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Speaker: Honourable Derek Bennett, MHA

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The House met at 1:30 p.m.

SPEAKER (Bennett): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Before we begin today, I would like to rule on a point of order raised by the Government House Leader who took issue with the language used by the Member for St. John's Centre during Oral Questions.

I've had the opportunity to review *Hansard* and I note that the Member, in questioning the Premier, asked the following: "Will the Premier admit that what his minister said is a lie and he has misled the House and the people of this province about the actual number of houses built?" "I ask the Premier: Were these statements lies as well?"

The question to be determined is whether the language is unparliamentarily and therefore contrary to Standing Order 49. In doing so, the Speaker takes into account the tone, the matter, the intention of the Member speaking. The Speaker also takes into account the person to whom the words were directed, the degree of provocation and whether or not the remarks created disorder in this House.

I've considered these matters. Similar matters, I have considered in March and May of 2023 rulings and also rulings by Speaker Snow, Hodder and Lush. In those rulings, a distinction has been made between circumstances where certain language was used in a collective or government sense, or whether it was directed towards a particular individual.

If such words were used in an individual sense, they are clearly unparliamentarily. All hon. Members know, as stated in Bosc and Gagnon, chapter 13: "The proceedings of the House are based on a long-standing tradition of respect and integrity of all Members. Thus, the use of offensive, provocative or threatening language in the House is strictly forbidden. Personal

attacks, insults and obscenities are not in order."

Further, Members of the House enjoy parliamentary privileges to enable them to do their parliamentary duties. One of these privileges is freedom of speech in parliamentary proceedings which Bosc and Gagnon indicate is "the most important right accorded to Members"

With that right, however, comes responsibilities to all Members to act within the *Standing Orders* and by doing so uphold the dignity of this institution.

In this case, the matter is clear. An accusation of lying implies deliberate attempt to mislead. There are many precedents in this House and other parliaments where the use of language has been deemed unparliamentarily. In this context, I make no distinction based on the fact that a Member made the accusation indirectly to the Premier and not the minister directly.

While I appreciate that in the heat of debate Members may get caught up in the complex issues at hand, I note that the Member for St. John's Centre then repeated the offending language in his subsequent question.

I, therefore, rule that the Member's language is unparliamentary and I call upon the Member for St. John's Centre to unequivocally withdraw both comments.

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

J. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

I will not retract those comments.

SPEAKER: I will ask you one more time: Will you please retract your statement?

J. DINN: Speaker, I regret that I had used those words, but I will not retract those comments, at this time.

SPEAKER: The Member has indicated that he will not withdraw. Therefore, I rule that the Member will not be recognized until such time as he withdraws those statements.

I would like to recognize several members joining us today in the public gallery. I would like to welcome Susan Dean and Patricia Power, who will be recognized in two Member's statements this afternoon. Also Anne Chafe, CEO of The Rooms and Katherine Hickey, Vice-Chair of The Rooms Board of Directors, who are also visiting us today for a Ministerial Statement. Lastly, welcome to Mayor Brian Button from the Town of Port aux Basques.

Welcome.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Before we move on to Member's statements, I would like to take time to welcome a new face to the Table, Gerrie Smith.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Gerrie has been appointed as the acting Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel in accordance with the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, effective today.

Gerrie has been practising law for 25 years, primarily in the public law for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Most recently, she served as the Assistant Deputy Minister in the Department of Justice and Public Safety and also worked previously as a Legislative Consultant with the Department of Health and Community Services.

As Speaker, I'm pleased to have Gerrie join our senior team here at the House of Assembly, and I look forward to working with her.

I ask all Members to join me in welcoming our new Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel, Gerrie Smith.

Welcome.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Statements by Members

SPEAKER: Today we'll hear statements by the hon. Members for the Districts of St. George's - Humber, Stephenville - Port au Port, Topsail - Paradise and Terra Nova.

The hon. the Member for St. George's - Humber.

S. REID: Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Judy White on being recently appointed Newfoundland and Labrador's first female Indigenous Senator.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

S. REID: Judy White is a Mi'kmaq, a member of the Flat Bay Band and a King's Counsel lawyer, with significant experience in human rights issues, Indigenous governance and legislative matters. Despite being our newest Senator, Ms. White has much experience in government, which will serve her well. She was previously the assistant deputy minister of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation in the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

She has worked on numerous boards and in governance, serving many agencies in various capacities, including as the former chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Newfoundland and Labrador, chair of the Inuvialuit Arbitration Board and co-chair of the Equal Voice Newfoundland and Labrador chapter.

Also with her extensive academic background, Ms. White has received numerous awards including the Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the

Persons Case in recognition of her outstanding contributions to the advancement of gender equality. She has also received the prestigious Gordon M. Stirling Distinguished Service Award from the Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I ask all Members to join with me in congratulating our newest senator, Judy White, of Flat Bay.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Thank you, Speaker.

The power of people helping people is what guides the work of Don Russell, a Mi'kmaq man, who runs the Addiction Recovery Drop-in Centre located in the Harmon Mall in Stephenville. The centre offers a safe place for people to get the guidance they need to get over the hurdles they face in life.

Russell, a retired addictions counsellor, returned home to Stephenville in 2014 and soon noticed that there was nowhere for people dealing with addictions to meet, to get together and to talk. It has been Don's experience, from his many years working in addictions, that people in recovery provide a great support system for others and it is by leaning on one another that we heal.

With experience and time on his hands, Don decided to open the Drop-in Centre. He does this work as a volunteer and a desire to share his experience with the people of Bay St. George. The centre is supported through donations from community organizations, churches and the Towns of Stephenville and Kippens; it's that money that pays the rent.

Thank you, Don, for your invaluable contribution in helping people turn their lives around and improve their quality of life.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

P. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, earlier this month the province's top athletes were recognized at the 2023 Premier's Athletic Awards ceremony. This program recognizes athletic excellence and provides financial support to help offset the costs of training and competition. Grants are awarded based on the athletes' respective accomplishments and their level of competition.

Speaker, I am proud to rise in this House and recognize 14 exceptional athletes from my District of Topsail - Paradise who each took home awards in their respective sport. They are: Gavin Baggs, Darcy Butler, Will Carroll, Daniel Earles, Levi Moulton, Hannah Neville, Merrick Noel, Daniel Pearce, Katie Slaney, brothers Dakota and Tyson Snow, Jack Turpin, Stephen Westcott and Emma Whalen.

Speaker, I want to extend my sincere congratulations to all winners and I ask all Members to join me, as these athletes are a shining example of dedication, excellence and exceptional ability and a true inspiration for their communities. I commend them all for their hard work, their commitment to their sport and I wish them continued success in their future endeavours.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

L. PARROTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize Ms. Susan Dean from the Flying Blades Skating Club in Clarenville, an avid volunteer for 17 years.

She says that volunteering provides her with an opportunity to give back to a sport that has given her so much and to ensure a skater-first mentality and experience for the athletes.

She contributes to Newfoundland and Labrador's skating community through her awesome work ethic, engaging leadership style and boundless energy.

I quote from her nominator: She is a big voice, figuratively and literally, with a strong positive message, clearly wanting nothing but the best for the skaters and the volunteers in the sport of skating.

No provincial event takes place where she isn't running about in many capacities. She has been a member of various committees and she was the team manager of Team Newfoundland and Labrador Figure Skating at the 2023 Canada Winter Games.

She is the lead for competition live broadcasts in branding and partnerships. We're all lucky to have here as part of our team.

Please stand with me in congratulating Susan Dean on receiving the Skate Canada national volunteer award for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Congratulations, Susan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

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

S. CROCKER: Speaker, I rise today to highlight the amazing work that is being done by the staff and leadership at The Rooms in preserving, celebrating and sharing our province's unique history and culture.

Since 2020, the board of directors, led by Chair Margaret Allan, and the staff, led by Chief Executive Officer Anne Chafe, have made it their singular purpose to bring attendance and membership back to pre-pandemic levels – and they have done more than succeed.

For 2022-2023, attendance and memberships at the provincial museum, archives and art galleries were higher than they've ever been.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

S. CROCKER: The Rooms welcomed more than 129,000 visitors last year and more than 2,000 people purchased annual memberships.

With more than 70,000 visitors this summer, The Rooms is on track to welcome more than 130,000 people in 2023-2024.

Special events to mark Come Home 2022, as well as collaboration with groups such as the Association for New Canadians, MusicNL and Memorial University, which offered a wide array of programming that appealed to a diverse audience of local and non-resident visitors, contributed to this success.

The Rooms also offered curriculum-linked programming in person and online for more than 15,000 K-to-12 students this year and every Friday they offer free admission to post-secondary students.

As we plan to celebrate 2024 as Year of the Arts in Newfoundland and Labrador, I look forward to the important role that The Rooms will play in making this a success.

I ask all of my colleagues to join me in celebrating the wonderful contributions of those at The Rooms who work so hard to share the incredible stories of our province and its people.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

We join the minister in commending Chair Margaret Allan, the board of directors and CEO Anne Chafe and her staff for their important work at The Rooms, which includes our art gallery, museums, archives and collections.

The Rooms also oversee three regional museums: The Demasduit Regional Museum in Grand Falls-Windsor; the Provincial Seamen's Museum in Grand Bank; and the Labrador Interpretation Centre in North West River, Labrador. Visitation of those museums nearly doubled to almost 11,000 in 2022.

People should check out their latest annual report at therooms.ca to see the incredible array of things they are doing. The Rooms is especially strong in preserving and showcasing our province's unique Indigenous heritage and collaboration with Indigenous communities – a very high priority for them, which they are supporting with their new digital engagement plan: podcasting, livestreaming, webinars, virtual offerings and digital engagement, so that people from their physical location can enjoy the benefit of their important work.

The Rooms has also expanded the focus of its accessibility improvements to include visual, hearing, learning, cognitive and mental health accessibility. The Rooms also provides travelling Edukits, which is education kits for schools, with education among their top priorities. Their musical and cultural collaborations draw live culture into a space that also preserves our most ancient artifacts, bringing our diverse history and culture alive.

We commend The Rooms for reaching out to the community, engaging directly with the people and trying new things. It's working and we encourage them to keep the ideas flowing.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

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

Showcasing the arts and culture of Newfoundland and Labrador is critical to our province's society. I even had the opportunity of bringing my girls to The Rooms this summer when we were in town for medical appointments.

The minister, as well, pointed out the investments in the arts programs will yield positive results for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. I encourage this government to consider how the arts and culture industry would flourish if investments were consistent, thought out and long-term investments and not just one-off announcements.

Thank you so much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Any further statements by ministers?

Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

T. WAKEHAM: Thank you, Speaker.

The Liberal minister of Housing has made repeated inaccurate statements in this House and to the media. He repeatedly gave false hope that affordable homes were built – quote – all across the province.

I ask the Premier: With 2,800 people on a wait-list, how did this happen?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

A. FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As we discussed in this House last week, the minister has stood in this House and has corrected to the media, Mr. Speaker, the comments he made. It was not done out of malice. It was a mistake. I'm sure everyone appreciates that people are human and he misspoke.

That said, we are fully seized with the 2,800 who are on the affordable housing list, Mr. Speaker, but we're also focused on this side of the House with creating housing that's affordable for the middle class. That's why we're addressing the acute issue of the people on that list while trying to change the market dynamic to ensure that there is appropriate market forces to allow housing prices and rental prices to come down through the five-point plan, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Speaker, the Liberal Housing Minister says he corrected his mistake on October 3. The minister said – quote – I knew I had made a mistake and that he tried to correct it right away. Yet, the claims were repeated again and again.

I ask the Premier: If the minister knew he had made a mistake, why were his claims repeated for another three weeks?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

A. FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

To my knowledge, that was corrected with the media, Mr. Speaker. Also, the Member stood up in this House and apologized for the misuse of a word. Mistakes happen; certainly, they can happen to anyone, any time, any place.

The most important thing is, number one, the minister understood that he misspoke, recognized that he misspoke and addressed it. While we continue to address the actual issue in terms of making sure that affordable housing is available for those people on the list, while creating housing that is affordable for the middle class, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Speaker, the Deputy Premier is quoted in a scripted video clearly stating – quote – 750 new affordable houses had been completed since 2021 with – quote – 850 affordable homes on the way this year.

I ask the Premier: Did the Deputy Premier misspeak in a scripted video?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Premier.

S. COADY: Thank you very much, Speaker.

Over the last two years, the Furey government has been very focused on providing an additional 750 housing options. This year, we announced in budget that we will providing an additional \$70 million for new affordable houses. Now, Speaker, while the Member opposite is playing gotcha politics, we're over here helping the people of the province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Speaker, this isn't about gotcha politics; this is about facts. Just this weekend, the Deputy Premier pointed to the budget to defend herself on housing, yet the video where she clearly states affordable homes was part of a series of scripted videos selling the Liberal budget.

I ask the Deputy Premier: Why did you set the example for this deception?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Premier.

S. COADY: Thank you very much, Speaker.

I will say the budget documents do fairly and accurately indicate over the last two years we have been developing 750 housing options, very important for the people of the province. The year, we are investing a tremendous amount of money, \$70 million, in affordable houses. The Member opposite is seeing them. As we go through the province, you're starting to see these affordable homes.

Speaker, this is incredibly important to the people of the province; as the Member opposite has said, there are 2,800 people on the wait-list. We're trying, on this side of the House, to really focus on those people. To really focus on two things, both social housing – which the Member opposite is speaking about – but also making housing affordable.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Speaker, I'm going to go back and ask the Deputy Premier one more time. You said in a scripted video that 750 new homes were built.

Will the Deputy Premier stand up and say the Deputy Premier has made a mistake?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Premier.

S. COADY: Thank you very much, Speaker.

As I have already indicated to the Member opposite, it wasn't a scripted video. I was off-the-cuff speaking. In the budget documents it clearly indicates 750 housing options.

I will say to the Member opposite those 750 people, the 750 people that we're talking about – and some of them are families – certainly did appreciate the focus that we've placed on affordable housing.

But I will also say we've already announced money, 850 affordable houses. It's very, very important to the people of the province, Speaker, that not only we address social housing, but we also address housing affordability.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Speaker, the people of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador cannot take much comfort in the fact that their Finance Minister talks about affordable units or options in the budget and then speaks publicly about 750 new homes being built.

Speaker, the Liberal Housing minister says no one could've predicted this crisis, while the housing advocate, Dan Meades, says: "Everybody could have predicted this housing crisis"

I ask the Premier: Who's correct?

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

S. COADY: Certainly, there's been an increase in the requirements around social housing and housing affordability coming out of the pandemic. It has been a

tremendous amount of effort going in to ensuring that we support the people of the province. This is happening globally; it's happening across Canada. I know when housing ministers and Finance ministers get together we're always talking about how important it is to address not just social housing, but also housing affordability.

That's why we introduced the five-point plan, Speaker. I can tell you to the people of the province today that the new residential rental property rebate that we're doing, the availability of surplus lands that we have, the new home ownership program that we've put in place are all very valuable to the people of the province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

T. WAKEHAM: Speaker, the Liberal Deputy Premier has misled the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and it's been exposed. It's as simple as that.

Speaker, the Auditor General released a report on Friday. The Premier had that report over the weekend now.

I ask the Premier: When will the recommendations of the Auditor General be implemented?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

A. FUREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Of course I'd like to remind everybody that it was this government who asked for this (inaudible).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

A. FUREY: Memorial University is an integral part of our society, Mr. Speaker. It's probably one of the most valuable assets we have for the future of the province. It's

helped educate, I would imagine, almost everybody in this House.

We need to continue to make sure its reputation is protected, Mr. Speaker. That said, there has to be a degree of accountability. There has to be accountability when we're spending taxpayers' money. That's why we asked the Auditor General to go in and I'm happy to say that that report is in the public domain right now, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Speaker.

I'm going to correct the Premier. It was on our insistence and I led the way with our caucus asking for the AGM to go in.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

B. PETTEN: Under the pressure from the Opposition, they actually gave in and brought the Auditor General in. So you take credit where credit is due but in that case, Premier, you had no choice.

Speaker, we called for the Auditor General to go into MUN, years before the Liberals finally agreed. I already had you prepared, see.

Speaker, students, faculty, staff and people of the province demand accountability and to know how their tax dollars are spent.

So I ask the minister and government: What's your plan to deal with this on a go-forward basis?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

K. HOWELL: Mr. Speaker, before the Members opposite give themselves credit for my oxygen exchange over here, I would

like to remind this House that the government has instituted the AG report; has asked the AG to go in and do that investigation; and now that we've received the report we have to take some time and read through it and work with the university as they move forward.

As the Premier mentioned, it is an integral part of our province. It is a piece of infrastructure in Newfoundland and Labrador that has been long standing, that brings credit to all of Newfoundland and Labrador. We want to continue to work with the university to make sure that they have the opportunity to educate our students so that they're prepared for a workforce, they're ready to go out and represent Newfoundland and Labrador on any stage and be class one.

But that said, we recognize there are implications of accountability and we want to continue to work with them to institute that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Speaker.

Lots of oxygen on the other side. I'll leave it at that. No shortage, as you can see.

Speaker, the AG's report confirms what our caucus has been saying for years. Spending at Memorial is out of control, with little controls on salaries, including lavish bonuses.

Minister, what are you going to do to address this?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

K. HOWELL: Mr. Speaker, as we all know we've just received the report. It's going to take some time for us to work through that

and see the information that's presented in there. But the reality of it is we want to continue to work with Memorial University. Barring the fact that they have an academic commitment and an autonomy that we don't want to overstep, we do recognize that there has to be measures of accountability and transparency that are implemented when the public funds are included in their spending.

So we'll continue to work with them, continue to build on their reputation and continue to build on the great work that they've done educating students in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

B. PETTEN: Speaker, I remind the minister, they've had the report since Friday. We've had it for 25 minutes and we got a slew of questions here.

I can't see why it would be so hard for her to answer a couple of questions here today for the benefit of the public, but, Speaker, I'll try again.

The AG's report notes alcohol and gifts have been inappropriately billed to taxpayers. Again, clearly against the rules.

What specific action is the minister going to take on this one?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

K. HOWELL: As I have repeatedly stated, the report became public at 1:30 this afternoon. We have to take it now and read through it and do – sorry, misspoke, 1 o'clock – some work on that, read through the report, see what recommendations are advised there, on behalf of the Auditor General, and continue to work with the university to be responsible and respectful

to their academic autonomy as well as the responsibilities that they have for accountability and transparency to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador where the public funds are concerned.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Speaker.

More Liberal misleading. They had it Friday; everyone else got it 1 o'clock today. Big difference in their words. Words matter, Mr. Speaker. Words matter.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

Order, please!

B. PETTEN: Thanks for your protection.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

B. PETTEN: The Government House Leader, he'll have a turn in a minute, we'll get around to him.

Speaker, the report also confirms administrative bloat at the province's only university. The Liberals have ignored this situation for years, while slashing the operating grant and increasing tuition. Why?

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

J. HOGAN: Thank you, Speaker.

I'd like to address the preamble. As the Member knows, the access to information also includes the part of the act that says protection of privacy. The redactions have to be done in any report government gets so we don't release private information of individuals in this province that could come back then for a lawsuit against the

government. So time has to be taken to do those redactions.

I'm surprised that the Member opposite doesn't know that because I know he spends a lot of time on VOCM.com. I saw a story from his Leader to say: don't release that report until those redactions are done. He respected that and all Members on the other side should respect that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

B. PETTEN: Mr. Speaker, he'd be surprised what the hon. Member opposite actually do know. In this caucus we know a lot more than this crowd across the way and we'll prove that in time to come. In coming months we'll prove it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

B. PETTEN: But I've got to ask this question again, seeing he wanted to get on his feet and he don't get enough questions, obviously.

Speaker, the report also confirms administrative bloat at the province's only university. The Liberals have ignored the situation for years while slashing the operating grant and increasing tuition. Why?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

K. HOWELL: Mr. Speaker, as I've said in my previous answers, our intention is to continue to support the students at Memorial University. We've taken money and placed it into student financial assistance, which is available through our department. If students have question and concerns, they can by all means reach out to the Department of Education; we can direct them to some of the funding options that are available.

In the meantime, we also want to be responsible with the public funds, so we have to continue to work with Memorial University, as they develop their plans and as we work with them to continue to support the university ensuring that there is transparency and accountability on how to use their funds.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Speaker, a senior from the Harbour Main District went to Carbonear hospital emergency this past week suffering from severe chest pains. The patient waited several hours in the ER after being told there was no specialist there to see him.

At 8 p.m. they were taken to the hospital in Burin, arriving midnight and admitted directly into intensive care.

I ask the minister: Is a 300 kilometre, 3½-hour journey at midnight from one hospital to another a good example of health care on his watch?

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

T. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What I will say is that this government, under the leadership of our Premier, has brought in the Health Accord, which is a 10-year plan to transform health care.

I have been told by other ministers across the country that it is the envy of the country. We are making great strides in health care. Every province in Canada has shortages of health care professionals; this province is no different.

Was that situation acceptable? Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker, but we continue to recruit the health care professionals that are

needed to ensure that they can deliver the health care to the people of the province that is the proper health care by the proper health care professionals when needed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Speaker, this Liberal government and this Department of Health and the way this senior was treated is certainly not the envy of this particular person. Travelling all the way to Burin from Carbonear in the middle of the night caused increased stress to this patient under very difficult and risky circumstances.

I asked the minister: Are lengthy, late-night ambulance rides for cardiac patients the new normal in our health care system?

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

T. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, as the Member knows, we can't comment on individual cases.

What I can say is that the new normal across Canada is that there is a shortage of health care professionals.

We've been working hard in this province to recruit the necessary health care professionals. Over 40 positions since the beginning of this fiscal year. We've reduced the number of vacancies in our registered nurses from 672 to less than 600 in the last two or three months. We are working on recruitment and retention so that situations like this do not happen.

But if she cares to look at the media from any province across the country, these situations are more common today than they were five years ago. We are working to address them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Speaker, if the minister is suggesting that this is the new normal, then that is certainly not acceptable. It's very sad to see that complacency.

Speaker, I ask the minister: Has the Burin hospital now become the hub for cardiac patients from both Carbonear and Clarenville hospitals?

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

T. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, nobody has said that this is the new normal. I appreciate the fact that the Member is trying to play politics with this very serious issue. This is not acceptable, Mr. Speaker. This situation was not acceptable. We are working to address this so that the normal is the proper health care that people deserve in the locations, by the proper health care professionals throughout this province.

We've done a number of initiatives, Mr. Speaker, that have improved health care in this province, including the Heart Force One, travelling orthopedic surgeons, the recruitment and retention, which has been successful in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Are we there yet? Absolutely not. We need more health care professionals helping to lift the load of those that are working in the system.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

P. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

I did hear the new normal mentioned over there, no doubt about it.

Last week, the Premier acknowledged the financial hardship government has created for seniors living in personal care homes and indicated that the minister would respond appropriately.

With the clock ticking on these seniors: What action has the minister taken to remedy the situation?

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

T. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As the Seniors' Advocate has pointed out, these increases were absolutely necessary and supported by the Seniors' Advocate. Personal care homes provide a valuable service to the people of the province.

We increased the rates on the government-subsidized beds. Some personal care homes have not increased the private pay, some have. These are private businesses, Mr. Speaker. It is unfortunate that some personal care homes have made the swift and significant increase to the private pay as opposed to working with these individuals.

As the Seniors' Advocate has pointed out, as we have pointed out, we want these homes to work with individuals, go through the assessment process. Many of the private pay will now qualify for subsidies with the new increase in subsidized rates.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The minister's time has expired.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

P. DINN: Thank you, Speaker.

Of course, the Health Accord, their own plan, talked about serving our seniors and

treating them with dignity and respect. The Premier said last week, quote: We'll continue to make sure that families aren't negatively impacted from a well-intended intervention.

Has the minister succeeded in ensuring all these seniors and their families have not been negatively impacted?

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

T. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We've been working with the personal care home associations. They've been working with us. They have agreed, Mr. Speaker, that they will communicate with their members. These are private businesses, let's keep in mind, and these are private-pay customers. We've asked that they work with these individuals to do the assessments to see which of the private-pay individuals will now qualify for subsidies.

Some of them are going to increase rates over a longer period of time, smaller increases. That is what should happen for these private-pay individuals, Mr. Speaker. It is unfortunate that some of the homes have put in a swift and significant increase to the private-pay customers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

L. PARROTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, last week I asked about the collaborative care clinics in my district: zero doctors, zero patients, zero applications, just a roster.

Can the minister tell me: What the net gain of patients is as a result of the collaborative care clinics?

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

T. OSBORNE: What I can tell the Member opposite, Mr. Speaker, is that I've actually heard from nurse practitioners who took offence to the fact that nurse practitioners are not able to provide primary care, Mr. Speaker, which was the insinuation the Member opposite gave.

There are three full-time nurse practitioners in the clinic in Clarendville. They are accepting and treating patients, Mr. Speaker, not just rostering. There are other employees and health professionals associated with that Family Care Team and we continue to look to recruit two physicians for that clinic.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

L. PARROTT: I've heard from the patients out there who heard the insinuation there were doctors practising there and there are not, so they're just as offended.

A family doctor normally has 1,500 or more patients. The new clinics require a doctor to carry between 1,000 and 1,200. Are you telling me that we are looking after more patients now? It sounds a little bit like the math that we're using for the housing crisis.

What is the net gain in patients?

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

T. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, the net gain since the last time this House sat when we had 28,000 patients rostered to Family Care Teams, and we now have 49,000 rostered to Family Care Teams.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

T. OSBORNE: That's the net gain.

The Family Care Team in Clarendville is actually seeing patients. Unlike what the Member said, Mr. Speaker, they are actually seeing patients. They've just opened, they are rostering patients and they are starting to see patients. You need to give time for this to become fully operational, which is the absolute intention of government.

I can't believe that the Member opposite is trying to take a good news story, a Family Care Team in his district, and try to make it sound like something bad.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

L. PARROTT: It sounds good. Multiple staff, no doctors, nurses being shifted from the hospital.

What's the dollar cost going to be per patient for a collaborative care clinic?

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

T. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, the benefit to the patients under a Family Care Team is that they will have a multidisciplinary team. If a physician retires or if a nurse practitioner retires, they still belong to the team. The value of a Family Care Team in a multidisciplinary setting, it is good for the health practitioners, it is better for the patients, and it is a better delivery of primary care in this province. Mr. Speaker, I don't see a cost in that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

L. PARROTT: Perhaps the minister can explain how it's a multi-care team when there are no doctors there.

Have we decreased the amount of unattached patients or are we just shifting resources for shiny, new clinics with yet another misleading Liberal announcement?

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

T. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, we are decreasing the number of patients that are not attached to primary health care. In addition to the Family Care Teams, we are about to unveil a virtual physician coverage which will provide to any individual in this province without primary care access to a virtual physician from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and virtual coverage in rural and remote emergency departments 24-7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Speaker.

I think we need to get the facts straight and not mislead any people. If it's open, it's open. If we have the staff there, we have the staff there. But let's make sure the announcement fits exactly what we're doing in action.

Speaker, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing has had chronic staff shortages for years. In last year's Estimates, we learned 25 per cent of positions are vacant, many of which are carpenters and plumbers that could be fixing units.

I ask the minister: Why has this issue gone unaddressed?

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

P. PIKE: Thank you for your question.

Speaker, our government recognizes the challenges in finding housing that is affordable. As our province faces the same

as all the other provinces in Canada, we face the same issues. When it comes to housing and homelessness, we do what we can, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: Thank you, Speaker.

Almost two years ago in Labrador West, two NL Housing units burned and have not been replaced. There are over 30 applicants on the wait-list for housing in Labrador West alone.

I ask the Premier: Will he expedite the work to get these units started before the new year?

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

P. PIKE: Thank you for your question.

Speaker, our government remains committed to continuing to work with our partners in the federal government, with municipalities and with stakeholders in our communities to address these particular challenges you've referred to and help make sure that every Newfoundlander and Labradorian has a safe space with a roof over their head.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: Mr. Speaker, I re-ask my question again.

Almost two years ago in Labrador West, two NL Housing units burned to the ground. They have not been replaced. I have over

30 applicants on a wait-list for housing in Labrador West.

I ask the Premier: Will he expedite the work to get those units started before the new year?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

A. FUREY: Yes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: I will hold him to that.

Speaker, we have a three-bedroom emergency shelter has been full since it opened in 2020. The Housing & Homelessness Coalition submitted a plan to the former minister in late 2022 to expand it to a 24-hour staff model with more beds to meet the need.

I ask the minister: When will he implement that plan?

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

P. PIKE: Thank you for the question.

We continue to work hard to make more social housing available to those who need it, including housing and wraparound services and supports for people with complex needs, to help get more housing units out there and to make it easier for people to buy their first home.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Labrador West.

J. BROWN: Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask the question again.

We have a three-bedroom emergency shelter in Labrador West. It's been full since it opened and the Housing & Homelessness Coalition in Labrador West submitted a plan to expand it to 24-hour staffing model and have more beds that are needed.

I ask the minister: Will he implement that plan?

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

P. PIKE: Thank you for the question.

As I said before, we continue to work hard to make more social housing available and we're doing that in Labrador West and making housing available to the people who need it, including housing with wraparound services for people who have complex needs.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Speaker.

Why did the Minister of Education and her department officials decline a recent interview on the two-spirited LGBTQIA+ curriculum?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

K. HOWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to take the opportunity to inform the House and anybody that may be listening, all of the policies and procedures related to Safe and Caring Schools, inclusion and LGBTQIA+ principles are all available on our department's website. There is distinctive designation for the curriculum, for what is taught and for how we conduct ourselves in our schools in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Speaker.

On October 16, I was told the minister declined an opportunity to speak to media and ask questions on the two-spirited LGBTQIA+ curriculum. It's really important to have the minister as an ally and to be able to be vocal on these issues. So it does lead the question.

Does the Minister of Education support inclusive education in our school system or not?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

K. HOWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is very interested and certainly supportive of continuing the work of inclusive spaces in our schools. We want to have safe spaces for everybody to have educational opportunities, to not limit anybody's potential and to continue to grow the lives of our children in here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Speaker.

My next question was: Does the minister support and is the minister committed to the Safe and Caring Schools policy and the Gay-Straight Alliance that helps protect our 2SLGBTQIA+ youth?

These are important questions, Speaker. So will the minister commit to actually being vocal and show her support for this

community and the programs that are offered to keep our children safe?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Education.

K. HOWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As the Member opposite identified, this is a very important issue in our society today and we recognize that our schools are often microcosms of what is happening in society. We know that we have a policy in place for our Safe and Caring Schools, but we also recognize that there is still work to be done. We work with our teachers and our staff all across the province to ensure that we're meeting the needs of the students that are represented in our schools.

I do want to take a moment to give the teachers credit because they have the ability to adapt and to roll and to meet the needs of their students, day in, day out, with things that are creative. They have a relationship that they've built with their students and we want to continue to foster that relationship. We want to continue to build and work on our Safe and Caring Schools policy to ensure that our schools are safe spaces for education in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Notices of Motion

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

E. JOYCE: Speaker, I give notice that on tomorrow I will move the following private Member's motion.

WHEREAS this Assembly is guided by the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*; and

WHEREAS during the process related to the events of bullying and harassment in 2018, this Assembly failed to live up to the principles that guide us; and

WHEREAS through political interference, failure to follow the oath we took and not realizing, due to political motivation, the human toll it takes on politicians and their families, who should never go through this again; and

WHEREAS this House of Assembly prides itself on truth and honesty and free of bullying and harassment, I can assure you in this private Member's motion, this House of Assembly failed miserably in living up to these principles and we must put safeguards in to avoid this in the future; and

WHEREAS I am a strong person and if we don't reflect and ensure that this does not happen to another person, he or she may do harm to themselves or others or turn to drugs or alcohol; and

WHEREAS I ask all Members to reflect inside to always find the truth, let people be heard, don't let political motivation outweigh the truth, as it takes a toll on families; and

WHEREAS I ask one question: Is it worth it to try and destroy people's reputations and lives for political advancement? Politics is not worth it; and

WHEREAS I always feel privileged to be a Member of this hon. House and my prayer is that we learn from this episode in our past and ensure it will never happen again; and

WHEREAS I have tried for five years to have the truth and facts on the record and I

was told by numerous Speakers, dating back to 2019, you can present a private Member's resolution in October 2023. Well, here I am to stand up for my reputation, my family and supporters; and

WHEREAS I ask all Members to review the information and, in the future, ensure safeguards are put in place to strengthen our accountability and integrity; and

WHEREAS there were false allegations made about myself of bullying and harassment; and

WHEREAS there was no finding of bullying and harassment but I was found in violation of Principle 10 of the Code of Conduct; and

WHEREAS Principle 10 states: Relationship between Members and government employees should be based on mutual respect and should have regard to the duties of these employees to remain politically impartial when carrying out their duties; and

WHEREAS the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's, the complainant, was classified as a public sector government employee by Bruce Chaulk, former Commissioner for Legislative Standards; and

WHEREAS former MHA Dale Kirby appealed to the Privacy Commissioner for a copy of the full Rubin Thomlinson report; and

WHEREAS the request was denied, as the Privacy Commissioner stated that Members are not government employees; and

WHEREAS two witnesses, Bruce Chaulk and Sandra Barnes, former Clerk of the House, gave evidence that Members are not government employees. In the report it states: The Commissioner for Legislative Standards states the complainant is not an employee. By Bruce Chaulk's own admission, Principle 10 did not pertain to government members. In support of this

position, the Commissioner for the Legislative Standards provided this office with an opinion from the Clerk of the House of Assembly: MHAs are not considered employees. They are public office holders. They are governed by legislation and policies specific to them; and

WHEREAS the current Clerk of the House of Assembly wrote a letter dated June 11, 2019, that: No, an MHA is not a government employee. An MHA is an elected official and is not bound by the contract of service or subject to any control when performing his or her duties. Further, the following is also noted: An MHA is elected to the position; no one dictates how an MHA makes decisions or various issues; a MHA is not eligible for Employment Insurance; an MHA can normally be removed or dismissed only by the electoral process as an MHA stays in office until he or she loses an election or does not seek re-election; and

WHEREAS the Privacy Commissioner stated that Members are not government employees and the request for the report by Rubin Thomlinson was denied, as former MHA Dale Kirby was not a government employee; and

WHEREAS Dale Kirby appealed the decision to the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador and they upheld the decision of the Privacy Commissioner that Members are not government employees and Dale Kirby was not entitled to the report as a government employee would be entitled to obtain a copy of the report; and

WHEREAS this concludes that the Commissioner's classification that the MHA from Placentia - St. Mary's was a government employee was false. I feel it was intentional and I will explain my rationale later in the PMR; and

WHEREAS, the current Speaker informed me on October 19, 2023, that Fraser March was an Officer of the House of Assembly

and the Management Commission can do a referral to the independent body but they can't for a Member of the House. That statement is inaccurate and the Management Commission does have that authority; and

WHEREAS I tried, on many occasions, to ask the Management Commission to bring this request back to the House of Assembly, which they have the authority as precedence was set by bringing the Fraser March back to the House; and

WHEREAS false statements were made by the former commissioner, Bruce Chaulk, to the Management Commission, a cover up, political interference and false statements by Bruce Chaulk in the House of Assembly; and

WHEREAS on October 24, 2018, during a technical briefing on the report, Siobhan Coady asked if all MHAs participated. Bruce Chaulk stated one refused to participate; and

WHEREAS former Minister of Justice and Attorney General Andrew Parsons asked: Who was that? Bruce Chaulk replied: Eddie Joyce; and

WHEREAS Andrew Parsons said: Eddie Joyce would not participate; Bruce Chaulk replied: Yes; and

WHEREAS this was proven false by documentation from my solicitor showing I did request a meeting; and

WHEREAS Bruce Chaulk stated in *The Joyce Report* of October 18, 2018: "... where MHA Joyce has been cooperative throughout," which refutes his statement to the Management Commission that I refused to participate; and

WHEREAS I will show an intentional cover up of this meeting and why I'm making this private Member's resolution to defend my reputation; and

WHEREAS one request to the Management Commission was rejected and I confronted the minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation and Government House Leader, who assured me he would bring it back to the House of Assembly; and

WHEREAS it was rejected and I confronted the Member for Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde and asked him what happened. He stated: I am following orders; and

WHEREAS I stated: The only one who can give you orders is the Premier; and

WHEREAS he said: He's the boss; and

WHEREAS I stated: You sold me down the drain. The Member for Carbonear - Trinity - Bay de Verde stated: You know how this works; and

WHEREAS the Management Commission refused to bring *The Joyce Report* of October 18, 2018, to debate with all the following information; and

WHEREAS I stood on point of privileges on several occasions and they were all rejected; and

WHEREAS I will correct this miscarriage of justice and put the truth on the record; and

WHEREAS the Citizens' Representative presented a report to the former Commissioner for Legislative Standards; and

WHEREAS the Management Commission asked former Justice Green to review this report and report his findings; and

WHEREAS the Management Commission accepted the findings of the Justice Green's report; and

WHEREAS Justice Green stated: "Although there were legitimate questions about witnesses' reliability, the Chief Electoral Officer was never informed of the details of

the witnesses' evidence. Because he was not able to challenge the witnesses' evidence, the findings are unreliable and procedurally unfair"; and

WHEREAS the Management Commission accepted the Green report, whereby a respondent must be informed of the details of witnesses' evidence, and unable to do so, the findings are unreliable and procedurally unfair; and

WHEREAS there were three reports filed against myself; and

WHEREAS there were over 20 witnesses and complainants; and

WHEREAS the only person that was never interviewed for the three reports was myself, and Justice Green declared that this would be procedurally unfair; and

WHEREAS *The Joyce Report* of October 18, 2018, had many witnesses; and

WHEREAS I never had the opportunity to see the testimony of the following witnesses, according to Justice Green, it would be procedurally unfair: the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's, her testimony to my submission and response to all witnesses; MHA Scott Reid; MHA Derrick Bragg; former MHA Cathy Bennett; MHA Bernard Davis; Greg Mercer, former chief of staff to Dwight Ball; Deputy Minister Sean Dutton; Kelly White, former executive assistant to the MHA for Placentia - St. Mary's; Joy Buckle, former staff member in the Premier's office; Karen Stone; MHA Andrew Parsons; former Premier Dwight Ball's, complaint to the Commissioner –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

P. TRIMPER: I'd like to remind this House that it is not our intention to identify the names of people, as he is doing, in the first name. Especially those who are sitting and

especially those who are not able to be here to defend themselves. That's my first point of order. When he concludes, I'll be there with my second one.

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

E. JOYCE: I'm just reading from the report that's in this House, that was tabled in this House, the names are in the report. Keep interrupting.

MHA Andrew Parsons, former Premier Dwight Ball's complaint to the Commissioner, April 27, 2018, media release Executive Council –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

P. TRIMPER: The Member has more years in this House than most of us put together. He knows full well he cannot identify the names of sitting MHA in this House by their name. He has many other ways than to identify people who are sitting here now or tomorrow.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

B. PETTEN: Thank you, Speaker.

I want to clarify what the Member for Lake Melville is saying. We've been in the House today and last week, and the Deputy Premier has identified the Premier's last name on several occasions. We've respectfully not – we've declined to identify it –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

B. PETTEN: But you can't have it both ways. So the Member for Lake Melville should stand when he's Deputy Premier is identifying people. He don't mind standing

for a Member on the opposite side and criticizing them. Maybe he should follow his own Deputy Premier, because we've heard it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

B. PETTEN: Seeing we're on the topic, I hope you tell the hon. House this is not an acceptable practice.

Thank you very much.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

P. TRIMPER: It's within everybody's right and ability in this House, I say to the Member opposite for CBS to raise any point of order any time. So pounce on the situation as you see fit; that's your role.

I'll let mine rest on this floor right now for your decision.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

It has been a practice that we always name Members either by their districts or employees by their positions and that. I ask the Member, you still use their position.

E. JOYCE: Just for the record, Mr. Speaker, all those names were presented in the report. I'm just reading what was in the report that was tabled for public information. I'm just quoting.

SPEAKER: Please move on to your private Member's resolution.

E. JOYCE: Thank you.

Media statements, May 2, from Bruce Chaulk, Commissioner for Legislative Standard advising that he, "on the request of the Premier, will conduct two separate investigations into the conduct of MHA Joyce and MHA Kirby." Text messages from the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's to

Greg Mercer on April 11: No response or submission; and

WHEREAS Justice Green has declared that this is unreliable, procedurally unfair, and it should not be considered; and

WHEREAS the Citizen's Rep investigation of Bruce Chaulk included interviews with at least 20 witnesses. He gave Chief Electoral Officer a 59-page document summarizing the events of each charge; however, the summary did not indicate which witnesses had provided what evidence and the Citizens' Representative did not provide the Chief Electoral Officer with notes or recordings. Justice Green stated that this is procedurally unfair; and

WHEREAS I never received any notes taken during the interview process with an opportunity to dispute these statements. "In my respectful opinion, the Citizens' Representative's findings should not be used as a basis for further action against the Chief Electoral Officer," Justice Green stated; and

WHEREAS the Green report was accepted by the Management Commission, due to the lack of procedural fairness, then this House of Assembly should have *The Joyce Report* of October 18, 2018, reviewed by an independent retired judge, due to the lack of procedural fairness; and

WHEREAS if I had been provided the evidence by the Deputy Minister Sean Dutton concerning the management job which the Member for –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

P. TRIMPER: Thank you.

(Inaudible) the conclusion of this PMR, but I'm sure we can all see where it is going. And I'd like you to rule on the following statement, I know myself as Speaker,

Speaker Reid, other Speakers in this House, but for 48th, 49th and 50th Legislative Assemblies of Newfoundland and Labrador, this Member for Humber - Bay of Islands, has had more than one opportunity to raise this.

I would suggest that by taking advantage of this opportunity, which is the honour and pleasure of this House to have his own PMR, and of all the issues in his district and across this province, he is preoccupied with this singular issue, of wasting the time of this House.

In addition to all the points he's raised, I will remind him that he's just lost a court case, and he should have more than enough feedback by now, that he has had more than ample time to make his statements and move on. I'd ask you to do that.

I leave it to you for your ruling.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

SPEAKER: Are you speaking to this point?

L. PARROTT: Yes.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

L. PARROTT: The hon. the Member for Lake Melville just identified the Member for St. George's - Humber by his last name.

P. TRIMPER: Speaker, if I could respond?

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

P. TRIMPER: (Inaudible) you would have heard, when you are referring to a Speaker, you refer to them by their last name.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

Again, just to remind Members that we refer to people by their titles and positions.

Move on with your private Member's resolution, please.

E. JOYCE: No, I'm going to speak to the motion.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, just two things. That is the same Speaker who wrote me in 2019 and told me the only avenue that I have is to present a private Member's motion in 2023, and here I am. And I can produce that letter.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

E. JOYCE: The second thing, Mr. —

SPEAKER: Order, please!

We'll move on with your resolution, please.

E. JOYCE: (Inaudible.)

SPEAKER: Order, please!

Can you take your seat, please?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SPEAKER: Order, please!

So I ask the Member to move on with the private Member's resolution.

E. JOYCE: WHEREAS Deputy Minister Sean Dutton gave testimony which he knew or should have known was false; and

WHEREAS the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's stated when the job competition was opened, I began to pressure her to get a certain person in the position; and

WHEREAS Deputy Minister Sean Dutton said that after the process was on-going, MHA Joyce provided the parliamentary

secretary with the resume of an individual whom he thought was a good candidate; and

WHEREAS Sean Dutton stated this initial conversation would have been late September or early October; and

WHEREAS the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's gave testimony that when asked: In six weeks, how many times did MHA Joyce talk to her about the position? The complainant estimated it was at least four times, all in passing; and

WHEREAS Deputy Minister Sean Dutton and the complainant, the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's, gave testimony that the process started in late September or early October; and

WHEREAS in a letter dated May 29, 2019: Thank you for your letter of April 8, 2019, and May 27, 2019, concerning the competition for manager of workplace, health and safety inspections based in Corner Brook with the Occupational Health and Safety Division of Service NL. The key dates related to this competition, November 17, 2017, the vacancy was re-advertised on the government website as a Public Opportunity and you apply on the OnLine Job Portal.

B. DAVIS: Mr. Speaker, point of order.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

If the hon. Member would like to utter threats across the House of Assembly like he just did – coming for me next – shows exactly what kind of character he has.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER: Order, please!

No point of order.

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

E. JOYCE: A lot of interruptions.

WHEREAS, the signature to this letter was Deputy Minister Sean Dutton and whereas, by his own admission in the letter of November 17, 2019, the competition for the publicly advertised position was not available for public competition in late September or early October; and

WHEREAS I was not given the opportunity to see, review, dispute the testimony of Sean Dutton until I received *The Joyce Report* of October 18, 2018, on October 18, 2018;

WHEREAS Robert Simmons stated on December 5, 2018, in an email: the file number is slightly off, but assuming you are looking at SNL.17.18.R0734 - manager of workplace health and safety inspections, position was posted on November 17, 2017, and closed December 1, 2017; and

WHEREAS the complainant, the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's, stated in her evidence that MHAs should be discouraged from interfering with the Public Service Commission concerning hiring; and

WHEREAS I have a letter dated July 16, 2018, stating: With respect to your further enquiry regarding competition number SNL 17.18.R0734, I can confirm that the PSC has not, as of today's date, received a complaint regarding that position, signed by Bruce Hollett, Chair and Chief Executive Officer of the Public Service Commission; and

WHEREAS if I interfered with the PSC job, the complainant and the deputy minister had a duty to report that. It was never reported, as the incident never happened; and

WHEREAS this letter was introduced as evidence but ignored by the Commissioner for Legislative Standards, Bruce Chaulk; and

WHEREAS the statements by the complainant and Sean Dutton were false as documents provided by Sean Dutton, himself, and Robert Simmons clearly prove that the position in question was not available to the public in September or October; and

WHEREAS the Deputy Minister Sean Dutton gave the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's the documents to prove that a person was not qualified; and

WHEREAS Sean Dutton did not give the testimony that the information was given on April 11, 2018, after the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's made the complaint to the former Premier Ball's chief of staff, Greg Mercer, to justify her false statements that I was upset over the competition; and

WHEREAS a complaint was made by the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's to Dwight Ball on April 25, 2018; and

WHEREAS the complaints were of mannerism, non-verbal behavior, old boys clubs and manipulative; and

WHEREAS on page 31 of the report, evidence of the complaint taken by Dwight Ball and Joy Buckle is that the complainant spoke about former MHA Tracey Perry's experience, the Member for – what is it, Carbonear, no, Pam Parsons; the Member for – Bernie Davis, what's your district name – regarding the June convention and the SPC meeting referenced; and

WHEREAS Ms. Buckle stated in her evidence, the complainant did not discuss the Placentia, the composting facility or the OHS competition; and

WHEREAS on April 25, 2018, I met with Dwight Ball, Peter Miles and Michelle Cannizzaro; and

WHEREAS Dwight Ball informed me that the complaints were all BS, about glaring, mannerism and wanted mediation; and

WHEREAS I asked: To mediate what, and Dwight Ball said: I know it is all BS but to shut her up, will you go to mediation; and

WHEREAS on April 27, 2018, Dwight Ball stated that he asked the Commissioner for Legislative Standards to conduct an investigation on these complaints of bullying and harassment; and

WHEREAS on May 2, 2018, Bruce Chaulk stated that he, upon a request from Premier Dwight Ball, will conduct two investigations concerning myself and Dale Kirby; and

WHEREAS in the legislation of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, section 38(4) "The commissioner shall report the results of an inquiry as soon as possible, and in any event no later than 90 days after beginning the inquiry"; and

WHEREAS on May 10, 2018, the Commissioner had a meeting with the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's, Cathy Bennett, Cathy Bennett's lawyer, and a letter of intent was given to the Commissioner, Bruce Chaulk; and

WHEREAS on June 12, 2018, a complaint was received from the complainant; and

WHEREAS Bruce Chaulk stated on November 5, 2018, in the House of Assembly "The normal procedure would be whatever I have," I forwarded it to the respondent immediately; and

WHEREAS Bruce Chaulk held on to the complaint for 16 days before he forwarded it to my lawyer; and

WHEREAS the information I received on June 28, 2018, as the complaint was incomplete; and

WHEREAS the information I received, there were no names, just numbers; and

WHEREAS the Commissioner, Bruce Chaulk, or the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's, or both, withheld the names; and

WHEREAS I received a complaint with 30 numbers and I had to try to guess who they were; and

WHEREAS this was procedurally unfair and bias; and

WHEREAS I had two weeks to complete a report with 30 names I did not know and I had to try and match them with corresponding numbers; and

WHEREAS my lawyer complained how unfair this is, legally and procedural, fairness was not upheld; and

WHEREAS Bruce Chaulk threatened that if I didn't sign a confidentiality agreement, only one of the complainants and respondents who had information withheld, until I signed this confidentiality agreement, I would not receive the names corresponding with the numbers. I refused to sign the confidentiality agreement; and

WHEREAS Bruce Chaulk interviewed the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's on July 3, 2018, and the complainant provided the completed submissions; and

WHEREAS Bruce Chaulk held onto the information until July 13, 2018, and sent it to my lawyer on July 13, 2018, at 4:15 p.m. with another 10 days of withholding the information; and

WHEREAS July 13, 2018, was a Friday, and I flew into St. John's on Monday, July 16, I had two days to respond; and

WHEREAS there were numbers we had to clarify with names; and

WHEREAS the PC Party was raising questions in the House of Assembly on April 26 concerning the meeting with Dwight Ball and the second one with Greg Mercer; and

WHEREAS Fred Hutton presented his breaking news –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

I'll remind you again, use the titles of the people. I don't mind you using their surnames and that but use their titles, too.

E. JOYCE: What did I use now? What did I use?

SPEAKER: Dwight Ball; you didn't say Premier Dwight –

E. JOYCE: But he's not Premier.

SPEAKER: Former premier, or the title of the –

E. JOYCE: I'm allowed to use his name. He's not a Member of the House.

SPEAKER: I'm just asking, use their titles too, please.

E. JOYCE: But he's not –

SPEAKER: I'm asking to use their titles. If you challenge the Chair again –

E. JOYCE: So we're not allowed to say Joey Smallwood?

SPEAKER: If you want to continue with your resolution or not?

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

E. JOYCE: WHEREAS Tammy was the code name for Tracey Perry; and

WHEREAS the second name, Michael, was for Fred Hutton; and

WHEREAS Bruce Chaulk interviewed 20 people but I was never interviewed; and

WHEREAS he asked my lawyer to meet on August 1, 2018, which was a civic holiday – Regatta Day in St. John’s; and

WHEREAS my lawyer explained to the Commissioner that he was not available, but I would meet with Bruce Chaulk without my lawyer present –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

Again, I ask you to use the title. You can use the surname, but use the title too, please.

E. JOYCE: Former Commissioner, Bruce Chaulk.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

E. JOYCE: WHEREAS an email was sent to former commissioner, Bruce Chaulk, stating what time I was meeting; and

WHEREAS the former commissioner, Bruce Chaulk, stated: I wasn’t expecting you or your client. I apologize for the misunderstanding; and

WHEREAS there was interviews on the following dates: August 29, 2018, September 18, 2018 and September 24, 2018; and

WHEREAS I was never asked to be interviewed; and

WHEREAS on October 24, 2018, former commissioner, Bruce Chaulk, had a meeting with the Management Commission on the process of the reports; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board asked the question: Did all MHAs participate? And the

former commissioner stated: One never. The Member for Burgeo - La Poile asked who was that; and

WHEREAS the former commissioner replied: Eddie Joyce, and the Member for Burgeo - La Poile said: Eddie Joyce refused to participate? The former commissioner said: Yes; and

WHEREAS I asked the Minister of Finance: Did you see the letters from my lawyer? Her statement: That is not what he said this morning; and

WHEREAS I presented the letter from my lawyer to the Speaker, the Member for Lake Melville, in front of the Speaker’s Chair, and he said: You are definitely willing to meet; and

WHEREAS I turned to the former commissioner, Bruce Chaulk, and I asked if he made this statement and here are all the letters from my lawyers; and

WHEREAS the former commissioner stated: I forgot about them. I will correct the record. Speaker Trimper stated that he heard the statement by the former commissioner; and

WHEREAS the Member for Burgeo - La Poile stated publicly about the false statements that the former commissioner made in the Management Commission; and

WHEREAS I have sworn affidavits, one from the Member for Burgeo - La Poile, which states on October 24, the Management Commission held a technical briefing with the former commissioner concerning the process of his investigations into bullying and harassment. During the briefing the Finance Minister asked the former commissioner: Did Members of the House of Assembly participate in the interviews? The former commissioner responded: One refused to participate. I asked: Who was that? The former commissioner stated: Eddie Joyce. I asked again: Eddie Joyce refused to participate?

The former commissioner said: Yes. The briefing continued on the process used by Mr. Chaulk; and – that is a sworn affidavit.

WHEREAS the second affidavit is from the Deputy Speaker after the Speaker, the Member for Lake Melville, made a ruling in the House of Assembly which I felt was unfair. The affidavit stated: On October 29, Mr. Joyce, MHA for the Humber - Bay of Islands, raised a point of privilege in the House. On October 30, 2018, the Speaker of the House of Assembly, the Member for Lake Melville, made a ruling that there was no prima facie case on the privilege. In November, Eddie Joyce asked me to join him in a meeting with Speaker, the Member for Lake Melville. The three of us met in the Speaker's office.

Eddie Joyce showed him the two emails where he wrote saying it was an in camera session. Eddie Joyce stated: Speaker, you were in the meeting, you heard the former commissioner say I refused to participate. Eddie then said: Speaker, you told me in front of the Speaker's Chair that this is not what he said this morning, you were definitely willing to meet.

Eddie Joyce said: Speaker, you heard the former commissioner say he forgot about those letters. I will correct the record. Eddie Joyce then said: How can you make that ruling? The Speaker, the Member for Lake Melville, replied: Eddie, I know you are right but he's an Officer of the House; it's hard for me to do. Eddie Joyce turned to me and said: Remember this conversation and see the BS that I have to put up with. Eddie Joyce then left the room; and

WHEREAS this is more evidence that the former commissioner misled the Management Commission and the former Chair of the Management Commission and Speaker, the Member for Lake Melville, confirming he knew that the former commissioner, Bruce Chaulk, made a false, misleading statement to the Management Commission; and

WHEREAS I wrote the Speaker, the Member for Lake Melville, on October 26, 2018, asking that he confirm the statement by the former commissioner, Bruce Chaulk, on October 24, 2018, at the Management Commission meeting with the former commissioner, Bruce Chaulk. The Speaker replied: Unfortunately, it is not appropriate for me to comment on the contents of an in camera technical briefing of the Management Commission; and – I could not get the evidence.

WHEREAS, again, I wrote the Speaker, the Member for Lake Melville on November 6 and said: You, as Speaker and Chair of the Management Commission, have the responsibility to uphold the rights of all Members of the House of Assembly. My rights have been violated and I am requesting you, as Speaker, to ask Mr. Chaulk, former commissioner, for a written and public apology. He is an Officer of the House of Assembly and answers to the Management Commission and I expect you will fulfill your sworn duties to protect the rights of all Members of the House of Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the response I received on November 6, 2018 stated: As the request refers to an in camera technical briefing of the Management Commission, it is inappropriate for me to comment on the discussion therein; and

WHEREAS, I raised a point of privilege on March 4, 2019; and

WHEREAS on March 14, the Speaker, the Member for Lake Melville, made a ruling and he stated: With the exception of the Clerk, Members of the Management Commission are Members of the House of Assembly. Any questions they had about comments concerning the Commissioner may have made in the technical briefing could have easily been raised when questioning the Commissioner for Legislative Standards in the reports; and – the meeting changed.

WHEREAS, the Speaker, in his two emails, said he couldn't confirm the statements because it was an in camera session but to justify a ruling, he deemed the meeting a technical briefing. The Speaker stated: Members have provided no further correspondence after this exchange to indicate that he sought an in-person meeting with the Commission. A typical case of blaming the victim for justifying a wrongdoing.

WHEREAS in section 21(1) of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* under Duty to Document: "The commission, officers and staff of the House of Assembly service shall be responsible and accountable for ensuring that all advice, deliberations, decisions and recommendations of the commission that result from formal or informal meetings of the members of the commission are properly documented in accordance with the Records Management Policy of the House of Assembly"; and

WHEREAS I asked for a copy of the minutes but I was informed there was no minutes taken; and

WHEREAS I appealed to the Privacy Commissioner whose report was issued on October 22, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Privacy Commissioner stated: We are satisfied that the meeting of October 23, 2018, with the Commissioner for Legislative Standards we called a technical briefing; and.

WHEREAS, this is contrary to the Speaker's, the Member for Lake Melville, emails where I was refused information where the former commissioner stated that I refused to participate as it was an in camera technical briefing; and

WHEREAS the Privacy Commissioner stated: The House of Assembly "conducted a search for records and determined there were no minutes"; and

WHEREAS the House of Assembly found some Members of the Management Commission present at the technical briefing did take personal notes and I was refused these personal notes as no official minutes were taken and they were not put in the official record; and

WHEREAS the Speaker made another false statement to justify Bruce Chaulk's refusal to interview me and to justify the false statements to the Management Commission that I refused to participate; and

WHEREAS the Speaker and the Member for Lake Melville wrote: With respect to your second question on whether or not a respondent choose to appear, you are not required to appear nor was it expected. The act provides that you can make representation to the commissioner in writing or in person or by counsel or other representation; and

WHEREAS the statement is inaccurate as section 37(2) of the act states: "Where the commissioner conducts an inquiry under subsection (1), he or she shall give the member to whom the inquiry relates a copy of the request and at all appropriate stages throughout the inquiry the commissioner shall give the member reasonable opportunity to be present and to make representations to the commissioner in writing or in person or by counsel or other representative"; and

WHEREAS the act clearly states I have the right to be present at all appropriate stages of the inquiry which is contrary to the statement by the Speaker and the statement by the former commissioner in the Management Commission; and

WHEREAS section 38(4) states "The commissioner shall report the results of an inquiry as soon as possible, and in any event no later than 90 days after beginning the inquiry"; and

WHEREAS the Commissioner stated publicly on May 2, 2018, that he will conduct an investigation on myself and Dale Kirby upon the request of the premier and delivered his report 169 days later, contrary to the act of 90 days; and

WHEREAS I asked former Premier Dwight Ball a question, if he was in contact with Bruce Chaulk during the investigation; and

WHEREAS there were over 100 questions asked on this issue and many to the premier; and

WHEREAS the Speaker and the Member for Lake Melville ruled the question out of order as it was concerning the fiscal policy of the government; and

WHEREAS these are some of the road blocks I faced trying to get to the truth and restore my reputation; and

WHEREAS in a ruling by the Speaker that the meeting of October 24, 2019, with the former commissioner was a technical briefing and he stated that Members of the Management Commissioner are Members of the House of Assembly. Any questions I had about the comments made in a technical briefing could easily have been raised; and

WHEREAS I asked the question to the Member for Burgeo - La Poile on April 11, 2019, same Member who was in the technical briefing with the Commissioner. The Speaker, the Member for Lake Melville, ruled it out of order as it relates to activities of the Management Commission; and

WHEREAS I asked Members to think of section 12(f) of the *House of Assembly Act* when I read this next section: "tampering with a witness in respect of his or her evidence, to be given to the House of Assembly or a committee of the House of Assembly, or directly or indirectly trying to deter or hinder a person from appearing or giving evidence"; and

WHEREAS there was no findings of bullying and harassment; and

WHEREAS I was never interviewed and there is mounting evidence that I did not interfere with a public service position; and

WHEREAS Principle 10 did apply to another Member, I was asked by many people, including the media: How were you found in violation of the Code of Conduct; and

WHEREAS I cited that former Premier Dwight Ball as not forwarding relevant information to the investigator, political interference and trying to ensure that I agreed with a report and I did not speak on *The Joyce Report* of October 18, 2018; and

WHEREAS the former commissioner stated on many occasions that he is an independent officer of the House of Assembly; and

WHEREAS former Premier Dwight Ball made many statements in the House of Assembly and in the public domain concerning the independence of the commissioner; and

WHEREAS on December 4, 2018, former Premier Dwight Ball stated, "Let's be very clear: The responses and the allegations and the back and forth that would've occurred between the Commissioner, I first found about them when those reports were tabled." This statement is false; and

WHEREAS on December 4, 2018, when former Opposition Leader Ches Crosbie asked the former premier would it be consistent with what the premier said on May 2, 2018, and I quote, "This is an independent process. It must maintain the integrity and the confidence of those who are dealing with it."

"PREMIER BALL: Of course it was an independent process" This statement is false; and

WHEREAS former Premier Ball stated on December 4, 2018, “Mr. Speaker, the written responses were supplied; they were made public here. That’s when I would have seen the information that would have come out from the Commissioner.” This statement by former Premier Dwight Ball is false; and

WHEREAS on May 16, 2018, Dwight Ball stated in the House of Assembly, “I can guarantee you, no way will I be inserting myself proactively.” This statement will be proven false; and

WHEREAS, on November 5, 2018, Dwight Ball stated in the House of Assembly: “Somewhere along the line, of course, the processes had changed ... but Members took a different route to actually get the allegations dealt with and investigated.

“So, that was my only involvement in all of this” The former commissioner: “Yes, very much so”; and

WHEREAS I will prove that statement false; and

WHEREAS on May 2, 2018, former Premier Dwight Ball stated in *Hansard*: “This is an independent process. It must maintain the integrity and the confidence of those who are dealing with it.” This statement will be proven false and the former premier himself involved himself in the process; and

WHEREAS on July 13, 2018, in a CBC interview, the premier states: No room for political interference, so hasn’t sought update. Former Premier Ball was asked about the report at an event Wednesday and he said he has not seen or sought out any information given it is an independent process. “There’s no room for political interference in these reports,” said Ball. “I’ve not received any information from the commissioner, neither have I went looking for any.” Dwight Ball went on to say, “the investigation and the release of the report isn’t something he has any control or say

over.” These statements are absolutely false; and

WHEREAS on August 6, 2018, Dwight Ball informed me that Colin Holloway’s report will be coming out on August 7, 2018; and

WHEREAS former Premier Dwight Ball called me that night and said the report will not be coming out but both will be coming out together in the near future; and

WHEREAS both reports came out together on August 23, 2018, as the former premier said; and

WHEREAS former Premier Dwight Ball, his office or both were in contact with Bruce Chaulk during his investigation; and

WHEREAS Dwight Ball confirmed to me that John Samms, an advisor in the Premier’s office, was in contact with the former commissioner; and

WHEREAS John Samms informed me, on several occasions, he was in contact with the former commissioner on Dwight Ball’s orders; and

WHEREAS John Samms informed me at a later date that Dwight Ball knew of the preliminary report and he was asked to talk to former the former commissioner to find something easy on Eddie and Dale; and

WHEREAS I wrote Dwight Ball on March 19, 2019, and stated: Mr. Premier, you informed me on several occasions that Mr. John Samms, an advisor in your office, contacted the former commissioner to ask for a status of the Reports. Premier, I’m asking for the following information: (1) how many times has John Samms contacted the former commissioner throughout the process; (2) under what direction and by whom in your office was this direction given; (3) how many times, with dates, did Mr. Samms contact the former commissioner; (4) will you release any and all notes taken briefing you or your senior officials in your

office; (5) who informed you that the Holloway report would be released on August 7, 2018, but later informed you that the reports would be released together?

If your statement to me is correct and there was any contact by your staff to Bruce Chaulk, the former commissioner, in any part of this investigation, it is a serious violation of my privacy; and

WHEREAS I wrote the former Premier Dwight Ball again on April 1, 2019, seeking this information; and

WHEREAS I wrote again on May 27, 2019, seeking this information; and

WHEREAS on May 31, 2019, I received a response from Dwight Ball – and I quote – I can confirm there were limited occasions where my office contacted the Office of the Commissioner for Legislative Standards; and

WHEREAS how many people in this House of Assembly voted on these motions and knew Dwight Ball was personally involved with the Commissioner for Legislative Standards during the investigation and directed the final outcome – Premier Ball himself; and

WHEREAS this confirms that there was political interference with the investigation and the independence of the Commissioner is called into question. Dwight Ball made many statements that he never contacted the former commissioner during the investigation but this is proven false and he would never contact his office for updates, but he did; and

WHEREAS my rights to a fair process has been jeopardized and *The Joyce Report* of October 18, 2018, and *The Kirby Report* should be rescinded due to political interference as we will never know what was discussed, and I feel confident as John Samms said to me: Dwight seen a copy of mine and Dale's initial preliminary report

where Rubin Thomlinson stated there was no bullying and harassment and he was asked by Dwight Ball to find something easy on Eddie and Dale to balance it out; and.

WHEREAS this is why Bruce Chaulk found me in violation – the former commissioner – of Principle 10, when he classified the complainant as a government employee; and

WHEREAS Rubin Thomlinson found there was no bullying and harassment, Bruce Chaulk had to try and justify why I was never interviewed and why there was no political interference; and

WHEREAS this is a very serious breach of trust by then Premier Dwight Ball and an Officer of the House of Assembly, by not reporting contact between them both; and

WHEREAS Dwight Ball stated on November 4, 2018: Mr. Speaker, if the Commissioner or anyone wanted me to participate in these areas, I absolutely would have been there – absolutely would have been there; and

WHEREAS Dwight Ball committed to me to be a witness as a person who took –

SPEAKER: Again, I remind you to use the titles, please.

E. JOYCE: The former Premier Dwight Ball –

SPEAKER: Thank you.

E. JOYCE: – who took the complaints, as a person who had important evidence and committed to present it but refused; and

WHEREAS I will provide proof that the Dwight Ball stymied the investigation and as premier, he has an obligation to make the submissions; and

WHEREAS on April 27, 2018, I received a call from former MHA Mark Browne and the

former MHA Carol Anne Haley about 11:30 pm; and

WHEREAS they informed me they had had 150 to 200 text messages from the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's concerning discussions in Cabinet; and

WHEREAS they stated they had text messages that weren't very nice about me; and

WHEREAS, former MHA Mark Browne and former MHA Carol Anne Haley informed me they sent the text messages to Dwight Ball; and

WHEREAS Dwight Ball informed me that he received the text messages and he used profane language and stated he will get rid of her; and

WHEREAS I told Dwight Ball he should release the leaked text messages now but he refused as he stated people would think he is doing this because we are friends; and

WHEREAS if Dwight Ball released the information, the investigation would have stopped; and

WHEREAS, on June 7, 2018, Dwight Ball came to the Sir Richard Squires Building in Corner Brook and had a conversation with two individuals; and

WHEREAS a sworn affidavit by Ms. Veronica Hickey, my sister, stated: Veronica said if it wasn't for Eddie and his supporters, he wouldn't be premier and he replied: I know that. Do you think I like looking over at her effing face every day; and

WHEREAS Dwight asked if we had seen the text messages from the Member for Placentia - St. Mary's to Mark Browne. He started to go through his binder but couldn't find it. He then made the comment: I have enough information to clear Eddie. Eddie is going to be all right; and

WHEREAS Judy Bolt was present at the same encounter and, in a sworn affidavit, Judy stated: Dwight, you have a leak in your Cabinet; you got to do something about her and he replied: She's going to be taken care of; and

WHEREAS Dwight Ball tried to show her the text messages; and

WHEREAS when the premier withheld evidence pertaining to an investigation, he denied my rights to a fair hearing; and

WHEREAS Dwight Ball committed to me that he would be a witness and give evidence about the bias towards me by the Member of Placentia - St. Mary's; and

WHEREAS with political interference and refusing to present evidence in an investigation showed the bias of Dwight Ball; and

WHEREAS before debate in the House of Assembly, I met with two people in an official capacity and I will release the names if there is an investigation; and

WHEREAS during this meeting, I was adamant that I was wrongly accused and found in violation; and

WHEREAS I was offered my lost salary and pension benefits amounting to over \$30,000 if I read a seven-sentence response, admitting guilt and stating that I would have no further comment on this matter; and

WHEREAS this offer I was told was from Dwight Ball. I was very upset that I would be offered money to try and make me apologize for something I did not do and not be able to speak on the matter; and

WHEREAS I stated: Tell Dwight Ball I am not for sale; and

WHEREAS to use taxpayers' funds, in my opinion, to guarantee my silence, as some

people described as a bribe, is unethical from former Premier Dwight Ball; and

WHEREAS I feel so strongly that there should be an investigation under section 12(f), as I mentioned earlier, of the *House of Assembly Act* to see if this act was violated; and

WHEREAS there are Members in this House of Assembly who can confirm that his offer was presented to me; and

WHEREAS the documentation provided of a faulty investigation with political interference by the former premier, Dwight Ball, withholding evidence by the former premier, Dwight Ball, during an investigation; and offering funds for a confession, I urge this House of Assembly to send *The Joyce Report* of October 18, 2018, and *The Kirby Report* of October 9, 2018, to an independent, retired judge to review and report back to the House of Assembly the findings.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Is this the private Member's resolution for this Wednesday?

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

Further notices of motion?

The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

P. TRIMPER: Speaker, I'd like to read the point of order and I guess what I'm asking you to suggest or to decide on is that this PMR that was just read is not acceptable and should be either rejected or give the Member an opportunity to table another one, for two reasons.

One is, as I stated earlier, the actual ask at the end: to rescind that report. This was a motion that was debated at length in this House of Assembly. It was passed

unanimously, with exception of the gentleman, and it has been raised repeated times under the 48th, 49th and now 50th Legislative Assemblies.

I would consider it, and I have ruled in the past, I believe you have as well, the previous Speaker has, as wasting the time of the House.

I would further add on another point, and having sat for two years as an independent, I also felt that one of the beefs of sitting as an independent is you often don't get those opportunities. And I sat with those two gentlemen over there, who are now sitting as independents, and helped raise the matter so that we would have opportunities eventually – you have to wait your time – to actually raise a PMR that would be important for the district, for the province. It would represent perhaps the policy or aspirations of a political party.

But in this case, the Member has decided to raise an issue near and dear to him, and him only, to waste the time of this House. So I would ask you to rule it out of order and perhaps invite him to come up with another but I doubt he has one on his mind.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear

SPEAKER: Do you want to respond to it?

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

E. JOYCE: First of all, he was supposed to say what section, which he didn't. Just for the next time when someone stands up for you, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, he's talking about me wasting the time. I'll just remind you that you're the one in the Liberal party, the Liberal government, that closed the House last week at 3:10. When we talk about –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

E. JOYCE: – just about wasting time.

The second thing I'll raise, Mr. Speaker. This is the same Speaker, when he was Speaker, told me I should bring up a private Member's resolution. I have that letter where you advised me that this is when I can do it and this is my time, in 2023.

You're the one who gave me the advice to do it. This Speaker gave me the advice to do it. I've got his letter that I could bring it up.

The third thing, Mr. Speaker, is he's saying that I'm wasting people's time. Is someone's reputation worth it? Is the integrity of this House of Assembly worth standing up for? When you have a former premier of the province and, you know, admits that he was involved with an independent officer of the House and we know that a lot of information during this debate, some Members were here, some weren't, were never presented to this House. You're trying to say that the integrity of this House of Assembly is not worth it.

We have questions here; I won't get into it, but a few people making statements that in this House you can question. This is where you question it. This is the same person who is standing up now, who on two occasions wrote me an email and says an in camera meeting and later he stated it wasn't to justify a meeting.

This is the integrity of this House. This is the integrity of the Speaker. This is the integrity of the Management Commission that Justice Green – I was here when Justice Green interviewed people back in 2007. I was part of it. He brought in the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, Mr. Speaker, so that we have rules to follow.

I remember John Lewis, the great icon: If one person's right is violated, all of our rights are.

Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt that my rights were violated. I don't wish anybody any harm, but I wish my integrity was put back in place. I will stand any time in this House, which I'm elected, and if the Member for Lake Melville thinks that I'm wasting the people's time in Humber - Bay of Islands, come out and run against me, because I can tell you more people today from the Humber - Bay of Islands would be proud that I stood up. Do you know why? Because I would do it for them.

I remember the Member for Portugal Cove - St. Philip's, he was in a situation here and was with us back years ago. There was another Member there, and we stood up. We said: We've got to go get this straightened up because what was happening was wrong. We stood up for a Member of the government because it's the right thing to do.

So when the Member for Lake Melville thinks I'm wasting my time: my reputation is worth it. The integrity of the House of Assembly is worth it. My family is worth it.

If this Member wants to say that I'm wasting time to bring back integrity to this House of Assembly, then, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you right now, if it wasn't for politics, I wouldn't be here today debating this. I wouldn't be here. If it wasn't for we had to present all the information, I wouldn't be here. If a couple of Members who stood up for me – and they know who they are. I don't have to name them, but they know who they are with integrity over there. They tried their best to help and do whatever they can do because they knew it was wrong.

I still remember, Mr. Speaker, this whole debate, and it was you, Mr. Speaker, also, that I spoke to. You remember I spoke to you about that, remember? What did I tell

you, Mr. Speaker? Can I put that private conversation we had in front of the people?

SPEAKER: No, no, that's okay. If you want to speak privately, we can speak privately.

E. JOYCE: Yeah, I know.

But I said to the Speaker – and I knew then the PC Opposition was against it, the NDP were out for blood. Do you know what I said to you? Don't vote for it because you'll lose your political reputation and your political status in the party. Didn't I tell you that, Mr. Speaker? That's how concerned I was about other people. I asked you – you and a few others – don't do it because it will never pass anyway. You wanted to vote against it because that's what you told me and that's what I did.

So when the Member for Lake Melville wants to stand up and question my integrity, come out and run against me. When you want to stand up after your involvement with this here and say I shouldn't be bringing this up – reflect. I'll say to the Member for Lake Melville: reflect. Reflect on the statements you made. Reflect on the information that you could have had this resolved on October 24, here in this House of Assembly. Reflect on that. Don't have malice towards me. There's no need to have malice towards me. That's all I'm saying to you.

I'm standing for my rights and if you think my rights aren't worth it – which, obviously, if you had to stand up on October 24 as Speaker, the most powerful person in this House of Assembly, this would have been resolved. You know it and I know it. So please dig down deep. Put aside the politics. Think of my family. Think about it because I feel confident what I put in here today, every bit of it, can be backed up by documentation and witnesses.

Mr. Speaker, I stand on my integrity. I'll stand here as much as I can to stand up for the people because the people of Bay of Islands wouldn't expect any different of me.

When I was offered – I even got the seven sentences, and people know what I am saying – seven sentences, read that there. I said: what, and I had a few choice words.

Do you think that I'm here because I want to be here? Do you think I want to stand in this House today to present this here because I want to? I don't want to, but I will do it.

And do you know something, Mr. Speaker, I'm saying here on this point of order right now: I would do it for any Member in this House that was wrongly accused; I would do it for anybody. I would stand up for anybody that was wrongly accused or wrongly given justice to. That's my nature. Anybody, bar none.

Mr. Speaker, I'll take my seat now and I ask the Member for Lake Melville: Don't try to minimize this here, that I shouldn't bring this up, Sir, please don't do it. You know the difference; you're part of it. It's better for all of us to stand up, get this resolved, make a motion in the House, get it resolved and get it done. Even if you don't want to do it, stand up and say whatever you want to say that there was a misunderstanding, the process wasn't done properly, rescind the two motions so we can move on. I won't hold any malice. Absolutely no malice because I am not a hateful person.

So if anybody wants to stand and question my point of privilege about me defending my reputation and defending my family, please don't question why I'm doing it because I would do it for anybody. People over there who I dealt with before on a personal basis, I defended them on a lot of personal things. That's my nature.

Mr. Speaker, I'll sit down now, but this is so serious to me, my family and supporters that I had to do it and it was on the recommendation of the Member for Lake Melville. I find it kind of hypocritical that he would stand now and say that I shouldn't do it.

What that was, Mr. Speaker, was back then in 2019 he thought he'd get rid of it and say, well do a private Member's motion in 2023 when your time is up. Guess what, I'm here, two elections since; I'm still here. Last election, almost 75 per cent. So you think people are worried that I am going to defend myself. People will be proud today that I did this, Sir – a lot of people would be proud.

We have another person up here in the gallery, Mr. Speaker. That is the kind of rights we have to stand for in this House.

For anybody to minimize my rights, they're minimizing that person's rights in the House of Assembly, in the gallery also, Mr. Speaker. We have to stand together for peoples' rights and we have to stand up when there are wrongful things done. The best thing to do is let's get it fixed and we'll all move on.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: I will take the point of order under advisement.

We will move on to further notices of motion.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

J. HOGAN: 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 Tuesday, October 24, 2023.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

J. HOGAN: Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow move that, notwithstanding Standing Order 9, this House shall not adjourn at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, October 25, 2023, and shall continue to sit to conduct Government Business, and if not earlier adjourned, the Speaker shall adjourn the House at midnight.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

J. HOGAN: Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow move that, in accordance with Standing Order 11(1), that this House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 26, 2023.

SPEAKER: Are there any further notices of motion?

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Petitions

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

J. DWYER: Thank you, Speaker.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The closure of the Canning Bridge in Marystown has had a devastating impact on residents, fire and emergency services, and the local economy.

The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure was well aware of the poor condition of the bridge, most recently documents in a bridge inspection report completed in January 2020 which confirmed the Canning Bridge was in poor condition.

Therefore, we petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows: We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to immediately begin the process to replace the Canning Bridge.

While the process has started on the engineering side, there hasn't been any tangible mitigation put in place to help the residents. Most are on a fixed income, when it comes to seniors, persons with disabilities and our staff that are working at some of the

local establishments. There's not a high wage for them to be paying all the extra money in taxis and fares and stuff like that.

My question to the government is that after more than 10 months of trying to mitigate against the closure of the Canning Bridge, what is this government implementing to help the residents of Marystown that have incurred costs because of the condemned bridge connecting Marystown North and Marystown South?

Furthermore, I ask that the minister please table the schedule presented to the residents recently and council of Marystown on the replacement of the Canning Bridge.

Thank you, Speaker.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Speaker.

This is a petition urging the House of Assembly to ask government to amend the *Limitations Act* to clearly state there is no limitation period for civil claims involving child abuse of any form.

Various forms of child abuse often co-occur and are highly interrelated. Treating child sexual abuse differently from non-sexual child abuse for limitation purposes is inconsistent with the shift in society's awareness and understanding of the damaging effects of child maltreatment.

Speaker, this petition I've presented several times. The most important thing I think we need to talk about is the limitation period on civil claims. The way the courts treat sexual abuse of children in care and abuse that's considered of a non-sexual nature.

The reason for this petition is that we need to make sure that when children are in care, they are safe. But when they're severely harmed, when they can be treated in a way that can be labelled as torture, that those

children who grow up to be adults have some legal recourse. It's about justification. It's about justice, abuse, recourse and, I guess, the quest for justice.

Now, there are limitations set on civil claims, but when the child is growing up they're actually developing their overall insight on to what the world is. Children who grow up in a safe manner have a different perspective on reality than somebody who's growing up, say, at the tender age of 13.

This petition was brought forward and I don't mind saying this petition was brought forward by Jack Whalen who was severely harmed by the system in care. When he was brought into the system at the age of 13, he was robbed of equal access to education. He was robbed of the resources to be able to grow up to be a productive person without any trauma.

Now, how people deal with trauma is different, but at the end of the day if you expect somebody to spend four years in care, to be abused where it's labelled torture, then expect them to go on out into the world and have two years to recover from abuses that shouldn't be named, torture that should not have been endured, to expect them to then at the tender of age of 19, 20 years old to be able to have the wherewithal to actually seek legal justice – and that's what he's been robbed of, Speaker, and he's speaking on behalf of all the youth out there not only today, not only in the past that's been harmed but all the future –

SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Member's time has expired.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

E. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I stand today in a petition:

We call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to amend the *Limitations Act* to remove the limitations period for civil child abuse claims when the abuse complaint occurred against a minor.

The above-mentioned legislation changes should be retroactive to comply, regardless of the expiry of any previous limitation periods.

Mr. Speaker, I stand again today on part of this, because someone's rights have been violated. As I said earlier, in this House, when someone's rights are violated, all of our rights are violated. This is what a civil society does.

When someone has been violated and have to live with that, there should be some mechanism. I'm not sure, and I'll ask the minister – he can send me a note later – how many other provinces have this statute of limitations lifted. I can write the minister and get it but I'm asking now.

I asked last week about truth and reconciliation. We hear all of this about truth and reconciliation in this province and Labrador and across Canada, and it should be truth and reconciliation. It should be. I remember my dad telling me things he's seen in Labrador that should never have happened. My grandmother, she used to talk about it. It should never have happened.

So, Mr. Speaker, my question to all the Members in this House: Who gives us the determination of who should have the truth and reconciliation and who shouldn't? Truth and reconciliation for the Indigenous definitely should be done. But shouldn't we have truth and reconciliation for somebody else who doesn't have a voice, doesn't have a national group supporting them, just a lone person?

Shouldn't we, in this House of Assembly, be that voice? Shouldn't we stand up because there is no other voice? Isn't that what we're elected to do in this House of Assembly? Isn't this part of our duty in this House of Assembly is the people who don't have a voice to stand up for them?

We have an opportunity to make a change here. We have opportunity here to give comfort that, yes, someone is listening to me. We have an opportunity to make sure that from whatever days are left yes, people believe me. Yes, I can move on with my life. If we don't do that, Mr. Speaker, what are we doing in this House of Assembly, this Legislature?

This is the kind of thing with people who don't have a voice; we need to be their voice. I call upon the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to be that voice. I'll be the first person out, in the front seat, applauding the minister's decision if it can be done. I know the minister well and the minister is of integrity, so I ask the minister to reconsider this and try to review the act so we eliminate the statute of limitations.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Orders of the Day.

Orders of the Day

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

J. HOGAN: I call from the Order Paper, Motion 8.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

J. HOGAN: Speaker, I move, seconded by the Deputy Government House Leader, that pursuant to Standing Order 11(1) this House not adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, October 23, 2023.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

J. HOGAN: Speaker, I call from the Order Paper, Motion 6.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

J. HOGAN: Speaker, I move, seconded by the Deputy Government House Leader, for leave to introduce a bill entitled, an Act to Repeal the Colonial Building Act, Bill 57, and I further move that the said bill be now read a first time.

SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the hon. Government House Leader shall have leave to introduce a bill, An Act to Repeal the Colonial Building Act, Bill 57, and the said bill be now a first time.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation to introduce a bill, "An Act to Repeal the Colonial Building Act," carried. (Bill 57)

CLERK (Hawley George): A bill, An Act to Repeal the Colonial Building Act. (Bill 57)

SPEAKER: This bill has now been read a first time.

When shall the said bill be read a second time?

J. HOGAN: Tomorrow.

SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 57 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

J. HOGAN: Speaker, I call from the Order paper, Motion 7.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Government House Leader.

J. HOGAN: Speaker, I move, seconded by the Deputy Government House Leader that notwithstanding the 2023 Parliamentary Calendar, this House not sit on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, but shall instead meet for the installation of the Lieutenant Governor designate, Joan Marie Aylward, at 11:30 in the morning.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

J. HOGAN: Speaker, I call from the Order Paper, Order 10, second reading of, An Act to Amend the Change of Name Act, 2009, Bill 50.

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Education that Bill 50, An Act to Amend the Change of Name Act, 2009, now be read a second time.

SPEAKER: It is now moved and seconded that Bill 50, An Act to Amend the Change of Name Act, 2009, Bill 50, be now read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act to Amend the Change of Name Act, 2009." (Bill 50)

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Speaker.

So the *Change of Name Act, 2009*, establishes the legislative framework for individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador to change their names. Under the act, a person who is a resident of Newfoundland and Labrador and at least 16 years old can apply for a legal name change.

To request a legal name change, a person must complete the required application, provide the registrar of Vital Statistics with a sworn affidavit and provide their birth certificate or other proof of birth. Before approval is received for the legal name change, the registrar may require and request additional information from the person. There is currently no requirement for information that would identify past criminal activity or the reason that a person is changing their name.

As outlined in the act, all legal name changes in Newfoundland and Labrador are reported to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary and Motor Registration.

So currently applying for and receiving a legal name change does not mean individuals can evade law enforcement or

change their criminal record. We know that all these organizations share all of the information each time an individual changes their name.

When law enforcement agencies receive notice of a legal name change, the individual's former name is reviewed through the Canadian Police Information Centre to determine whether that individual has a criminal record. The Criminal Intelligence Service NL also follow established protocols to ensure that former names, if found to be connected to a criminal record, are linked to the new legal name.

Last year, we heard concerns from the public regarding an incident of a sex offender obtaining a legal name change and the associated negative impact on the victims. We can all remember – well, I remember, and there was a lot of discussion in the media, and we spent a lot of time talking to victims, talking to the community, and now we're taking action to strengthen the legal name change process, and prevent this from happening in the future, by bringing forward Bill 50 in the House of Assembly today.

Bill 50 provides the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL with the authority to prohibit name changes for sex offenders convicted of 16 designated sex offences. The 16 designated sex offences identified in the bill have been extracted from defences identified in the *Criminal Code of Canada*.

Bill 50 will also require criminal record checks from applicants seeking legal name changes. The submission of a criminal record check as part of the legal name change process is necessary to be able to identify persons convicted of any of these 16 designated offences.

Applications submitted by a person convicted of any of these 16 offences would be forwarded to me by the registrar of Vital

Statistics and the minister would then have the authority to refuse the requested name change.

It should be noted that anyone under the age of 16 seeking a name change with the consent of their parent or legal guardian would not have to provide a criminal record check. It should also be noted that Bill 50 does not include the requirement for fingerprinting as part of the criminal record check process. That aspect would be based on the process established by the respective law enforcement agency providing the criminal record check.

Speaker, just to elaborate on that, sometimes we know that if someone is requesting a criminal record check and they might have the same name as someone else, for example, if the criminal record check is not very clear whether a criminal background belongs to this person or this person, the law enforcement agency might require a fingerprinting as part of their criminal record check process. But that's not something we'll be requiring, Speaker.

Enacting this bill makes Newfoundland and Labrador the fourth province in Canada to prohibit registered sex offenders from changing their names. Alberta, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia have similar legislation, and I believe in Ontario there's a private Member's resolution that was recently passed.

Consistent with the current act and the practice in other jurisdictions, persons changing their name for reasons of marriage or divorce would be exempt from this process. The rationale for this is that changes of surnames related to marriage or divorce are often for purposes of convenience, and are supported by other legal documentation such as a marriage certificate or divorce decree.

All jurisdictions provide exemptions for persons changing their name due to marriage or divorce. When someone

changes their name due to marriage or divorce, there are rules associated with that. You can only change your last name, and you can only change your last name to the other person's name, or a combination of names. When you get divorced, you can only change your name back to your previous name. So you can't just make up a third name for example, if changing it for the purposes of marriage or divorce.

To date, we have been informally publishing full legal name changes in *The Newfoundland and Labrador Gazette*, both a person's given name and their surname. With these amendments today, we're taking the opportunity to update the language in the legislation to clarify for the public and make law of what gets published when a name change occurs.

All legal name changes are reported to law enforcement agencies like the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, as well as Motor Registration. Once this notice is received, the individual's former name is reviewed by national and provincial police agencies like the Canadian Police Information Centre and the Criminal Intelligence Service NL to determine whether or not that individual has a criminal record.

If the individual has a record, the criminal record is attached to the new legal name. So changing your name does not mean an individual's criminal history or record disappears. Notification is provided to the appropriate agencies to ensure public safety. This has always been a part of the process. We are now strengthening the process and upping our stance on public safety by prohibiting sex offenders from changing their legal name.

Mr. Speaker, just to elaborate on that, I said previously there's no public safety risk. Well, you can't evade the law by changing your name. I did reflect a lot on this and I thought about instances where someone, a younger

person for example, might be vulnerable. They might look at someone's ID and google their name and then what comes up when you see those results. They could make serious decisions based on what comes up when they undergo that process.

So I do think this is the right step forward in the name of public safety, Speaker. Establishing a more robust process for persons changing their identities would provide others with a sense of confidence in the process and would strengthen public protection. These changes would establish a stringent and stronger process for name changes, improve transparency, provide the public with a sense of confidence in the process and demonstrate the province's commitment to improving public safety.

These changes will also avoid the re-traumatization of victims and strengthen current processes to prevent sex offenders from using a legal name change to try to escape their criminal records, thereby enhancing public confidence in the system. So I think this is important for the victims, survivors and ones who have shared their stories with us, and also ones who have not shared their stories but are still impacted by these types of decisions.

So I'd be happy to answer any questions and looking forward to discussion of Bill 50.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: I thank the minister for that introduction to Bill 50, which is An Act to Amend the Change of Name Act, 2009.

First of all, Speaker, I can say that certainly the Opposition believes in any law that will enhance transparency, that will enhance public confidence in systems that we have

in government that will improve public safety. I can say that this bill does that in terms of the intent of the legislation. We know that previous to this bill, there have been some gaps, if you will, and some concerns about the system that existed.

For example, prior to this legislation, when we see that a resident of the province could change their name without any type of criminal record check, that certainly was concerning, Speaker. Because what it did is it placed vulnerable individuals, such as partners, for example, with respect to intimate partner violence, it placed people in situations where they were definitely put at risk. If you have an individual changing their name to evade the law, for example, to hide their past so as to prevent others from knowing that they have been convicted as a sexual offender, that obviously is of serious concern.

We see that now, if you want to change your name and you are a convicted sex offender, that at least there are rules, more stringent rules in place requiring you to not do that without having to comply or have registration.

For example, we see that now there has to be a criminal record check. What does that really mean? My understanding, and we'll delve into this more when we ask the minister further questions, but we know now that with having to have a criminal record check, anyone who wants to change their name as a registered sex offender will have to comply. They will have to apply for that legal name change.

Now there are questions that we will ask. For example, I know that the minister will have discretion to give exemptions. I know she mentioned in her introduction that there will be exemptions, for example, provided for someone who's getting a divorce or married. We're going to explore that further and whether there are other exemptions, other places where she feels that there are going to be exemptions allowed so that

means that someone doesn't have to go through this process.

There are concerns about the way things have been and we see the example that the minister referenced with respect to a serial domestic abuser who had legally changed his name after a sexual assault conviction. Obviously, that is a very serious matter; it potentially puts others at risk, other vulnerable people because if this gentleman was able to hide the fact that he has a criminal record and had a criminal conviction for a sexual offence by using this technicality, if you will, with the law, obviously we all have to be very concerned about this. I am glad to see that the minister has now brought forward this amendment, but, again, I have to question what took so long.

When we look at other provinces in our country, we know that, I believe, Newfoundland and Labrador had the least stringent of all of the protections in place. I believe that Nova Scotia, British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan also require fingerprints. So if a person who is a convicted sexual offender wants to legally change their name, they have to have fingerprints. This legislation does not require an individual to have fingerprints.

So, for example, New Brunswick and Ontario, they require a person – this will be similar to Newfoundland and Labrador's legislation – they just have to submit a criminal record check without having fingerprints. So New Brunswick and Ontario, we are following their lead on that. But when we see that Manitoba, for example, it's mandatory for adults to submit their fingerprints with their application. Then we know that their fingerprints then go to the RCMP and they're run through the database. I believe that would be, as well, through CPIC, which is the national database that exists with respect to criminals and crimes.

I'm concerned that we're a little bit late at the gate, if you will, when it comes to this. I think that we have to be very concerned that there are people who have been out there, and are out there, that really want to change their name just to hide in the shadows, if you will, and to prey on innocent, vulnerable victims.

Again, this legislation, it's definitely a good start. We definitely support that, as far as what's stated so far, but again we'll have some further questions as we get into this.

I think, Bill 50, hopefully, will protect more women and others, people who are in vulnerable positions. It's an important piece of legislation. My view is it's long overdue, but I think it will enhance public safety and basically address the concerns with respect to intimate partner violence, that really is what this bill is intended to do.

On that note, Speaker, I look forward to asking questions in Committee.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Speaker.

We're also in favour of this amendment, the Change of Name Act. The reason why we support it is about increasing public safety. I guess one of the reasons why this bill was spurred on was because of public outcry and especially what caught the people's attention was a story where a serial domestic abuser and a registered sex offender was able to change their name. I think attention needs to be drawn to when you have somebody who is a criminal, especially with acts against vulnerable people, that the public needs to be made aware.

What tools do you have when you meet somebody? Or a friend or a family member, they meet somebody? If there are things

that are going on that looks out of the ordinary, that's concerning, the first thing you do is look up the name of a person: Do they have a record? Of course, if they change their name a lot of times, you don't have access to getting that background so you can't actually take steps to protect people. It's so important to protect the public.

Also, it's important to note that there are only two provinces that have legislation preventing name changes by dangerous offenders. When you look at the current act, as my fellow colleague from Harbour Main talked about, it's quite easy to actually change your name. It's quite easy to do. Complete a form, affidavit, pay the fee and then what happens is it's published in the Gazette. But the Gazette is not easy for people to actually go and look at. People are not made aware of the publishing in the Gazette. I certainly don't follow them and I'm in the House of Assembly.

So it's important for us to make sure that people with that type of background, that they're not allowed to change their name and actually continue on their lives, and sometimes their criminal acts, with anonymity. This is what it's about. It's about making sure the public has the option or the ability to actually go in and find out what their history is.

Just looking at the process now, it's positive. If somebody makes an application to have a name change and it's determined that they do have a defined criminal record, then, of course, it has to go to the Registrar General who refers it back to the minister and a decision is made. It's a bit vague on that process, so it would be really good if we could have some clarity put into that. I will bring that up in questions, but just looking at this now, I don't see any real cause for concern.

Another question we're looking at that is so important is for somebody under the new act, they'll have to submit a certified criminal

record check. Then, of course, that goes on file. But I was just wondering about the process there. Who would actually be doing the criminal records check? Because in the technical brief it was mentioned that the commissionaires of Canada, so not just the RCMP or the constabulary or any other law agency.

For the most part, Speaker, we are in support of this amendment.

Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you very much, Speaker, and I'll just take a couple of minutes to speak to this as well.

Last year, I believe, I presented a petition that would see this legislation come forward. All legislation is important, but some are a little bit meatier than others. I believe that this is a great piece of legislation which is going to help a lot of people.

Full disclosure, Speaker, the lady in question in the article is a friend of mine, so I got a first-hand account of how she felt when she saw – being the victim – the perpetrator of the crimes that were committed against her could change his name just like that, which would, in fact, affect victims moving forward, women moving forward. We want to make sure that we protect the people of our society.

Some of these women are the most vulnerable in our society and we want to make sure that we pass any legislation that would protect them moving forward. So I think this is a great piece of legislation moving forward. I know that the lady in question, of course, she will be quite happy with this as well. For two reasons: when it was brought up before, it definitely triggered her PTSD once again. It was a reminder of what happened to her and what she went

through. That right there, just the article herself, I know it was traumatizing to her.

Unfortunately, there's nothing that can be done about the crimes right now that were committed against her, but the whole point of this legislation is that these crimes cannot be committed against somebody else without the disclosure of their real name and who that person truly is at the end of the day.

So, of course, we are going to support this with some questions in Committee, which we will have. But, you know, with today's social media or looking into names or whatever, if somebody wanted to get into an intimate relationship with somebody, if somebody wanted to hire on somebody for a job or a position within a company or an organization, we want to make sure that those people are dealing with the person in fact of who they are.

There's nothing wrong with a legal name change. As a matter of fact, I had a legal name change when I was younger and I know the importance of it. But the importance of keeping our most vulnerable people in society safe definitely supersedes any name change by anybody who would commit such a heinous crime. So we're happy to see it. The 16 crimes that are outlined, we'll take a look at those as well.

It's a great piece of legislation. Again, we want to make sure that those victims are protected moving forward, that there are no victims moving forward and if anybody wants to get involved in an intimate relationship with a person, again, they know who this person is. They cannot use the system to fly under the darkness of night under another name. It's very, very important.

I know that my constituent will definitely look forward to this piece of legislation being passed here for future potential victims moving forward and to make sure that there

are none. So I definitely support it and I look forward to questions in Committee.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Seeing no further speakers, if the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL speaks now she will close the debate.

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Speaker.

I'm happy to answer any questions in Committee. I'll just address a few of the things that I've heard already. But I'm happy to chat again.

In terms of the discretion, as a rule, sex offenders will not be allowed to change their name. In talking with lawyers and lawyers and lawyers and lawyers and lawyers, I can admit there could be some extenuating circumstance at some point that we cannot yet predict where this might not be in the best interest of the public. I cannot foresee what that might be, but we wanted to add that we recognize that there might be a grey area in the future and there might be a situation that may arise where it is appropriate for one of these people to change their names.

So that's why we put that in there, just so that if there is an extenuating circumstance. I can't foresee that but that's why we added that in, in case something arises that we cannot foresee. But as a rule, sex offenders or those listed in the act will not be able to change their names.

In terms of fingerprinting, I guess our policy objective with this is just as I mentioned: Sex offenders can't change their name. When we look at how it's operationalized across the country and in the other two or three provinces, we're trying to balance achieving that policy objective with also not

overburdening everyone who applies for a name change.

I couldn't find any actual reason to require fingerprinting. We did look at that. I couldn't find any reason to require fingerprinting because part of the criminal record check process includes fingerprinting, if there's a doubt of are you this person or are you this other person. If it's not clear, then the criminal record check requires fingerprinting, and that is not done by us. So we're also trying to limit the amount of personal information that we keep. You know, Vital Statistics is not going to now keep a record of everyone's fingerprints. That's part of the criminal record check process and so, in my mind, that's sufficient to fulfill the requirement, the policy objective.

Anyway, that's just a review based on some of the comments that were mentioned, but I'll be happy to answer any questions in Committee.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question?

The motion is that Bill 50 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.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act to Amend the Change of Name Act, 2009. (Bill 50)

SPEAKER: This bill has now been read a second time.

When shall the said bill be referred to a Committee of the Whole?

L. DEMPSTER: Now.

SPEAKER: Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Amend the Change of Name Act, 2009," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill 50)

SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

L. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Speaker.

I move that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 50.

SPEAKER: And a seconder, please?

L. DEMPSTER: Seconded by the Minister for Digital Government and Service NL.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

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

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (Warr): Order, please!

We now are considering Bill 50, An Act to Amend the Change of Name Act, 2009.

A bill, "An Act to Amend the Change of Name Act, 2009." (Bill 50)

CLERK: Clause 1.

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

The Chair is recognizing the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, I'm going to go back to something I alluded to in my comments with respect to the delay. Why was there such delay to bring forward this amendment?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

I guess all I can say is that there's a lot of research that went into this. I'm not a lawyer. I didn't go to law school but I understand it's legally complex and, as you can tell, my department has a lot going on, if you look at the Order Paper. So this is the amount of time I can bring this forward. We tried our best to do it as expeditiously as possible and be comprehensive, sufficiently.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you, Chair.

Can the minister please advise how many convicted sex offenders have had their names changed in the past five years?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

I'm not sure I would have any way of knowing that because we don't currently require criminal record checks. So we don't keep a record. The provincial government, we don't know who is a sex offender. That information would be held by someone of the national criminal intelligence organizations that I named. They would know that. But we don't know that and I don't think that we could ask them for that information.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: With respect to consultation that took place, did your department consult with the Status of Women Council on this?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

We consulted with internal government departments. We consulted with victims, people who reached out. I guess in terms of the women and gender element, the consultation there would have been with the Office of Women and Gender Equality, which we did consult with.

Thank you.

CHAIR: The Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Was there any consultation with the RNC Intimate Partner Violence Unit?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

Our department had extensive discussions and consultations with provincial and national law enforcement bodies.

Thank you.

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality.

P. PARSONS: Thank you, Chair.

Just to answer and to support my colleague of Digital Government, yes, our office was consulted. There was consulting in cross-jurisdictions as well. My office was satisfied with the findings and do indeed support the legislation.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: So going back to the minister who introduced the legislation. You indicated that you consulted with police enforcement agencies in the country. Could you just please describe who those were?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

We would have consulted with the RCMP, the RNC – in my notes, I named national organizations that we had consulted with. Just a second, I have to dig that out. I've already said in my opening remarks – sorry, thank you for your patience.

The RCMP, the RNC, the Canadian Police Information Centre, the Criminal Intelligence Service NL and then also other federal criminal intelligence services. I don't have a comprehensive list but working with Justice and Public Safety.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: I see that there has been consultation with internal provincial government departments and other government agencies. Has there been any consultation with outside stakeholders, for example, with the Canadian Civil Liberties Society?

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

S. STOODLEY: We would have consulted with the Privacy Commissioner but the name referenced by the Member, I don't believe we would have consulted with them.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Was there any consultation with The John Howard Society on their views?

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

S. STOODLEY: I don't believe so, no.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Now I note, just looking at this legislation that it's almost, from what it appears to me, the amendment is more of a ban with respect to allowing convicted sexual offenders from changing their name. Except for the allowance or the discretion by the minister to allow an

exemption. Why are we not following the example of Alberta and Saskatchewan who do not allow registered sex offenders to change their names at all?

I'm just wondering because, in this situation, we are still allowing convicted sexual offenders the ability to apply for a legal name change. So my question goes to: Why are we not following the example set by Alberta and Saskatchewan who do not allow registered sex offenders to change their names at all?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

The policy objective is that sex offenders cannot change their name. That is what we are trying to do.

In developing and executing that, I recognize – and we've had many, many, many discussions with lawyers also to protect against Charter challenges – that there could be a situation arise where it makes the most sense to allow someone to change their name.

I can't think of an example of that but I can acknowledge that there could be a situation to arise that I cannot foresee. That discretion is to safeguard against a future instance where it is in the interest of public safety to allow this but as a rule we will not allow sex offenders to change their name.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: So just for clarification, I note that the minister had stated in her comments that there were circumstances where an exemption may be considered with respect to marriage or divorce.

Could you please clarify how that would look and what would follow there?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

Currently, instances of changing your last name for marriage or divorce is exempt from this act, as is in the other provinces that have introduced similar legislation.

You don't have to apply to my department; you can go to Motor Registration with your marriage certificate or your proof of divorce and then you can change your name to your partner's surname or back to your previous surname. There are very specific rules around what you can and can't do.

So just trying to balance the amount of burden we are adding on to the everyday person. There are a lot of name changes for marriage and divorce and I think the risk to public safety is not as great. All the other provinces that have similar legislation also, it does not apply when changing your name for marriage or divorce. That is our intention with that.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Just for clarification on this. So are there any safeguards in place when we're looking at someone who's applying for a marriage or a divorce, change of name with respect to convicted sexual offenders? What are the safeguards that are there?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

The safeguards would be that those national bodies who track criminals and their names, they would be aware. But they would be exempt from this act as they are today, as they are in the other jurisdictions with similar legislation.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Is there any plan to make *The Newfoundland and Labrador Gazette* more publicly known, available and easily searchable from what it is today, Minister?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

That's certainly a discussion that we've had. I certainly have encouraged my team to make technology changes so that it is more searchable, because right now it's not easily searchable. I don't have a timeline at the moment, but that is something that we're working on. It's a good suggestion.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

We look forward to that. We think it will be of some importance.

Prior to Royal Assent, Minister, is there anything in this bill to protect the public from convicted sexual offenders who will change their names between now and then?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

I will reiterate that you can't change your name and evade the law. As the process worked last year, victims were notified when their perpetrators changed their name. That will continue to happen. Law enforcement would still be tracking the individual. I'm hoping to change that with this piece of legislation.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, if children are not required to submit a criminal records check, what about if their parents are a convicted sexual offender and their legal guardian?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

I guess, children being exempt – so if a child changes their name, they will not be required to submit a criminal record check. That is unrelated to the parent changing their name. A parent changing their name would have to submit a criminal record check.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Does that have any effect if a convicted offender adopts a child in that matter?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

There's no family package of name change. It's all done on an individual basis. So 16 and under, you do not need a criminal record check; 16 and over you, will need a criminal record check. There's no special case for adoptions or adopting a child.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, what happens if a convicted sexual offender gets a pardon? How will their application be treated in this case?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

So I don't have the answer to that; we'd have to consult with some lawyers. There would be a precedent and a standard for that. I just don't know what it is.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, we encourage you to probably get an answer for that, because it's quite important before this does get Royal

Assent, to ensure that we don't leave anything out in this bill.

Minister, what if an individual gets their conviction overturned? Must they apply again? And what if that decision is overturned in the appeal?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

I'm not a lawyer; I wish I'd gone to law school but I didn't. Based on my rudimentary understanding of the law, if someone was not convicted, if it was removed, if they were successful on appeal, my layperson understanding of the law is that they would not be convicted of a sex offence, in which case they would be able to change their name.

Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Through this legislation, Minister, is there any process to rescind a name change if that happens?

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

S. STOODLEY: Sorry, can the Member ask the question in a different way? I don't quite understand.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

If an individual gets a conviction overturned, is there a process right now to rescind the name change?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

So perhaps I'm not understanding the question, so I apologize if that's the case. If at the time of the criminal record check you have a conviction listed in the act, you will not be able to change your name. At the time of the criminal record check, if you do not have that, you will be able to change your name.

That's the best I can answer the question.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Minister, what if an individual is charged, applied and is granted a name change and then subsequently is convicted after that. So reverse the roles, sort of thing.

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Digital Government and ServiceNL.

S. STOODLEY: I guess it's the same answer. We're not retroactively doing anything. We're doing the check at the time you apply for the name change. If you have a past conviction that's listed in the legislation, we will not permit you to change your name. If you do not, you can change your name. We're not keeping track of everyone's future convictions.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Chair.

Also, I'd like to thank my colleagues for all the questions that they were able to successfully ask that I also had.

Minister, I do commend you on your consultation. As you said, you consulted with police agencies and also women's organizations and the department of Women and Gender Equality. But I was just

wondering, the other question I had, and the Member for Harbour Main also asked it, is a lot of times when public safety is at the forefront, sometimes we rush in to protect the public. Sometimes we err on the side of public safety. But we also need to be cautious that we don't trample on the rights of all.

So I was wondering, my original question was what consultation have you done with advocates such as The John Howard Society? Has any work been done to ensure that people who may have criminal records are protected and not harmed by this new legislation, Minister?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Digital Government and ServiceNL.

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

So our policy objective is that sex offenders cannot change their name. I think to the latter part of the Member's question about instances where following this is more harm than good, I think that's a perfect example of why we've built in the potential for discretion. So if there is a unique situation that arises, that I cannot foresee right now where it is in the best interest of the public that this person is allowed to change their name, then that can be granted. That is why we put that in there.

We consulted broadly within government and with law enforcement. I think the discretion does allow for extenuating circumstances with very vulnerable people under a range of different situations.

I think we have that covered with the potential discretion that could be applied if there was an extenuating circumstance.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Chair.

The process by which the minister, or the Registrar General, renders a decision is not outlined in the act and we did ask in the technical briefing for more information but they weren't able to provide any insight.

Now, just looking at the process there, it says here through our notes, the Registrar General must refer the matter, if there are criminal charges or a criminal record at play here for the name change, the Registrar General must refer the matter to the minister for a decision on whether to grant or refuse the name change. In the briefing, we were told that the minister would delegate this back to the Registrar General.

Just looking for some clarity: What would the process be to render a decision yes to rule in –?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

There are a range of matters which I, as minister, delegate to the registrar to make decisions on. A similar one is the publication of names. There's a letter that I've signed outlining to the registrar of Vital Statistics when they can approve someone to not have a change of name published, by request. From a process perspective, we would create a delegation letter, which I would sign and I would delegate that authority to the registrar.

Instances that come up where sex offenders' name changes are exempt, practically they would not come to me, the registrar would just deny those. But if there was a special appeal that the registrar thought might require additional consultation or consideration, then the registrar – or an unusual case – would escalate to the minister for a decision. The day-to-day decisions without extenuating

circumstances, I would delegate that authority to the registrar.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Chair.

I thank the minister for her answer as well.

I only have one other question here. I did talk about it earlier on. Just looking for clarity on what organizations are approved by the minister for the provision of criminal record checks?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

It's the RCMP, the RNC and the commissionaires.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

P. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm only going to take a second to speak to this because I was distracted during second reading, to be honest.

Anyway, I just want to say for the record that I support Bill 50. I thank the government, the minister, for bringing this forward. This is primarily another tool to protect children, in particular, from predators, as well as, I guess, adults from those who would also be considered predators in terms of sexual assault, rape and other heinous crimes.

I think anything we can do to protect the public and particularly children, we should

be doing; it is the least we can do. I understand that we don't have the ability here, in this House of Assembly, to look at the *Criminal Code*, that would be a federal matter. But I would suggest that an awful lot more could be done to protect the public from sexual predators and child predators, federally. I certainly hope our federal MPs will be advocating for stiffer penalties for those individuals who we'd be talking about here in this legislation.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

P. DINN: Thank you, Chair.

Just one question of clarification here. When the Member for Harbour Main talked about the exemption for marriage or divorce and the minister responded that there are safeguards such as national bodies that would be aware of this.

Can you walk me through a process where if a sex offender is getting married and he or she changes her name, what are the safeguards to make sure that person is not a danger to the public?

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

First, a sex offender who gets married or divorced, they have limited options when they are changing their name for marriage or divorce. They can change their last name only, they can change it only to the partners surname or a combination of their surnames or if they get divorced they can change their surname back to their pre-marriage surname, so you have a limited set of options.

If a sex offender does change their name or someone convicted in one of the offences listed in the act does change their name for marriage or divorce, that is still then notified to the RCMP, the RNC, Motor Registration and then the national criminal monitoring organizations.

I will reiterate, I guess, that you can't change your name and evade the law. We're trying to balance the burden on the every day person. There are a lot of name changes for marriage or divorce. In every province in Canada that has a similar policy objective there is also an allowance, I guess. They don't have to get the criminal record check for changing your name for marriage or divorce.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

P. DINN: Just for further clarification, because, of course, you can married numerous ways. But at what point does government realize that an individual is a sex offender? What are the steps taken then to ensure the safety of the public?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

If you are changing your name for marriage or divorce you do not have to contact Vital Statistics. You can go to Motor Registration with a marriage certificate to get a new name on your driver's licence. Otherwise, you can change your name – if I wanted to not be Sarah Stoodley anymore and I wanted to be Jennifer Smith, I could fill out – or maybe that's a bad name, but anyway – an application form, pay the fee and after this legislation is passed, I would have to go and then procure a criminal record check and provide that to Vital Statistics with my application. So the registrar would then

consider that and if, depending on the results of my criminal record check, they would or would not grant me the option of changing my name.

I'm guessing, if you've been a convicted sex offender, you are not then going to go through that process but you still may and they would deny you.

That's the process.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: It's a great debate, Minister. I mean, this is why we debate, to make sure that there are no loopholes within the legislation. We can all put out our ideas here.

My question would be if John Smith is charged with a crime, a heinous sexual assault crime, and his court date is October 23, 2023, is he able to change his name while he's tied up in the court system as a loophole to get through that?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

You're innocent until proven guilty. As a layperson, I understand that. At the time of the application and the criminal record check, the results will come back on your criminal record check at the time of application.

Again, you can't evade the law by changing your name. We are trying to change this policy. Once this gets Royal Assent, people will not be able to change their name if they have been convicted of one of sex offenses listed in the act.

I guess that's the best I can do.

Thank you, Chair.

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

C. TIBBS: My only concern here is while somebody is in the court system, it can be seen as sort of a loophole. I'm sure you get what I'm getting at here. It can be seen as a loophole.

If their trial is going to go on for six months and they know they're going to get convicted, well then within that six months that the trial is going on, they can legally change their name in preparation for a conviction at the end.

I just want to make sure that there are no loopholes for any of these people to get through – that's all, Minister.

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

S. STOODLEY: I guess all I can say, you know, the criminal justice system has conditions on offenders. You cannot evade the law and change your name.

Even today, a sex offender changing their name is why the victims got the letters. There are checks and balances across Canada whereby law enforcement tracks all of your names and all of your aliases.

I'm trying to change that with this bill and all I can say is at the time when you apply to change your name you have to get a criminal record check. If that criminal record check has one of the 16 convictions on it, you will not be able to change your name. If it does not, you can change your name.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

CLERK: Clauses 2 through 12 inclusive?

CHAIR: Shall clauses 2 through 12 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 12 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: A bill, An Act to Amend the Change of Name Act, 2009.

CHAIR: Shall the 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 bill without amendment, carried.

CHAIR: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

L. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 50 carried without amendment.

CHAIR: The motion is that the Committee rise and report Bill 50.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

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

SPEAKER (Bennett): Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay and Chair of the Committee of the Whole.

B. WARR: Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them

referred and have directed me to report Bill 50 without amendment.

SPEAKER: The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and reports Bill 50 without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

L. DEMPSTER: Now.

SPEAKER: Now.

When shall the bill be read a third time?

L. DEMPSTER: Tomorrow.

SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

On motion, report received and adopted. Bill ordered read a third time on tomorrow.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

L. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Order 11, second reading of Bill 51.

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

S. STOODLEY: Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Education that Bill 51, An Act to Amend the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act, 2008, now be read a second time.

SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that Bill 51, An Act to Amend the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act, 2008, be now read a second time.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act to Amend the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act, 2008." (Bill 51)

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Speaker.

As part of our ongoing legislative review process, my department, in consultation with the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Board of Newfoundland and Labrador, identified the need to update the *Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act, 2008*.

No substantial amendments have been made to this legislation since 2010 and the bill reflects requests brought to us directly by the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Board, as well as feedback we have received from industry stakeholders and the public.

We have consultations from July 2021 to September 2021 through engageNL to help inform the proposed legislative changes. We've taken some time to consider the input we received and to craft these amendments in a way that ensures we are meeting the needs of the board and the funeral embalming industry in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The board had initially provided the department with a list of requests for legislative changes. We then invited industry stakeholders to complete an online questionnaire or submit a written submission to the department about these proposed changes. In total, we received 32 completed questionnaires and these came from a variety of individuals involved in the funeral services industry: funeral directors, embalmers, apprentices, funeral home owners or operators, crematorium owners or operators. In addition, 10 written submissions were received from funeral home owners and operators.

There is a *What We Heard* document publicly available on our website outlining the feedback we received during the consultations.

I just want to thank anyone who participated in the process and for sharing your feedback on the proposed changes. We

appreciate your input. We considered it very thoroughly and have incorporated it into the legislation that you see today.

We've also heard from residents through various communications directly to officials in my department. So occupational self-regulation exists to protect the public, the people of the province, where there is significant risk of harm to those who use a service, if that service is performed improperly. Speaker, in Newfoundland and Labrador the funeral industry is self-regulated.

When we go through the death of a loved one, we want that protection, and I think people in the province want that protection. We want that reassurance, and we want to know that people in that situation are being taken care of. That's why we have the *Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act, 2008*, and the board established under that act, and the board oversees Newfoundland and Labrador's embalmers and funeral directors, as well as the operations of all funeral homes and facilities in the province.

The board is specifically responsible for the following areas: establishing licensing requirements for persons operating funeral homes, including funeral directors and embalmers; reviewing and approving licence applications and issuing said licences; establishing educational standards and examinations for funeral service industry professionals; and overseeing disciplinary action for these professionals if needed.

The amendments we are proposing would increase the regulatory powers of the board, and they include: granting authority to establish and enforce standards of practice; granting authority to the board to prescribe continuing education requirements; granting authority to the board to establish and enforce licensee-specific duties; and granting authority to the board to impose penalties for late licence-renewal applications.

These changes are very similar to what other regulatory boards in the province already have in place for their governing structure. Making these amendments will simply help the board carry out their responsibilities. This bill helps to enhance clarity of the board's purpose and duties for the industry and the public by establishing distinct sections of the act that clearly list those objectives and duties. The bill also expands on the board's authority by allowing the board to establish an apprenticeship system for funeral directors, similar to the system already established by the board for embalmer apprenticeship.

In addition the bill modifies the board's membership to include our assistant deputy minister responsible for regulatory affairs in our department in a non-voting capacity. The role of our assistant deputy minister is to provide some guidance on the application of legislation and to contribute to enhancing board governance. Following discussions with the Department of Health and Community Services, and Justice and Public Safety, this bill also repeals language in the *Health and Community Services Act* related specifically to crematoria facilities and services.

This provides clarity by removing unused regulatory authorities currently within the *Health and Community Services Act*, and avoids unnecessary overlap between that legislation and the *Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act, 2008*, with respect to the regulation of crematorium facilities and services.

The board will have sole authority to make regulations prescribing minimum standards for the premises, accommodation and equipment of funeral directors, as well as the methods, equipment and materials used for embalming. This bill adds authority for the board to establish minimum standards for the cremation and crematoria. I would like to point out that the board does not approve the development of new

crematoria, as the authority for this rests with their respective municipality.

These proposed amendments will strengthen and clarify the board's role in the funeral services industry and will facilitate the implementation of best industry practices while enhancing consumer protection. It is also worth noting, the proposed amendments will align Newfoundland and Labrador with other provinces and territories. Each other province and territory has legislation appropriate to their particular jurisdiction. None of these are identical but there are commonalities related to licensing requirements, complainant discipline processes and standards of practice.

What we're proposing today reflects these commonalities and empowers the board to establish a standard of practice pertaining to embalming and funeral services. While Newfoundland and Labrador's funeral services industry provides understanding and compassion to individuals and families during the most difficult of circumstances, these changes will further enhance the level of professionalism to meet expectations of residents as they navigate the period of grievance for the loss of a loved one.

We are pleased to work with the board, as well as other stakeholders directly in the industry, to hear their thoughts and ideas about what can be done to strengthen the act, their role and, ultimately, the protection of people and families in Newfoundland and Labrador. We believe, and I believe, that this bill reflects and achieves that input.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you very much, Speaker.

We look forward to this legislation, to debate the legislation and, of course, some questions in Committee.

The embalmers and funeral directors perform vital services in our communities that make a huge difference in people's lives. Saying goodbye to a loved one is among the most emotional and painful experiences in any person's life. We know that we have many great funeral directors across the province that definitely takes care of the families in times like that and we applaud them.

It takes a special kind of person to tend to the remains of human beings and oversee their funerals in ways that are dignified, respectful and compassionate to those who mourn. This is one of the most fragile times in people's lives and it's most imperative that the circumstances be overseen with the upmost care and attention by the funeral directors throughout our province.

I am always amazed at the level of professionalism amongst our embalmers, funeral directors and those who work with them. Those I have met in my own district – and there are quite a few, I'm sure, throughout all of our districts – are professionals and highly regarded throughout our communities. They are very trusted individuals and so they should be. I can well understand why these professionals are determined to ensure their own high standards are upheld by all who serve this wonderful industry.

Elsewhere in the world, on rare occasions, there have been sad stories of misconduct. Those stories are always shocking to hear and traumatizing to the community. We want to ensure we will never see such things happen here in Newfoundland and Labrador. That is why the profession in the province has taken the lead to impressing for strong legislation and regulations to protect the integrity of the profession and to protect the public. We applaud them for

their professionalism throughout our communities.

In 2008, the government brought forward legislation to formally professionalize this work and allow the professionals to regulate themselves, which is important as well, as nobody knows the industry like them. This legalization respected the principles of White Paper that was commissioned to gauge the goals and aspirations of those who knew the profession best. Now we are building on the foundation to expand definitions and formalizing process. We know how important it is and how important, again, they all are to the communities here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I will point out one thing, though, and we're hoping to see some more legislation, especially around cremation and crematoriums, as there is little to no legislation right now in regard to crematoriums and cremations themselves, basically, it just says that a funeral director has to have a licence. It's one paragraph. But as time goes on, there should be more regulations when it comes to crematoriums and cremations themselves. I'll be interested to see and to find out who was consulted with this piece of legislation moving forward.

Just sticking with the topic here, you talk about cutting-edge technology, we here in Newfoundland and Labrador and Central Funeral Homes in Grand Falls-Windsor have the only alternative to cremation east of Quebec. That's something to be said for the undertaking business.

We have in Grand Falls-Windsor, Central Funeral Homes which has aquamation. Aquamation, again, is an alternative to cremation. It's less pollutant in the air, of course. The one we have in Grand Falls-Windsor right now has been open for about two years and basically it's a chemical process for loved ones. There are many benefits to this.

One such benefit is, of course, any parts that a person may have gathered throughout their lifetime, whether it be steel rods in their knee or pacemakers even, they are taking them out of the solution right now and reusing them again. So it's great to see. They don't get burnt and destroyed like they would in cremation.

I know that right now Central Funeral Homes in Grand Falls-Windsor are taking the pacemakers out and they're giving it to Doctors Without Borders to use elsewhere in the world. It's a relatively new technology, around about 20 years, but, of course, it's very new to Newfoundland and Labrador. I know that Mike Goodyear in Grand Falls-Windsor there, with this cutting-edge technology, has had great success and people are really interested in it and it's good to see an alternative to what we've had for so long.

Again, we've estimated that Mike has taken about 105,000 pounds of carbon out of the air by not doing cremations and doing this process instead. So it's just a little side note there for anybody who would like to know that.

Moving forward, we're excited to see who the minister reached out to with the consultations throughout as she put this piece of legislation together. One piece in particular, clause 2, of course, says the board currently consists of seven people: two elected embalmers, two elected funeral directors and three others appointed by the minister. But this piece of legislation will add an eighth member to the board, of course. It will be a non-voting member, keep it at seven, and it will be the deputy minister responsible for Consumer Affairs in the department.

We think that's important and the funeral directors I've spoken to think that's important as well, as that can bridge the gap now between government and the funeral directors to see if there's any piece of legislation, anything that they want to bridge

back to government. I think that bridge will be there now with the eighth non-voting member. I think that's extremely important.

Clause 4, of course, will clearly define the objects of the board and all of them, of course, seem to make good sense from what I can read so far. One of those will be protecting the public from untrained and unqualified persons providing funeral services or practices of embalming. That's extremely important. We want the professionals to take care of this and we don't want anybody to come in under the darkness of night to make any mistakes or to say they are somebody they are not. We want to make sure that people's loved ones are entrusted with the people that we trust throughout our communities, which are the funeral directors with their licence and the embalmers as such.

Overseeing, facilitating, apprenticeship training, we all know how important training is and nobody can give the training like the professionals that we have in our communities. They are very trusted and we want to make sure that they are being trained by the best people throughout the industry.

Part (c) says "ensuring that the public interest is protected by the administration of a discipline program." We know that's very important as well. Finally, "ensuring funeral homes and embalming, cremation and aquamation" – which we are happy to see now in the legislation; it's being mentioned here in the legislation for the first time and it's being recognized for the first time in Newfoundland and Labrador throughout legislation, that aquamation is a real thing and we're very excited about that – "facilities are maintained and equipped as required by this Act and the regulations."

We're happy to see aquamation, anything new coming to the province. I know the Central Funeral Home went through quite the lengthy process to get that facility up and running, to offer people a different

option, and we are very, very happy to see it.

I'll just touch on one more clause, which is clause 8. Basically, these changes allow the board, by way of regulation, to establish an apprenticeship training program for the practice of funeral directing, which is extremely important, and prescribe continuing education and requirements to this great industry that we look at the funeral homes throughout the province and it's just a family. They provide such a great service, a trusted service, to the many people of Newfoundland and Labrador in their darkest hour. It takes a very special kind of people to do this and we are very happy to have them right here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

We look forward to Committee for questions.

Thank you, Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Speaker.

I'm just going to speak briefly on Bill 51. As my colleague for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans spoke about, when you look at the service, a service that's so important. When we have to deal with death and we have to look at burial, and we want to be respectful for people that we cared about we have to make sure the profession is up to standard. I think that this amendment actually brings the profession into the modern age, it's so important.

This act is being amended to make provisions more explicit and also to clarify the roles and responsibility of the self-governing board. In our province, embalmers and funeral directors govern themselves through a board. Over the past year we know that the board has told

government that there's a need for updated legislation, both to reflect changes to the profession since the act was last amended in 2013 and also to spell out more clearly the power and duties of the board.

When you're looking at consultation and discussion about this service, from what I could tell, the proposed changes came about as the result of extended discussions with the board as well as a consultation process through engageNL. I was really pleased to see that engagement process.

A document called *What We Heard* – so it was kind of confusing when you're trying to talk about the document, *What We Heard* – was published in October 2021. The document noted – and it's important to reference this – more consultation was required since there was significant disagreement on many points in the legislation at the time. As a result, the introduction of these amendments that we're looking at now to the House was delayed until this fall. Also, to note, that some of the proposed changes were left out of this amendment.

Looking at the updated legislation, the amendment defines the objectives and duties of the board. That was lacking before, so it's a positive thing to see that. Also, the amendment clarifies a code of ethics must include rules of professional conduct for embalmers, funeral directors, apprentice embalmers and apprentice funeral directors. That is so important.

Also, looking at the profession, like I said, we needed to bring it into the modern age, to make sure that these were professionals delivering a professional service. It authorized the board to make regulations concerning establishment of apprenticeship program for funeral directing; creation of continuing education and training requirements – that's very, very important; prescription of duties for licensed embalmers, funeral directors, apprentice embalmers and apprentice funeral directors;

and the establishment of standards of practice.

You look across industries and you will see the standards of practice. All these things, continuing education, apprentice programs, to make sure that people in the profession are skilled and offering a quality service.

Also, the amendment allows the board to issue a licence to apprentice embalmers and apprentice funeral directors. Like I said, that's critical here. Prescribes the terms of a licence; allows the board to charge extra fees – this wasn't in place before – when a person applies to renew a licence after it expires.

This rectifies a significant problem. Because in the past many licensees were not filed on time, resulting in gaps in coverage of the practitioner. So hopefully now this will deter people from letting their licences lapse.

Just looking at this, the bill also defines apprentice embalmers, apprentice funeral directors. This bill also stipulates explicitly that the board may establish initial and continuing education requirements for the issuance and renewal licence. However, there's nothing in this legislation that makes it mandatory. It's merely at the discretion of the board. I mean, if we're going to modernize the industry, I think it should be more scripted.

Also when we're looking at this industry, a lot of the people who call upon this service is vulnerable, they're grieving and a lot of times they're vulnerable to being taken advantage of. Some of the proposed changes aim at increasing the ability of the board to protect consumers, our vulnerable consumers who are grieving at the time against unscrupulous funeral homes.

Speaker, in the past there has been unscrupulous funeral homes or people acting in the industry where they had taken advantage of vulnerable people. Even before people have passed away, the pre-

bought packages, coming back to elders and saying the prices have gone up, after they signed an agreement. That's happened in the past. It's so important for us to realize that, you know, we've got to protect the consumers at their most vulnerable times.

So looking at the proposed changes, it's aimed at increasing the ability of the board to protect consumers against unscrupulous funeral homes. However, most of the provisions that fall under the category of consumer protection do not actually stipulate concrete measures, and that's one of the problems that we have with this amendment. It does not actually stipulate concrete measures, since this would undermine the ability of the board to govern its own professional affairs. Yes, but when we look at other provinces, how do other provinces protect vulnerable people?

When we're looking at Ontario, there's an entire section of the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act in Ontario that has a part solely devoted to consumer protection with such measures that we could adopt that prohibit against false advertisement or furnishing false information, prohibition of soliciting vulnerable people for services such as a senior in a care home and maintenance of a price list of supplies and services made available to the public and the prohibition against charging more than the listed price. These are all measures that other provinces, such as Ontario, have adopted and put in the legislation that protects our vulnerable population.

Again, just looking back at the consultation that was done through engageNL. In 2021, the document noted significant disagreement regarding the proposed changes to the legislation and that further consultations would be required before presenting a bill to the House. Although, conversations did continue between the board and the department, there were no further consultations with the public or industry on that matter. Have things fallen

through the cracks here that could have been further discussed and maybe been included in this amendment?

Another concern we do have with this amendment, this legislation is that there's no apparent requirement for inspectors to have experience in the funeral industry – no experience in the funeral industry. Instead, the current inspector only has to have a safety-training course and no funeral home experience. So that's a bit of a gap there, Speaker.

I got some questions that I'll ask later.

Thanks you.

SPEAKER: Seeing no other speakers if the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL speaks now, we'll close debate.

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you for the comments and feedback and happy to answer any questions in Committee.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question?

The motion is that Bill 51 now be read a second time.

Is it pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act to Amend the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act, 2008. (Bill 51)

SPEAKER: This bill has now been read a second time.

When shall the bill be referred to the Committee of the Whole?

L. DEMPSTER: Now.

SPEAKER: Now.

On motion, a bill, "An Act to Amend the Embalmers and Funereal Directors Act, 2008," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently, by leave. (Bill 51)

SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

L. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Speaker.

I move that this House to now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 51.

SPEAKER: Do we have a seconded of that?

L. DEMPSTER: The seconder is the Minister for Digital Government and Service NL.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

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

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (Warr): Order, please!

We are now considering Bill 51, An Act to Amend the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act, 2008.

A bill, "An Act to Amend the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act, 2008." (Bill 51)

CLERK: Clause 1.

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

The Chair is recognizing the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, are there any complaints on file against funeral homes within the province currently?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

The funeral industry is self-regulating so complaints would go to the funeral board. They would establish a committee that would review the complaint and they would make a decision. I am not informed of those.

Although, the annual reports which would be tabled in the House of Assembly would detail the number of complaints and the resolution process.

I don't know off the top of my head but I can certainly get that. That would in the annual report tabled in the House of Assembly.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) it's on the website.

S. STOODLEY: Yeah, so they wouldn't report to me, other than the annual report, how many complaints they received.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, are all funeral homes currently registered and in good standing?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

The funeral industry is self-regulating, so they would be responsible for ensuring that all funeral homes were registered and in good standing. They would report that in their annual report, which I table in this House.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, the legislation will allow for the disposition of unclaimed remains.

How many remains are unclaimed in funeral homes around the province currently?

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

S. STOODLEY: I don't have that information. The funeral industry is self-regulating so the funeral board and their staff would have that information if it was available.

Thank you.

My team says none.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, how would this very sensitive matter be handled, if it needed to be handled?

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

S. STOODLEY: Sorry, can the Member specify the situation he's referring to, please?

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

C. TIBBS: Unclaimed remains.

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

S. STOODLEY: That would be the responsibility of the board.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, will the Department of Education oversee the apprenticeship training of funeral home staff?

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

S. STOODLEY: My understanding is no, the Department of Education would not be involved. The funeral industry in each province is self-regulating and there are continuing education, online courses and stuff. My understanding is it's pretty

standard across the board. So that would be the responsibility of the board as a self-regulatory organization, any training requirements would be in alignment with other provinces and are likely online offerings.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, in regard to the decision of the board, why is there no internal appeal process to the minister's department versus an expensive, lengthy external court process?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

I think that is with the nature of the self-regulatory board. They would have quasi-judicial status to make rulings and determinations. As the Member himself mentioned earlier, they know their industry best. So I think they are best placed to make decisions about instances that arise in the funeral industry and that would be the same for other provinces as well.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

Minister, like I said before, there is one aquamation system east of Quebec and that is right here in Newfoundland and Labrador, it's finally mentioned in legislation.

Did you consult with this funeral home director?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

In terms of the *What We Heard* document and the consultations, when we receive feedback from engageNL, there are no names associated with it. I cannot say whether or not that funeral home participated in the review.

However, I did receive correspondence, I think this week, from that funeral home. I'm not aware of any outstanding concerns around aquamation, other than the fact that, for the first time from a public safety perspective, this legislation will grant the board power to regulate aquamation, where today they do not.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Minister, just to be clear, your department didn't reach out to the only aquamation funeral home in the province before we opened up this legislation?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

We reached out to every funeral home in regard to this legislation and we received written feedback. We sent the proposed legislation in response to the inquiry that I got from that specific funeral home this week.

If we look in the legislation, we're simply providing the board, who are experts in the embalming and funeral industry, with the

oversight authority for aquamation and they can then create rules. As a self-regulatory body, it would be their responsibility to now go through the process to look at other jurisdictions and figure out what those rules for aquamation should be.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: Just two questions left, Minister.

Can the minister provide a list of all proponents that were consulted through this process, please?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

When someone completes a What We Heard submission from engageNL, we do not get a name, I think for privacy reasons. We did receive, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, 32 completed questionnaires and these came from a variety of individuals from funeral directors to embalmers to apprentices, funeral home owners and operators. We also received 10 written submissions from funeral home owners and operators.

So I think that's a relatively good sample of funeral homes in the province. The *What We Heard* document has been publicly available for a while, so I'm confident – and we did change our recommendations based on *What We Heard*, so I think we've done appropriate due diligence and consultation on this piece of legislation.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

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

C. TIBBS: So if I'm hearing you correctly, Minister, you've reached out to all funeral homes, which is great, and just one more question, I think we caught it at the first, but I just want to clarify.

Minister, are there any unclaimed remains in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador currently?

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

S. STOODLEY: No.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Any further questions?

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Chair.

S. STOODLEY: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR: Order, please!

I am recognizing the Minister of Digital Government and Service NL.

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, sorry, just to elaborate, I guess. There is an element of the Chief Medical Examiner and that falls under the Department of Health, and I'm not an expert in this but there could be bodies from a Health perspective that are unclaimed, let's say, at the Health Sciences for example.

One interesting or complex thing to note is that the funeral and embalmers board are not involved in bodies where there is a Public Health concern. So the ownership or I guess the jurisdiction of that body then is a Public Health matter, and no longer under the jurisdiction of funeral and embalmers board.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you, Chair.

I note that there's very little in the current act as well as the proposed amendments that have to do with crematoria. Given that this has becoming a very common means of disposition, why were further stipulations regarding cremation left out of the amendments, and are there any plans to introduce separate legislation for crematoria and their operators?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

So, I guess, crematoria are complex in that they touch a range of different pieces of legislation and a variety of departments. Municipalities have authority to approve whether or not a municipality has a crematory facility. So the board has no role in that.

In terms of the sanitary maintenance of these facilities, that's more of a municipality thing; the board's role for crematoria is related to the facilities and the equipment and making sure that that's efficient to provide the services that people are buying, essentially. Public Health regulates the internment, discernment, transportation and the conduct of funerals of dead bodies from specific diseases. So this board does not oversee that element.

Then Environment and Climate Change regulates the emissions released from a crematoria, as that is under the Air Pollution Control Regulations. So it's a complex web of regulations that oversee crematoria that would fall outside of this board. But of things that I haven't listed, the board would be responsible for developing policies and procedures and regulations for crematoria.

CHAIR: The Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

When revisiting this legislation, was there any thought given to laying out the criteria needed to be an inspector and who will determine that criteria?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you, Chair.

So that would be up to the board. As the Member mentioned it earlier, I was thinking to myself, you know, there can't be that many people in the province with this type of experience who do not currently work in a funeral home. I imagine the pool of applicants for that type of job is not – you know, you don't have hundreds of people applying to be a funeral home inspector. But that would be up to the board.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Yes, I realize there are a lot of people with safety experience and training. But, of course, an element could be introduced where people would actually have to have training in the funeral home business and some of the issues around that.

Going on to my next question: Who will the definition of funeral supplies apply to? And even if the board regulates their sales by suppliers in this province, many items such as urns, monuments – hold on now, I got my other question over here – and even caskets are available for purchase online from other jurisdictions.

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

Funeral services means goods that are used in connection with the care and preparation of dead human bodies or the disposition of a dead human body. So hopefully that answers the question.

Thank you.

CHAIR: The Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: I'll just go on to my next question.

While funeral merchandise is defined, it is unmentioned in the current act and I don't believe it appears again in this bill. If that's the case, why the omission? Couldn't the board at least have given explicit authority to make regulations on funeral products in the interest of protecting consumers?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

So I guess if it's not mentioned in this change, it means we're not changing it. I'm just waiting for my team to definitively give me a response. If you want to go on, I can come back to that.

CHAIR: The Member for Torngat Mountains, do you have a further question?

L. EVANS: Yes, I'll just go on to the next one. There was consideration given to a separate licence being required under this act for the operation of crematoria. Why did the government decline to add this to the current bill?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

So based on the feedback that we received in the *What We Heard* document and looking at other provinces, we decided that

there were sufficient licence classes and we also didn't want to overburden smaller funeral homes. So we took the feedback from the *What We Heard* into consideration in not making those changes requested by the board.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: How are crematoria separate from funeral homes to be licensed? Would they need to hire a licensed funeral director?

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

S. STOODLEY: That's a technical question. I don't have the answer to that off the top of my head.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: So you'll get back to us on that? Okay.

I know a crematorium that offers services for deceased pets in the city. How would this act currently impact or affect them? Will any of the proposed amendments affect their operations as well?

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

S. STOODLEY: I guess what we're doing in this piece of legislation is clarifying the board's authority to oversee cremation facilities. So there's nothing in this legislation that's going to change what someone does the day after it receives Royal Assent.

The board may then go and take a stronger role or change the operations of cremation facilities. But no, passing this legislation will

not result in any changes for cremation facilities, like, the following day.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: I just have one more.

This legislation is bringing in the need for apprentices to licence. So I was just wondering: What was the rationale for that?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

I have an answer to the previous question. All crematorium, they do have to be operated by a licensed funeral director.

In term of the apprentices, I think in some areas an apprentice might do a lot of work, not necessarily just kind of standing by and watching. So I think it's prudent that we licence apprentices.

To answer another previous question, sorry. This does not impact services for animal processes.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Further questions from the Member for Torngat Mountains?

I'm recognizing the Member for Torngat Mountains.

L. EVANS: Yeah, I wasn't sure, Minister, if you answered my question about the need to bring in this legislation to licence apprentices. Was there any rationale behind that? Because they're still apprenticing under direction.

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

I know that the legislation previously talked about the board could come up with apprenticeship classes. The board didn't feel like they had the authority previously to do that, so we're kind of clarifying that they do have the authority.

We are now allowing the board to establish regulations for clarifying the duties of licensees, which would include apprentices. This would be to enhance consumer protection, because I think the apprentices in this type of industry, they would be working on bodies or involved in these very sensitive, serious professional processes. I do think it's important that these apprentices have that licensing.

Nova Scotia and PEI both have licensed apprentices and their self-regulatory board defines that.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Are you finished?

L. EVANS: Yes.

CHAIR: Okay, thank you.

The hon. the Member for Topsail - Paradise.

P. DINN: Thank you, Chair.

Just on the apprenticeship clarification here. The minister noted that apprenticeship is happening in other provinces. Just out of curiosity: Is the intent for the apprenticeships here to be a provincially challenged exam or is it looking at a national challenged exam?

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Digital Government

S. STOODLEY: The board would decide the requirements to be a licensed apprentice. That's not something that the provincial government would decide. The board would decide that.

CHAIR: Thank you.

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

P. LANE: Thank you, Chair.

I guess, first of all, just for the record, I'll be supporting Bill 52.

Minister, I'm just wondering, I know it's not here in these amendments, but does your department still oversee prepaid funerals?

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

S. STOODLEY: Yes, my department does oversee prepaid funerals. That has its own act. There's a *Prepaid Funeral Services Act*, I believe it's called. That is a separate piece of legislation. That's more of the financial services side. We regulate insurance, we regulate prepaid funerals, because that's a financial instrument. This is more of the logistics, operating of a funeral home. The prepaid funerals are more like an insurance product.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Before I recognize the Member for Mount Pearl- Southlands, just for the record, you did say that you were going to be supporting Bill 52. We are on Bill 51, just if you want to change that for the record.

P. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: I'm paying attention.

P. LANE: Well, I'm glad you are, Mr. Chair.

I'm supporting Bill 51. I was actually reading Bill 52 because I had some concerns about the accessibility.

CHAIR: All good.

The Chair is recognizing the hon. Member for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

P. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister, for that. I was just wondering because I know that in the past there had been concerns – this is going back a while now with prepaid funerals in terms of – I think there was a requirements for the funeral homes to basically open up the books to your department and there was someone who would come in and audit it and so on.

I know in the past, there were concerns about documentation required for audit not being submitted by certain funeral homes. I know there was, I think, even some issues in the past where there was, if I'm not mistaken, a funeral home that left some consumers high and dry or whatever.

If that's under a different act, I understand, but just out of curiosity: Are you aware of any issues with that particular issue on prepaid funerals, that you're aware of?

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

S. STOODLEY: Thank you.

That is a separate piece of legislation. We are not making changes to that at this time. We have a full-time financial services investigator in our department. So if there are any complaints that arise, they would be doing auditing of the prepaid funeral elements.

We examine and review prepaid funeral contracts on a regular basis. I'm not aware of any issues at the moment. But it is an important piece of responsibility in our department. For a while, we didn't always have a full-time investigator. We do have a full-time investigator working on a range of – prepaid funerals would be one of many areas of responsibility that they would be working with or investigating on.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Seeing no further speakers, shall the motion carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion is carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

CLERK: Clauses 2 through 28 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall clauses 2 through 28 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion is carried.

On motion, clauses 2 through 28 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.'

Motion is carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

CLERK: An Act to Amend the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act, 2008.

CHAIR: Shall the 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.'

Motion is carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

CHAIR: I'm recognizing the hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

L. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Chair.

I move that the Committee rise and report Bill 51 carried without amendment.

CHAIR: The motion is that the Committee rise and report Bill 51.

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

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

SPEAKER (Bennett): Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Baie Verte - Green Bay and Chair of the Committee of the Whole.

B. WARR: Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report Bill 51 without amendment.

SPEAKER: The Chair of the Committee of the Whole reports that the Committee have considered the matters to them referred and directed him to report Bill 51 without amendment.

When shall the report be received?

L. DEMPSTER: Now.

SPEAKER: Now.

When shall the said bill be read a third time?

L. DEMPSTER: Tomorrow.

SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

On motion, report received and adopted. Bill ordered read a third time on tomorrow.

SPEAKER: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

L. DEMPSTER: Thank you, Speaker.

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

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Motion carried.

This House do stand adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

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