you follow people.

If everybody, as an MHA, did what he did for his constituents – and I'm listening, I can tell you that. Call everybody back, as the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands said, if you call all your constituents back and take care of them the

way he did, then you'll be in this profession a long while, if you profess to be.

Just coming in here and listening, as the Member for Exploits had said, when we get in the caucus room and when he starts to talk, people start to listen. They're not going to be talking over him. You sit down and you listen. He brings a lot of respect to the room. It's just unbelievable how he does it. It's a great trait.

Just looking across with all the Members that have been here before me and the Members that are over there, he'd go at you in a hard way, but go at you in a respectful way. That's what it's all about. When we're finished here, we will still be friends and away you go. He brought that trait to our caucus, I'm going to say. To me, just sitting here, I certainly respect that. I think I've asked him about a hundred times: B'y, don't be going yet. He said: B'y, I don't think I'm going to run. I said: Don't say that. Keep coming. We need you here. He knows that. I'm after saying to him lots of times: What can we do to keep you here? Because it's important.

When he talks about being nervous in the House – when I came in here and the first time I got up to speak – and no sleep – make sure you're conscious of not bringing anybody down or cutting anybody up – that's not the purpose – or say something that you shouldn't say. He would relax you a little and say: B'y, I was like that when I started. You'll get used to it. We are getting a little better along the way.

It's sad to see him go, but I wish him the best of luck and certainly appreciate him helping me for my first 17 months here.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for Baie Verte - Springdale.

No, I always get that wrong. My apologies.

MR. WARR: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Baie Verte - Green Bay. Certainly, that was the old district. You're half right. Fortunate for our district, Madam Chair, that we're able to get the

southern part of Green Bay, I guess, back into the old district of Baie Verte - Springdale, now called Baie Verte - Green Bay, and certainly a district that I'm very proud to represent.

While we're here on Bill 45, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act No. 3, I, too, will speak in support of the bill. Smoking is obviously something that I didn't do either, but I had members of my family that smoked and, in particular, my mother.

I might get a tongue banging for bringing this up. She came from a very large family. I think she started smoking at a young age, but there's a good ending to the story. My mom is still very much alive and well today. I thank God for that every day.

At her 65th birthday, we decided to join her at my sister's home for a surprise and that would have been just about 50 years, I think, since the first day that she took up her habit, a habit that was hard to break. But someone mentioned early on about quitting cold turkey, and that's exactly what my mother did on her 65th birthday. After nearly 50 years of smoking, she decided that was her 65th birthday present to us. I know my oldest girl, which was her first grandchild, harped on my mother for many years for her dislike of her smoking. So mom quit it at 65 and decided to go to the gym. She spent years at the gym before she hurt herself and couldn't go back anymore.

I, too, Madam Chair, want to share my sentiments of congratulations to the Member for Cape St. Francis. We've built a great friendship as well. I think it first started when I got elected in the fall election of 2015. My family and friends were very excited to see me come to government as an MHA, something that I aspired to do for many years, even though I wasn't that political. I spent a lot of time doing volunteer work within the community and certainly around my district.

My friend, the Member for Cape St. Francis, and I share a very good relationship actually with my brother-in-law. His name is Gerry Manning. I know when Gerry found out that I got elected, one of the first things he mentioned to me, he said: You got to meet my buddy, Kev Parsons.

Now, Gerry, everybody he likes is a sweetheart – he’s a sweetheart, he’s a gem of a guy and a sweetheart of a fella. But like other Members in the House of Assembly have spoke to today, just don’t get him mad. I know that Gerry’s relationship with Kevin went back to the Avalon East league as well.

Most people here know that I spent some years in the RNC and I know that the Member for Cape St. Francis and I share many friends who are a member of that police force as well.

I didn’t share that with the Member but as a young child, my grandparents on my father’s side, while they live in Springdale they had a fair amount of land in Middle Cove, which is in the Member’s district. When I see the land that they had and I see where the prices are today, I wish my grandfather or, actually, my father, would’ve held on to the land because there’s no other place – I was born here in St. John’s. Until I started going to school was when we moved to Springdale. We lived on New Cove Road.

I always considered myself born in St. John’s but certainly loved the east end of the city. In particular, I spent many nights down in the Member’s district policing the communities and making sure that everything was safe and sound. It’s an area that’s no trouble to fall in love with, especially with the beauty of Conception Bay and the ruggedness of the area as well, when it comes to splashing water up on the rocks. It’s very surreal.

Madam Chair, the other place I know the hon. Member visits, or has the opportunity to go from time to time is on Bauline Line.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. WARR: Absolutely. I know that she would want me to say to him today how much she’s appreciated having him as a Member. I did visit the Member’s district on his request when I was the minister of Education and Early Childhood Development.

You always take that opportunity when you can for your colleagues, regardless of what side of the House they sit on. You always take that opportunity to be able to visit with their constituents in their district and you always take

the opportunity to say how much you respect the Member. There are no truer words spoken. I have a lot of respect for the Member for Cape St. Francis.

We both have a love and a passion for the fishery. His passion would be out in the open water, my passion would be on a salmon river. We do have a passion for the river and we certainly shared our passion with a gentleman from my district. I know he’d be upset if I didn’t take the opportunity to wish the Member the best of luck in his future from Keith Bath.

The Member for Cape St. Francis actually spoke about Keith just a while ago when he talked about the sealing fishery. Keith is probably one of the best pronounced fisher people when it comes to the sealing fishery. Actually, he’s been fishing for many, many years. He’s from La Scie. The author of a book that was written by Eric Colbourne who’s actually – Eric is from Lushes Bight which is in my district as well. I’d encourage the membership in the House of Assembly, if they like the fishing stories, the sealing stories which I do – I’ve read just about every book when it comes to the sealing fishery, a lot of them written by Gary Collins. It’s called *The Diary of a Fishing Master*.

The stories that have come from just the memory of Keith Bath are so fabulous and unreal. He talks about tragedy. He talks about near tragedies. He talks about the support of people who were on the water. I mean he talks about many instances where they had to go and rescue. When Coast Guard vessels weren’t in the area, fishermen called upon fishermen. Like we have a brotherhood here in the House of Assembly, fisher people have a brotherhood when it comes to protecting each other on the water as well.

I’d certainly encourage my colleagues to pick up a copy of that book and have a good read. I know when I read it I read one chapter a night because I wanted to savour the book. As much as I wanted to finish or go on to the next chapter I thought I was going to finish it too early. Again, a recommended read.

Madam Chair, I see I’m out of time. I’ll take the opportunity in my next round to talk a little bit more about my district. Congratulations.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the hon. the Member for Conception Bay South.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

It's a pleasure to speak in this House, as we always say, and rightfully so. I'll get to the bill in a second I guess; I'm going to reverse the role. To my colleague from Cape St. Francis – and I can say with certainty a very good friend of mine and we'll remain friends. We were friends before I got elected. We met a lot of years back and we've been through a lot in this political world together from all different sides of it

I have nothing but respect for the Member for Cape St. Francis. He's always put his district – everyone said it here this evening many times over again, the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis, but that became the signature statement. I think if anyone comes in here, whoever replaces him it will not be the same. I'm sure they might do it because they should do it – we all should do it – but it won't be the same without it coming from him. I do have a lot of admiration for him.

I recall my first day in the House when I came in to get sworn-in. When I got elected – and my colleagues across the way and the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay just said it – we were in here together, newly elected. We came in and we got sworn-in in here and took our seats. I remember sitting in the seat and there were people in the gallery – deer in the headlights – and you're looking around. Someone said earlier you're looking across and I was looking at – the former premier was there and there was a lot of Members there. The ministers at the time I was watching on television. Even though I was around this Chamber, I mean this was a different ground game when you're here on the floor and you're looking across. It was pretty intimidating, probably a bit overwhelming when you look at it.

The government was after changing and there were seven of us. Ironically in my caucus at the time I had a former premier, a former deputy

premier, four Cabinet ministers and parliamentary secretaries – people with oodles of years in this House of Assembly under their belt. Even though it was seven it was a pretty daunting task when I looked at it. I was the rookie.

Ironically, there were 20 people elected in 2015. There were 19 across the way, there was one over here and I was on my own. For a while they were saying you're the rookie. Every meeting we had, former leader Paul Davis would say: That's our rookie, so it became the word. Now, all of a sudden, you go into the room and it's totally different, the table has changed. Now you're one of the senior hands. How quick things change in politics.

I've said this many times and I've used this since my first day in the House of Assembly. His quote is something that I have kept with me and I've talked to on many times. I was sat there and I think he must have looked at me. We were sat next to each other; he must have seen the look on my face because I was like where am I? He looked at me – and I know names are not allowed but I'll say it anyway. He said: Barry, have a look around. You're in unique company here. You're in pretty special company here. You're one of 40. There are not a lot of people who get to sit where you're sitting. He said: Take it in and enjoy it.

It came from him; it came from the statesmen of the party. When he said it, it really – and I've said it, I told him that many times. I remember that took the edge off the day and it made me realize instead of having butterflies in your stomach, a sick feeling and not knowing what the future is bringing you, it took the edge off that I could actually stand up and walk up to say my oath, sign the scroll and get back to my chair. I think before he said that my legs were probably too rubbery to do anything. I'll always remember, and I've always had a lot of respect – a lot of respect – and I always will, of course.

Another thing comes to mind, and the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay and I think the Minister of Transportation would remember, and a few others, during our filibuster in 2016, we spent many times, there were three or four of us over here a lot of times, late in the night, through the night. After a while we'd get bored and we'd

look for – our colleague for Conception Bay East - Bell Island alluded to it earlier, in the middle of the night we'd be looking for chicken wings or pizza when everything was closed. All of a sudden, we were across the way and we'd cheer up each other – late in the night, sometimes trying to stay awake. Then it became the affectionate word, it was Waldorf and Statler across the way.

We were starting to be referred to as the peanut gallery. We were called all those things for a while. The Government House Leader is laughing. I'm sure he can remember those comments coming from across the way, because at the time it somewhat became a sport, but it somewhat became trying to stay focused, stay awake.

Underneath all that, there are a lot of good memories and a lot of good laughter. That's what this House will do. We'll all come to a point in time when we're going to bid farewell, but those memories stay with you for a lifetime.

I won't belabour these. He has gotten a lot of accolades, and he rightly deserve it. He's always been a strong voice in our caucus room. He's always been a very, very strong voice for his district. He wears his heart on his sleeve when it comes to that stuff.

I know my colleague for Ferryland said there the other day, he said don't poke the bear. That's as big a compliment as you can give to him because he's a very soft-hearted – he has a big heart, but it's soft. He cares for his people and he cares for people. I heard him speaking, every word he says I can attest to it, being around him for a long time. Every word he said he meant it. Truer words could never be said because that's his true feelings.

We'll get in there, and I'm a bit more rambunctious and a bit more back and forth. As the Government House Leader just shrugged his shoulders towards me; we have our moments like that, but he'll go, he can go hard sometimes, but he's always the voice of reason a lot of times, too.

I have a huge amount of respect for him and I do wish him well in whatever he does. I know he's going to spend his time with his family, his

grandchildren who he loves dearly, and I wish him nothing but the best. We will definitely miss him on this side of the House.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the Member for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune.

MR. LOVELESS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Just to talk a little bit about Bill 45, and I'll certainly get in to talk a little bit about the Member for Cape St. Francis.

On the tax on tobacco, I never was a smoker and I'm not going to start now. I guess as a young boy I didn't witness my parents smoking either and that, I guess, followed me through the years. As a father of two, I certainly preached to them about the dangers of smoking. My son used to always say when he see people smoking, he used to say: Dad, why would they do that? Their lungs will be black. I guess that image, hopefully, will stay in his mind. He's 15 years old now. My daughter is 19 and neither one of them smokes, and hopefully they will not resort to it.

I listened to the Member for Ferryland, he talked about it seems always that there's a tax on tobacco and there are people that are addicted. It's a fair point that the Member makes and I agree with it that we need to support them, too, through whatever means. I know there has been programs around that but we certainly need to look at that from their personal perspective that you can't just cold turkey, as they say, quit smoking. It's not easy so I agree with you there.

Awareness is important and there's been lots of campaigns around awareness of the dangers of smoking. I guess on cigarette packs or wherever, the image of the black lungs certainly resonates with people and certainly with my son.

We have to encourage our youth, no doubt about it. It starts young to educate them and make them aware, certainly. Just to, I guess, get to the importance of not smoking and the dangers of

your body and your lungs, I'll personalize it a little bit.

Back in 2005, I was diagnosed with Hodgkin Lymphoma with a report that showed a tumour in the centre of my chest that was sitting on the lungs. I guess, I'm here today, that's many years later, through lots of chemotherapy, radiation and even a stem cell transplant.

My point is, if I had been a smoker, I probably wouldn't be sitting here now. The doctors made that very clear to me, that if you were a smoker, you wouldn't be here now and you wouldn't have lasted very long because in treatment, your lungs are – and I can't explain it; you have to experience, I guess – really your heart of facing that treatment. To anybody that's listening today, my advice would be to not smoke because you never know what you're going to face in life in terms of a diagnosis.

I probably won't use the full 10 minutes, but I want to speak about the Member for Cape St. Francis. I know he's growing carrots and all that stuff so he's probably going to be a farmer. I look forward to putting my orders in to get some carrots from him and all that good stuff. But all these people that are saying good comments about you today, if you're paying them \$20 each, it's going to be a costly day for you.

I did hear, I believe it was the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands reference Jack Byrne. I heard him, back a few years ago being a researcher, listening to him on the open-line shows. He referenced the measure of a man is in his word. I believe that certainly sums up the Member for the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis. We've all mentioned that he has passion for his district. He certainly does. We all appreciate that. I know he has passion for the fishery. I thank him for all the years you spent in this House; for your words, your dedication and, certainly, your actions around this industry.

I'm going to end to say enjoy your time with your grandkids and family; keep hunting and fishing, which I know you enjoy as hobbies. I'll end by saying to the Member for Cape St. Francis: A job well done.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for Placentia West - Bellevue.

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

I want to speak to Bill 45. I kind of hate to say this but I think I might be the only smoker in the Chamber so I'm speaking from a first-person perspective, I guess. In all honesty, I've heard other people talk about the addiction and stuff like that, and when it comes to that side of it, if the addiction is strong enough, I'm not sure if you could put a high enough price on tobacco to make somebody stop.

I personally have tried to stop smoking on many occasions, but, of course, there are those fail safes, going to a shed party or something like that and you end up having one and your back on the wagon again, I guess. When it comes to increasing the tax on tobacco, I personally really don't disagree with it, just for the simple fact that there are added – poor health; it increases, I guess, your propensity to get certain diseases and stuff like that, like cancer.

I hate to admit that I have been smoking for a very long time but it's something that we always say I'm going to have one to calm myself down, but, in all honesty, we know that cigarettes are actually a stimulant. It's not something that would necessarily calm us down.

When it comes to adding to the price of tobacco, I believe that it is a necessary evil, I guess, kind of thing because of the added cost to health care. As for deterring people because of the taxes, that would remain to be seen because although smoking has gone down amongst young people with the campaigns that have been made here in the province, vaping has gone up. I guess, it's probably a little bit more attractive, the flavours and all kind of stuff or whatever, but, I would say this to any young person in this province: If I had my time back, I never would have started smoking.

It is a bad habit. It's not something that I'm proud of. I don't smoke in my home or anything like that. I usually go out to the shed or anything like that. I've never ever made it so that my

family was inundated with it as well. I never ever smoked in my car, I never ever smoked in my house. When I come in from having a smoke, I certainly wash my face and hands to make sure that there is no smell and stuff, too.

With that being said, if I could throw out that advice from somebody that wishes they never started, then if it saves one person from not starting then I probably done my job today as a smoker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DWYER: I played sports all my life and I was a smoker. They told me it would stunt my growth and I'm 6-2. I think the only thing it ever stunted on me was my appetite. Like I say, you get into a habit and there are certain triggers, like I said, like having a beer with the boys in the shed, that triggers it. That's what happens. I've never tried vaping. It didn't seem to be a cessation thing to me. It seemed to be just another alternative to what I was already doing.

I am happy to say that I have cut back a nice bit on smoking. I'm not a pack a day by no means; I'm probably more like a pack a week. It is a mindset, too. For me, I found a lot of times that if I didn't have them on me, I wanted them; but if I had them on me, I could have one any time so I didn't smoke as much if I had them on me. I don't know if that was just the way I convinced myself to slow down or anything like that, but I never was a big, big smoker. I have had one from time to time when I felt it was convenient for me, I guess.

When it comes to taxing tobacco, like I said, again, it will help with the added expenditures that we have in health care, based on a disease that is brought forward by smoking.

I will certainly agree with this bill. The people that are in the same boat as me might not necessarily agree with the angle I'm taking on this today, but I'm willing to bet there are a lot more people out there like me that wish they never ever started. That should be the message, and if raising the taxes on tobacco is a deterrent, then that might help elevate that message to younger minds. So I will agree with the bill.

I would be very remiss if I never took the opportunity to talk about my colleague from the beautiful District of Cape St. Francis. Just this past summer, Kevin came out to my district. I have 45 towns in my district. Most of them are fishing towns. I sat back and watched. I took notes and I took pictures, but I would aspire to be able to talk to people the way Kevin Parsons talks to people. He has that way about him to bring you into his fold and make you feel secure.

When I jumped in the truck with him to go on our trip – we just went for two days of meetings, one night – I said: Kev, I think this feels like we're going on a hockey trip. Sure enough it pretty much was.

Kevin and I did play hockey against each other. He never admits to the night that I kicked the (inaudible) out of him – pardon my language.

CHAIR: Now, now.

MR. DWYER: It was good tilt and I was glad when the linesman showed up.

He's a fierce competitor. He's a very honest person that I'm very proud to call a friend and colleague. Like I said, if any of us can be half the politician that Kevin Parsons is, we'll all be in pretty good shape because honesty and integrity are a reflection of yourself, not the people you're showing it to. That man definitely wears his heart on his sleeve. I just want to say thank you to him for his support, his guidance and his confidence in me.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Seeing no further speakers, I'll just have a quick little word. I want to share a story, as well, about my friend.

We talk a lot about hockey; we all know he's a big hockey fan. He even has a few hockey friends in my region, in my district, who are very fond of him, but I also wanted to share a quick little story about the time we had a bet. It was the about the Herder.

The CeeBees were playing Kevin's team. He lost but we had a bet. Whoever would lose

would wear the other ones jersey in the House of Assembly. I got to give you the credit, you donned that CeeBees jersey like no other in the House of Assembly. I thank you for it and I will always remember that.

Seeing no further speakers, shall the resolution carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, resolution carried.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3." (Bill 45)

CLERK (Barnes): Clause 1.

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

CLERK: Clause 2.

CHAIR: Shall clause 2 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clause 2 carried.

CLERK: Be it enacted by the Lieutenant-Governor and House of Assembly in Legislative Session convened, as follows.

CHAIR: Shall the enacting clause carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

CLERK: An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3.

CHAIR: Shall the long title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, title carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the bill without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the resolution and a bill consequent thereto, carried.

CHAIR: I recognize the Minister of Finance.

MS. COADY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I move the Committee rise and report the resolution and Bill 45.

CHAIR: The motion is that the Committee rise and report the resolution and Bill 45.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

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

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

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

The Committee of Ways and Means have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report that they have adopted a certain resolution and recommend that a bill be introduced to give effect to the same.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair of the Committee of Ways and Means reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and have adopted a certain resolution and recommend that the bill be introduced to give effect to the same.

When shall the report be received?

MS. COADY: Now.

MR. SPEAKER: Now.

On motion, report received and adopted.

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Government House Leader, that the resolution be now read a first time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the resolution now be read a first time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

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

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

On motion, resolution read a first time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Finance.

MS. COADY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Government House Leader, that the resolution be now read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the resolution now be read a second time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

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

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

On motion, resolution read a second time.

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Deputy Government House Leader, for leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3, Bill 45, and I further move that the said bill be now read a first time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the hon. the Minister of Finance shall have leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3, Bill 45, and that said bill be now read a first time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Finance to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3," carried. (Bill 45)

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3. (Bill 45)

On motion, Bill 45 read a first time.

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture, that Bill 45 be now read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the said bill be now read a second time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3. (Bill 45)

On motion, Bill 45 read a second time.

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

MS. COADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Education, that Bill 45 be now read a third time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that Bill 45 be now read a third time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3. (Bill 45)

MR. SPEAKER: This bill has now been read a third time and it is ordered that the bill do pass and that the title be as on the Order Paper.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Revenue Administration Act No. 3," read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 45)

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

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that this House does now adjourn.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

This House now stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 in the afternoon.

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