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Speaker: Honourable Ross Wiseman, MHA

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The House met at 1:30 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Wiseman): Order, please!

Admit strangers.

Before we start regular proceedings today, I have the honour of following a strong, established parliamentary tradition as we welcome a new member to the House of Assembly.

I have the task today of welcoming Ms Lisa Dempster who has been recently elected in a by-election for the District of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, and I have been advised by the Clerk that the member has taken the Oath of Office, the Oath of Allegiance to the Crown, as required by the Constitution, and has signed the Members' Roll.

The Chair would like to welcome Ms Dempster, as she is being escorted by the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I introduce Ms Lisa Dempster, the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, who wishes to take her seat.

MR. SPEAKER: Congratulations.

MS DEMPSTER: Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Today I want to also welcome to our galleries two special guests, Susan Shiner and Ruby Hann, both of whom will be the subjects of members' statements in a moment.

I also want to acknowledge the presence of Wayne Lucas, who is the President of CUPE, Newfoundland and Labrador Region.

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: Today we are going to have members' statements from the Member for the District of Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi; the Member

for the District of The Straits – White Bay North; the Member for the District of St. John's East; the Member for the District of St. John's South; the Member for the District of St. Barbe; and the Member for the District of Cape St. Francis.

The Member for the District of Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi.

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

I am so pleased today to stand and congratulate Susan Shiner, a long-time friend and colleague in the women's movement, who last week was one of five women presented with a Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case. The Persons Award recognizes contributions to the advancement of women's equality and celebrates Canada's evolution as an inclusive society.

Susan moved here in 1972, and has since been an inspiration to many of us. She has volunteered with the St. John's Status of Women Council and the St. John's Women's Centre since 1985, serving as a board and committee member. From 1987 to 2000 Susan worked at the Iris Kirby House as the Children's Services Counsellor, and since 2000 she has been the Family Services Co-ordinator at the Daybreak Parent Child Centre.

Susan has also extended her beliefs and principles into action in organized labour. She is the Chair of the CUPE Newfoundland and Labrador Equality Committee, as well as the provincial representative on CUPE's National Women's Committee.

I ask all hon. members to join me in congratulating Susan Shiner, most recent provincial recipient of the Persons Award.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of The Straits – White Bay North.

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Barb Genge, a successful entrepreneur, engaged community leader, and champion for sustainable development for being inducted into the Canadian Tourism Hall of Fame.

Barbe is President of the Tuckamore Lodge, an award-winning hunting, fishing, and adventure tourism lodge located in Main Brook, which is considered one of the best outfitting lodges in all of Canada. She believes in full economic utilization, without abuse, of nature's resources and operates her lodge based on these principles.

Barb is an inspirational entrepreneur and a true leader of the north, exhibited through a lifetime of advancing the profile of tourism on the Great Northern Peninsula. She was a founding member of the Viking Trail Tourism Association and its predecessor, which levered millions in funding for the Viking Millennial Celebrations at L'Anse aux Meadows.

She served fifteen years as an Economic Development Officer at White Bay Central Development Association establishing community partnerships and investing millions in environmental and tourism related projects. In addition, she is a recipient of the Sustainable Tourism Award, Entrepreneur of the Year, and PRIDE award for excellence in tourism.

I ask all hon. members to join me in congratulating Barb Genge on her business and community success.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for St. John's East.

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to say thank you to an outstanding volunteer. Ruby Hann was the recipient of the Alice Noseworthy Volunteer of the Year Award

for 2012-2013. The award is presented by the Seniors Outreach Program of the City of St. John's in memory of Alice Noseworthy, a long-time volunteer and participant in the city's seniors program.

Her family donated the award to remember Alice and to recognize other volunteers who enriched the community. Ruby is a long-time participant of the seniors' program and, according to her award citation, has always been there to lend a helping hand. The citation noted Ruby's support with everything from poster distribution to recruiting new participants.

Ruby's volunteerism extends beyond the city program; she is also an active member at the Kenny's Park apartments, where she lives, helping with the social club there get funding. She is known for being a volunteer who always rises to any occasion, even when called upon unexpectedly.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all hon. members to join me in congratulating Ruby Hann, winner of the Alice Noseworthy Volunteer of the Year Award for 2012-2013.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for the District of St. John's South.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Next week, I will attend a Remembrance Day Ceremony in Shea Heights. On the monument in front of the community centre in Shea Heights there are over 150 names of men and women who have served in World War I, World War II, and the Korean War.

As we prepare for November 11, I would like to recognize our veterans, our Newfoundland Regiment, Newfoundland Foresters, Merchant Marines, Peace Keepers, and all of those who have served to preserve our freedoms.

We enjoy our freedoms today because our veterans have fought for those freedoms. Many of the men and women who fought for us did not make it home.

We live in a society that allows freedom of speech, we live in a democracy; we live in a part of the world where we generally feel safe. These benefits came at great cost. At Beaumont-Hamel, for example, only sixty-eight of almost 800 troops answered the call the morning after battle.

As we stand with our veterans on November 11, let us remember those who left home and did not make it back. Let us be thankful to the veterans in attendance, and let us remember those who gave us what we most often take for granted, our freedom.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. Barbe.

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House today to commend and thank Maureen Blanchard of Norris Point for her unconditional commitment to the community, past residents, and current residents of Norris Point.

For many years during the spring, Maureen spends hours and hours in the local cemetery caring for graves and headstones. Many of the deceased have no connection to her and no longer have family or friends in the area but Maureen will not let them be forgotten.

Every community needs people of Maureen's character to care for public places and to maintain our history. She exemplifies the caring nature of our people in Newfoundland and Labrador, a culture that we cherish and protect.

On behalf of the families and communities, I thank Maureen Blanchard for this dedicated service to her community and our Province.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the House to join me in commending and thanking Maureen Blanchard and people like her throughout our

entire Province whose unselfish service often goes unnoticed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cape St. Francis.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize a Flatrock resident and a Torbay volunteer firefighter, Mr. Phillip Whitten.

On the morning of August 6, while coming home from work, Phillip noticed some smoke coming from a home on the hills in Torbay. When he arrived at the house, the side of the house was on fire so he called 911 and searched to see if anyone was inside.

A side window was open, so yelled into it and woke up a young girl. He helped get her out, and she advised him that her mother was still inside. He pounded on a bedroom window, woke the mother up and got her outside. Then she informed him that both her husband and son were still inside.

Phillip proceeded inside the house and escorted the son out. He also told the father that the house was on fire and got him out safely as well.

Phillip is a person who does not want any recognition for what he did, but the fact is he got four people out of a burning house and his actions surely helped save them. Phillip takes great pride in his work and trains hard as a volunteer firefighter.

I ask all hon. members to join with me in thanking Phillip Whitten for his efforts and goodwill.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise in this hon. House today to reiterate our government's vision for economic development, balanced with environmental protection. There has been much discussion surrounding hydraulic fracturing in recent months. I can assure Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that our government's first and main consideration when exploring an economic development opportunity is the health and safety of our people and protection of the environment. These principles guide our decisions and remain our highest priorities.

Today, I am announcing that our government will not be accepting applications for onshore and onshore to offshore petroleum exploration using hydraulic fracturing. This measure provides an opportunity for government to undertake a balanced review of regulations, rules and guidelines in other jurisdictions; to complete the technical work necessary to fully assess the geological impact in Western Newfoundland; and, following this process, to undertake public engagement to ensure that our residents have an opportunity to comment and are fully informed before any decision is made.

Mr. Speaker, oil and gas exploration and development has played a significant role in the economic growth of this Province, transforming the economy and prospects for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Petroleum drilling and production activities throughout our Province have proceeded in accordance with stringent regulations and rules. Our sound approach to petroleum industry regulation and environmental protection is guiding the step we are taking today.

Our first consideration is the health and safety of our people. In making this decision, our government is acting responsibly and respecting

the balance between economic development and environmental protection.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for the District of Humber Valley.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. Interesting enough in this very House on March 27, 2013 as a PMR, the Official Opposition brought in a private member's resolution to put in place regulations against fracking. At that time, all members opposite voted down that PMR.

Today, we are pleased, however, with the approach that has been taken; we really do believe in public engagement. The people who I have talked to over the summer, the people who actually live close to the resource that we are talking about in Western Newfoundland, are keenly interested in getting this process started.

I believe we have lost some time. There was an opportunity last spring to get this process started. In a general sense, the public engagement is the way to go. We support this Ministerial Statement. It is long overdue, I believe, and I look forward to the process. I would like to see a date in place when this could be finalized.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for St. John's East.

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is good to hear the government step back finally, after all the petitions that were presented in this House, Mr. Speaker, and I have one more to present today. It is nice to see them step back, and actually have the time to take to put some sanity back into the reasoning behind why government wanted to proceed this way in the first place. It seemed like it was very rash; it

seemed like it was very unconcerned the way that they wanted to proceed with development.

They called us anti-development. Right now they are speaking the NDP platform when they are talking about being able to step back and take the time. Let's see what Mr. Scott Vaughan says, the environmental commissioner of this country, when he comes out with his report on fracking in 2014.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FRENCH: Mr. Speaker, there are tragic events in the history of our Province that not only profoundly affected the lives of those involved, but all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The crash of Cougar 491 on March 12, 2009 and the 1985 Universal helicopter crash on March 13, 1985 are two such events.

As a government, it is important that we develop a memorial that remembers and honours the individuals whose lives were lost in these helicopter tragedies. To that end, a committee of family members, government representatives, and labour and industry stakeholders was established with an aim of developing a memorial that represented the families' vision for honouring their loved ones. They wanted a monument that would keep the victims' memories alive, and make it a place where visitors could reflect and learn more about these events.

Mr. Speaker, there was a delicate balance between commemoration and compassion that had to be achieved. The committee carefully reviewed the submissions and chose the one they felt best achieved that balance. The proposal put forward by Luben Boykov and Frederick Hann was selected, and I was pleased to present the design to the families just last week. The City of St. John's partnered with us and donated the land for the site at Quidi Vidi Lake.

The memorial design is a circular space with a spiraling stainless steel sculpture at its centre, representative of the aerial screw prototype of the first helicopter envisioned by Leonardo da Vinci in the late fifteenth century. The sculpture is made of stainless steel, a material used widely in aviation and the oil and gas industry. Along the spiral of the aerial screw, the names of the twenty-three victims of both helicopter tragedies are cut into the stainless steel.

A second prominent element in the design is light, representing hope, faith, remembrance, healing, and care. This light will be visible at night everywhere around Quidi Vidi Lake and will shine through the open cutwork of the names. A series of five permanently illuminated lights on the ground will help lead visitors along a path into the main circular spaces for contemplation and reflection.

Mr. Speaker, it is our sincere hope that the memorial will not only be a lasting reminder of the victims of those helicopter tragedies, but also a place that speaks to the impact they have had on the lives of all who knew them. We feel this memorial will be a site worthy of that remembrance.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Humber Valley.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank the minister for the advance copy. I did have the privilege to attend the service last week and I do want to congratulate the government, in partnership with the City of St. John's, in choosing this site.

I believe this monument does capture its purpose and, indeed, will be a lasting reminder of the victims and, of course, the impact they have had on the lives of their families. It was a pleasure for me to join with the family members who were there, including government officials.

It has been awhile coming, since Cougar 491 and the Universal helicopter crash in 1985, but there are still some outstanding questions. It was ironic that on the very same day we had the industry out there asking for the resumption of night flights. I think the focus should be not really on how we respond in these situations, but indeed how do we prevent these accidents from happening in the first place.

Overall, I believe the memorial will achieve its objective, and I was certainly pleased to be a part of the service last week.

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Third Party.

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

I thank the minister of an advance copy of his statement. I, too, commend government in the work they have done to dedicate this memorial, and I commend them for the sensitivity to the families of the individuals we have lost in these accidents. I also hope the memorial will serve as a lasting reminder to the impact this loss of life has had on the community as well.

Now I hope the government will move forward with another act to commemorate these accident victims, and I call upon government to ensure that no regularly scheduled night flights be allowed in this Province's offshore oil industry. If I remember correctly, Mr. Speaker, I did hear family members say the same thing, so I ask government to listen to that as well.

Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Member for St. John's North have leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No leave.

MR. SPEAKER: Further Ministerial Statements?

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased to rise today in this hon. House to highlight the fantastic work done by our municipal councils around this Province. In particular, I want to thank councillors who recently retired from office, and I want to recognize new councillors who have come forward to serve. I would also like to thank returning officers for their important contribution to the election process.

On September 24, we saw almost 2,000 candidates step forward during the municipal election to offer themselves for consideration. These individuals were young and old, women and men, and came from all walks of life. They had one thing in common – their desire to make our communities better places.

Mr. Speaker, I can now confirm that on September 24, 125 elections were held, and seventy-four councils were elected by acclamation. Our officials are working with communities to provide guidance and training as new councils begin their important work.

When we look at the gender distribution during the 2013 election, of the 804 who were elected, we saw 551 men, and 253 women taking office. This represents a 2 per cent increase in elected female councillors.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to report the success of our Make Your Mark campaign in promoting the recent election and encouraging candidates to step forward for nomination. Our grassroots campaign focused on promotion through online videos and posters, and a targeted social media campaign, which saw the Make Your Mark hashtag being used by candidates across the Province.

One significant aspect of our work with our town councils is municipal training and support. In fact, this coming Thursday I will be attending the Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador Convention here in St. John's. We will be participating in a number of sessions over a

three-day period to provide updates on infrastructure developments, municipal operating grants, councillor orientation, and our ongoing fiscal framework review.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with our new councils as we build stronger communities for our children and families across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for an advance copy of his statement, and all members on this side also would like to thank all the councillors who put their name forward to represent their towns in municipal elections. It is always a privilege and sometimes a challenging job to represent the people they represent in smaller towns with the challenges they do have.

To the people who did not put their name forward who were on council before, we thank you for making our towns a much better place in our Province. For the people who did not get elected, it is still an honour and a privilege to put your name forward – hopefully, those people will represent you.

I say to the minister, if you are really concerned about the municipalities and the people who put their name forward, you should have that fiscal framework agreement with the towns done immediately, Mr. Speaker. In 2008 it was committed to, the towns are struggling financially. Right now they are begging to the government to have this agreement in place, but once again we see another delay until next year. If you are really concerned about the municipalities, do the proper thing, make the commitment that you made in 2008 and have the

fiscal arrangement done immediately to ensure the towns will remain viable.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would also like to thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. At the same time, I wish him all the best in his new department. Congratulations, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank all these people who took the bold step forward in putting their names in the hat. I know they face some challenges, particularly when it comes to population decline. They face challenges when it comes to raising new revenue to undertake any project that they have to in the future. It is good to see such a level of enthusiasm amongst these volunteers. Some of these people step forward and take these positions without any form of remuneration. I think that is a very important point to remember.

I would also like to thank the minister for the efforts, too, for gender equality. It is nice to see so many women. The percentage I know was up this year. So, again, congratulations to all involved.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. the Member for The Straits – White Bay North have leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No leave.

MR. SPEAKER: It is time for Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On March 13, 2012, the Premier said to ensure our Province has excess Muskrat Falls power available for industrial development she would not enter into a long-term power purchase agreement for any excess power. By now she is saying just do that with Emera of Nova Scotia.

I ask the Premier: Why are you offering Emera of Nova Scotia a long-term power purchase agreement which you promised you would not do in this House of Assembly?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have talked many times in this House about what a wonderful project Muskrat Falls is for the people of the Province.

Mr. Speaker, in the contract we have with Emera, we pledged to them 20 per cent of the power from Muskrat Falls. Forty per cent of the power will be used for ratepayers here on the Island, Mr. Speaker, and the remainder 40 per cent of the power will be used for industrial development and increased residential demand. We made that promise and that commitment to the people of the Province from the very beginning, Mr. Speaker. That has not changed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier has cooked up a deal with Emera of Nova Scotia to provide almost 60 per cent of Muskrat Falls' power at market rates, which are currently just four cents a kilowatt. People in our Province will have to pay at least fifteen cents a kilowatt for the same power.

I ask the Premier: Why does everyone else get discounted power except the people of Newfoundland and Labrador?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the second tranche of the agreement with Emera, what we have pledged to sell to them at market prices is the excess power that is generated within our system.

Mr. Speaker, when you use coal-fired generation, you know exactly how much power you need and that is the amount of power you generate. In a hydropower situation, Mr. Speaker, you have what you call firm power, which we know we can absolutely produce on a daily annual basis and we provide that to ratepayers, Mr. Speaker.

Beyond the firm power, we have non-firm power, Mr. Speaker. We cannot do long-term contracts for non-firm power because most people want that power on a certain time.

I will be glad to continue my answer in supplementary, if I can.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JOYCE: Now we know that Nova Scotians will get four cents a kilowatt today. Why doesn't the Premier of this Province tell the people of Newfoundland and Labrador what they will pay for the Muskrat power?

You are telling Nova Scotia, but you will not give the people of Newfoundland and Labrador the same courtesy. Tell us what we will pay for

that power today, as you are doing to Nova Scotians.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, beyond the firm power we generate non-firm power, which can be anything from half a terawatt to four or five terawatts a year. Based on fifty years of hydrogeology, the amount of snow or rain in this Province, we have been able to commit to Emera 1.2 extra terawatts of power on average; Mr. Speaker, some years that might be 0.5 terawatt, another year that might be three.

Mr. Speaker, if we did not have a link we would have to spill that water. This is another opportunity to commercialize the vast resources we have here in the Province to earn money from it. Mr. Speaker, we may use that money to reduce power rates; we may use it to buy cancer drugs, build schools or roads.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Just for the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Premier will not tell us how much we are going to pay but she will tell the people of Nova Scotia. Great job, Premier. You should run for the Premier of Nova Scotia, you will win by a landslide.

Mr. Speaker, residents of Nova Scotia are seeing the benefits of a full review of Muskrat Falls by a utility board. They are ensuring that ratepayers in that Province are protected and getting the most of the development.

I ask the Premier: Why have you hidden Muskrat Falls from a full review by a utility board, and will you now send this project back to our PUB for a full review?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I will say again: Muskrat Falls is a wonderful project for the people of this Province – for the people of the country.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: It is the least-cost option for Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker, bar none, and we have made that argument time and time again. The argument we have made has been validated by at least seven independent experts on a variety of issues surrounding Muskrat Falls.

Mr. Speaker, the easiest analogy I can give is building a house and the mortgage is costing you \$1,000 a month. In that house is a basement apartment, and basement apartments are going for \$600 a month. We decide to rent the basement apartment for \$600. Will we keep it empty rather than charge somebody the \$1,000?

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

MR. JOYCE: Just to let you know, if you are building a home you would at least let an inspector in to review the home. You would not just build it. You have to have it.

Mr. Speaker, I recently represented injured workers who need their cases reconsidered by the Workers' Compensation Review Division. Injured workers are waiting months to have their cases reviewed due to a backlog in the decision being made.

I ask the Premier: How is it that injured workers are being automatically rejected for missing the deadline by just one day, but it is acceptable for her own officials to break legislation requirements to have the review completed?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CRUMMELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the emphasis of the Review Division is both on quality and efficiency. The full-time Chief Review Commissioner has a cadre of commissioners as well who are doing tremendous work for the people of the Province and injured workers in the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: We now, Mr. Speaker, have lightened the load in terms of the wait times for injured workers and employers, from six months to four months, so things are moving ahead very positively. There are still some challenges, but we are getting to a very good place. We are very happy, very proud, of the work that is being done, and Mr. Speaker, it is one of the most efficient and effective systems in Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. JOYCE: I say to the minister, if you think by your officials breaking your own guidelines, breaking your own rules, while someone who is injured cannot miss it by one day is efficient; it is time for you to go back and have a review of your own views on workers' compensation.

Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that the minister's officials are breaking deadlines on timely reviews with the minister's approval. The review division left 309 workers stranded with reviews that were unheard of last year – double the number of cases in 2010.

I ask the Premier: Will you now give the injured workers the respect they deserve to ensure their reviews are completed in a timely manner?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: Mr. Speaker, improved service to the injured workers of this Province, improved service to the employers of this Province, is something that we are very proud of.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: The metrics, Mr. Speaker, are in place to show that the system is getting better all the time. We will take his comments under advisement and get back to him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Last year, government denied our Public Utilities Board the opportunity to hold technical briefings on Muskrat Falls. Actually, they said we did not have time. Now Nalcor officials are presenting at the technical briefings on the project in Nova Scotia.

So I ask the minister: Why have you continued to place our ratepayers at risk, while going at great lengths to protect the ratepayers in Nova Scotia?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, fundamental to the Muskrat Falls Project, is that this is about Newfoundlanders and Labradorians first. Make no mistake about this, Mr. Speaker. The power that is generated is going to be the least-cost option for ratepayers into our future; it is going to be great for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Mr. Speaker, built into that, not only are we in terms of a least-cost option; we are going to have surplus power and we are going to have an opportunity to add value to the project to make money for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

We have gone through an extensive process; everything that Nalcor has been doing has been validated from the federal government to Navigant, to Manitoba Hydro, to the Bank of Canada. The list goes on, Mr. Speaker. This is a great project for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and we are looking forward to getting it done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. BALL: I will remind the minister who did not validate it. That was the joint panel review and the Public Utilities Board in our Province. As a matter of fact, Nalcor is over presenting in Nova Scotia as we speak.

Even though this government is plowing full steam ahead on the Muskrat Falls Project, the \$1 billion federal loan guarantee is still not finalized. For the project to receive the federal loan guarantee, it has to achieve financial close.

I ask the minister: A year ago the Premier signed an agreement with Stephen Harper for the federal loan guarantee; has Nalcor delivered on all the conditions precedent and, if not, when will this be achieved?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In June of this year, Nalcor commenced a request for the financing process for the Muskrat Falls Project. This is a robust, competitive process, it is progressing as planned, and it is continuing. There has been great interest in what Nalcor is doing, positive interest from the

financial markets. Obviously, when you have the guarantee from the Government of Canada, with its AAA rating, it makes the financing processes extremely interesting.

We must be careful, we must be prudent, not to release any details prior to placement of the financing that could have an impact that could adversely affect the people of the Province for a time frame as long as fifty years. The timing of the placement will incur at the right commercial time, but no timing has been selected at this point. The lead arrangement selection will be made at the appropriate time, but not right now. This is standard industry practice. It is necessary to (inaudible) –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. BALL: I think what I heard the minister say is we are going to wait until they are finished in Nova Scotia and then we will have all the answers on financial close.

Mr. Speaker, we know that government is spending \$1 million a day on Muskrat Falls, but they have not been clear on how much is committed to the project.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BALL: I ask the minister: How much taxpayer money is committed to your Muskrat Falls Project to date?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, the issue with the UARB and that process is about clarity. We are going to enter into the markets where there is significant interest for \$5 billion.

It is important, as we enter into the market, that we have clarity on the full project, waiting in terms of what the UARB decision will be; but, what is important and why we are doing this, so that the people of Newfoundland and Labrador understand, when we go into the market we will get the best deal for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. We will keep their rates down, Mr. Speaker.

We will continue to make this project favourable. We will do it in the right timelines, Mr. Speaker, because it is about Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and it is about the lowest-cost option. That is the process we are going to follow.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. BALL: If it is about Newfoundlanders and Labradorians we just answered the question; we are spending \$1 million a day currently right now.

How much has been committed on this project in terms of tenders? How much of a commitment have we made to this project?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Natural Resources.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, I do not have the exact number, but I think it is around \$235 million to date. Mr. Speaker, it is important to understand in terms of the process, in terms of working with contractors, this is also about Newfoundlanders and Labradorians working. There are going to be over 3,300 jobs in Muskrat Falls.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: There are over twenty companies from Newfoundland and Labrador on the ground in Muskrat Falls, Mr. Speaker. As we work through a process, as we proceed

towards the end of this project, we are ramping up and Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are certainly getting the benefits.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. Barbe.

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, last week the Premier threw a big party down at The Rooms. A big lavish party to celebrate a \$280 million payoff from the federal government for –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BENNETT: - minimum processing requirements.

I ask the Premier: How many of our processing jobs will be lost as a result of her payoff that she received from the feds?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a fisher's home. I lived in a fishing community for fifty years of my life and always had a great interest.

I was on part of the appeals committee of when the cod fishery was closed, when people talked to us about their lives and their earnings from the fishery. I travelled the length, breadth, and width of this Province, Mr. Speaker, and heard from people first-hand about their experience in the fishery.

One theme that made its way through all of that, Mr. Speaker, was how much better off we would be if we had access to a European market to sell our fish products. Mr. Speaker, last week, or two weeks ago, we achieved what has been the dream of many in this Province for a very long time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. Barbe.

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, the question was: Would there be job losses or not? I take it that there will be job losses because the last minister to go through the revolving door at the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture said that 9,000 people depend on seafood processing for a livelihood. The feds now claim that part of that \$280 million is to cover job losses.

I ask the Premier: How many job losses will there be? How many plants are expected to die in the first five years after CETA, after her deal with Stephen Harper?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, only 13 per cent of our fish now goes into the European market, a market of over 500 million people. At the signing of CETA, 99 per cent of our fish can go into the European market. It would be a value of about \$25 million, quickly believed to grow to \$100 million. How many people will lose their jobs? I say, Mr. Speaker, none.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you, there is only one other province in this country that had minimum processing requirements –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: - that was the Province of Quebec, Mr. Speaker. They gave up their minimum processing requirements too, because when they look at the Maritimes they see that there is no impact, Mr. Speaker, but they did not get a \$400 million transformation fund.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. EDMUNDS: Mr. Speaker, gas sniffing is an ongoing crisis in Natuashish. Sadly, children as young as six and seven years old are sniffing gas. In the spring the minister said it was government's priority to ensure the safety of these children.

I ask the minister: What new strategy has government implemented to help address this crisis?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The matter raised by the member opposite, I can tell you it is a very serious matter for the community of Natuashish. It is a very serious matter for us as a government. We have been facing challenges for some time in recruiting and being successful in moving the qualified and available personnel to live in that community and work in that community.

We have now worked towards a fly in, fly out process; a pilot project which we have been working on with our staff. We have generated terrific interest, Mr. Speaker, from not only qualified social workers but qualified and experienced social workers who have an interest in participating in this program. We are working through that process and we look forward to implementing that in the very near future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. EDMUNDS: Mr. Speaker, the incidents of gas sniffing in Natuashish have become an epidemic. They are not marked by just the next media story.

I ask the minister: How confident are you that these new initiatives will address and hopefully put an end to the epidemic affecting the children of Natuashish.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some of these issues and challenges that affect this very isolated community have been seen throughout the years and for generations. I can tell you what we are not doing, Mr. Speaker. What we are not doing is we are not giving up on the community of Natuashish and we are not giving up on the children of Natuashish.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAVIS: Mr. Speaker, we are bringing together the best expertise that is available to us. We have qualified staff on the ground in Natuashish today as we develop and roll out this pilot project, which will bring consistency and apply consistency of better services to communities so we can work with the stakeholders, we can work with the leaders of the community, we can work with the families and the children of Natuashish, so that we can bring an end to this problem in this community.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

MS DEMPSTER: Mr. Speaker, the Strait of Belle Isle ferry service is operating on a twenty-year-old schedule that no longer reflects the reality of the region. The latest schedule change is causing huge problems for both residential and commercial traffic.

I ask the Minister of Transportation and Works: When will you listen to the recommendations of our own transportation committee and allow for more crossings of the *Apollo*?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MCGRATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair to the House.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the Labrador ferry schedule, our department monitors this on a daily basis. There are times, when we feel it is necessary, to put on extra runs, and we do that on a regular basis. We will continue to monitor and when we see it necessary to put on the extra runs, they will be there.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

MS DEMPSTER: Mr. Speaker, we all remember the fiasco last year when government failed to issue a tender for the Strait of Belle Isle in a timely manner. The existing contract runs out in January 2014 and we are close to repeating the same debacle of last year.

I ask the Minister of Transportation and Works: Why are you delaying the issuing of the tender for the Strait of Belle Isle ferry service for 2014-2015?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MCGRATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I can guarantee you there is no debacle going to happen in this coming year. As

an MHA from Labrador, I watch it very closely also. We are very close now – I am working with some of the contractors – on having that RFP awarded. I worked very closely – as we know, the *Bond* is now in refit and getting ready to come out for this spring and winter schedule.

Again, we are watching that closely, working with the contractors, and I can guarantee you that there will be a schedule running on a regular basis.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

You have time for a quick question without preamble, please.

MR. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, Accreditation Canada released a report last week identifying affordable housing and housing conditions as an issue.

I ask the Minister Responsible for Service Newfoundland and Labrador: When will he protect our tenants with minimal housing standards as they do in other provinces?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador, for a quick answer.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: Mr. Speaker, the residential tenants review is ongoing. It is a comprehensive review. We are looking at the legislation. We are doing public consultations, which I have just concluded. Mr. Speaker, when the time is appropriate, we will bring it to the House of Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

I apologize for the last time; I miscalculated my number. This is a quick question that you have – so make this one quicker than the last one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. OSBORNE: Can I have my preamble on this one?

I ask the Minister for Service Newfoundland and Labrador: Will the changes to the legislation include minimal standards to protect tenants in this Province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Again, a quick answer, please.

The hon. the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: Mr. Speaker, we are still awaiting the results of that review, and we will bring it to the House of Assembly at that point in time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

Emera and Nalcor's latest application to the Nova Scotia utility board is, in essence, a new deal, and there are experts who are saying that. That agency will rule on whether this deal meets conditions set for project sanction of the Maritime Link, an essential piece of Muskrat Falls.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier: Will she submit this new proposal to the PUB so they can decide if it is a good deal for the people of this Province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I love it every time I have an opportunity to get up and talk about what a wonderful project this is for Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Mr. Speaker, many times in this House of Assembly in the last two years we have been accused, by parties opposite, for building this project and trying to build the Maritime Link and bring the power to markets that did not exist – did not exist in the Maritimes, Mr. Speaker, did not exist in New England. Here we are today, Mr. Speaker, we cannot even get out of Nova Scotia. We can sell everything that we are producing in Nova Scotia.

This is not a new deal, Mr. Speaker. In terms of Muskrat Falls the plan always was 40-40-20. It still is, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Third Party.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the Premier: Why is the future of her \$8 billion-plus Muskrat Falls hydro project that we are paying for being decided by a Nova Scotia PUB charged with ensuring their province gets the best deal for Nova Scotians, not for people in this Province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that is a wonderful question, because it captures the whole disconnect between this debate since the very first days. Muskrat Falls, first and foremost, is being built for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Anything we are doing with Emera, Mr. Speaker, is to commercialize the extra power we have until we need it here in Newfoundland and Labrador, either for industrial development, hopefully in Labrador, or for increasing demand from ratepayers in the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS MICHAEL: Mr. Speaker, I am asking the Premier: Will she explain to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, while the people of Nova Scotia enjoy far lower electricity rates from the Muskrat Falls Project than they are, who will be carrying the financial burden? Explain that to the people of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I can explain it again. It has been explained over and over again, even by the PUB. Their experts, Manitoba Hydro, have explained time and time again that Muskrat Falls for us is the least-cost option. We have to build generation. We have to run transmission lines the length and breadth of this Province. There is over a \$2 billion difference between Muskrat Falls and the next least-cost option. They have never been able to disprove that fact. If you can, do it, please.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On Friday, the government announced that low-income wage earners will be waiting another year before receiving any relief through a wage increase.

I ask the Premier: Will she explain to the lowest paid workers in this Province why she did not follow the recommendations of her advisory committee to bring minimum wage up to a level that would meet the cost of living?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister Responsible for the Labour Relations Agency.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am indeed very pleased to be able to speak to that particular question. We are very pleased with the announcement we made on Friday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KING: It puts us in a spot, Mr. Speaker, where at this point in time the announced wage increases we have on the table puts us as only two jurisdictions in Canada will be ahead of us based on that announcement. We are very proud of that.

We have done a lot of other things besides the minimum wage increase, Mr. Speaker, to support those low-income earners in our Province. I talk about the Home Heating Rebate, the drug plan, the health care plan we provide, the low-income supplement for seniors, just to name a few.

There is more to supporting low-income families and low-income earners in this Province, I say, than simply raising the minimum wage. That is why we have a complete suite of packages available.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Government has hidden the sexual exploitation report and its ten pages of recommendations for two-and-a-half years. Mr. Speaker, youth are being sexually exploited for shelter, for food, and for drugs. They are in danger right now.

I ask the minister: What is she doing to protect them now?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, violence and violence prevention is an issue that we take very seriously as a government. Our record shows that we take this issue very seriously through our Violence Prevention Initiative which has been touted as one of the best in the country. We have done very active initiatives when it comes to violence.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, when speaking of the report itself, we have a responsibility to take advice from the RNC. They are the experts, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to public safety. Any mention at all of this report, it was advised that this would have put people – particularly vulnerable people – in harm's way.

I see the member shaking her head. I would expect from a member, such as the member opposite, that she would want to protect vulnerable women, Mr. Speaker. It is a shame to see that she is shaking –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The member has time for a quick question.

MS ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, how many of the recommendations of this report have the minister achieved now?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, our government's record on violence prevention is solid. We have brought in numerous initiatives when it comes to violence prevention.

Mr. Speaker, the easiest thing to do would have been to speak to these recommendations. We have acted on many and will be acting on more of them when we release violence prevention II.

The fact remains that we have to ensure public safety. We have to ensure the safety of vulnerable people, in this instance mostly women. I would expect the same from the member opposite. It is shameful.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

I failed to notice in the gallery earlier today, when I acknowledged some special guests, today we have a former member of this House in the gallery, Mr. Roger Simmons.

Welcome to our House, Sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. KENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Select Committee appointed to draft a reply to the Speech from His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, I am pleased to present the report of the Select Committee as follows:

To His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Frank F. Fagan, CM, ONL, CMA.

May it please Your Honour: We, the Commons of Newfoundland and Labrador in Legislative Session assembled, beg to thank Your Honour for the Gracious Speech which Your Honour has addressed in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Burgeo – La Poile, that the report of the Select Committee be adopted.

MR. SPEAKER: When shall the report be received?

Now?

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Now, Mr. Speaker.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we would defer debate until we go through the remaining Orders of the Day and come back into regular debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. It has been suggested that we will deal with the Select Committee's report when we come to the Orders of the Day.

Tabling of Documents.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 28.4 –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I would ask the members of the public galleries, as they leave if they would do so recognizing that the proceedings of the House are still in session and if they would leave the House quietly, please.

Tabling of Documents

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 28.4(e) of the Financial Administration Act, I am tabling one special warrant relating to the 2013-2014 fiscal year relating to the by-election in L'Anse au Clair.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion.

Notices of Motion

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 63.(3) there is a private member's motion to be debated this week. That motion will now be read by the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. BALL: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for St. Barbe:

WHEREAS one of the key points of the Muskrat Falls development was the ability to use 40 per cent of the power for industrial development in Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS the Premier and other government members repeatedly said that 40 per cent of Muskrat Falls power would be used for industrial development in Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS the new arrangements between Nalcor and Emera of Nova Scotia mean that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has now committed excess power to Nova Scotia; and

WHEREAS the power will be sold to the residents of Nova Scotia at rates well below what Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will be forced to pay; and

WHEREAS residents of Nova Scotia have benefited from a full utility and review board hearing on Muskrat Falls and will be the primary beneficiaries of our resources.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House calls upon the government to send the Muskrat Falls Project back to the Public Utilities Board for a full public review for the protection of our ratepayers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile and House Leader for the Opposition.

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, the motion just read by the Member for Humber Valley shall be the one to be debated on Wednesday.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Further notices of motion?

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Revenue Administration Act No. 4. (Bill 12)

I further give notice that I will move that this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Supply to consider a resolution relating to the Granting of Supplementary Supply to Her Majesty. (Bill 9)

I also give notice that I will move that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Supply to consider a resolution relating to the Granting of Supplementary Supply to Her Majesty. (Bill 8)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Further notices of motion?

The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Pharmaceutical Services Act. (Bill 10)

MR. SPEAKER: Further notices of motion?

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. KENT: Thank you once again, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Municipal Elections Act. (Bill 18)

MR. SPEAKER: Any further notices of motion?

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Proceedings Against the Crown Act. (Bill 19)

I further give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Provincial Court Act, 1991. (Bill 16)

I give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Commissioners for Oaths Act. (Bill 15)

I give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Judicature Act. (Bill 14)

I give notice as well that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Remove Anomalies and Errors in the Statute Law. (Bill 11)

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act. (Bill 17)

MR. SPEAKER: Further notices of motion?

The hon. the Minister of Service NL.

MR. CRUMMELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act to Amend the Highway Traffic Act, No. 2. (Bill 13)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Further notices of motion?

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Petitions

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. Barbe.

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, a petition to the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled, the petition of the undersigned residents humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS home care allows the elderly and people with disabilities to remain within the comfort and security of their own homes, home care also allows people to be discharged from hospital earlier; and

WHEREAS many families find it very difficult to recruit and retain home care workers for their loved ones; and

WHEREAS the PC Blue Book 2011, as well as the 2012 Speech from the Throne committed that government would develop a new model of home care and give people the option of receiving that care from family members; and

WHEREAS government has given no time commitment for when government plans to implement paying family caregivers;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of

Newfoundland and Labrador to implement a new home care model to cover family caregivers, and in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this is a situation with a lot of families. It is almost like we are having Ground Hog Day all over again, because this is the same petition we were going with last spring and people are still telephoning. The explanation we are providing to people when they telephone is: Yes, government committed to it; yes, government promised it; yes, it is a good idea; yes, government committed funds in this year's Budget.

The estimated annual Budget is in the range of \$8 million. The amount committed was in the range of \$6 million. It was reasonable to assume that three months in – which will be July, 2013 – government would actually implement the long-standing promise. In fact, that has not happened.

Now people are saying: What are they doing with the money? Who knows what they are doing with the money? Because the money was committed, the money was allocated, the money was voted on and the money is not being used to help these families with their home care needs.

Mr. Speaker, it is really unfortunate and shameful that government is just ignoring this small group of people in their plight when they have already made the commitment. They made the promise; they were elected on the promise. They have asked for the money in the Budget, the Budget has been passed, and still government does nothing to help these families. This is really unfortunate, but these petitions will keep coming because people keep telephoning. They assume they have been individually forgotten. It is not a fact that they have been forgotten, everybody has been forgotten.

The government is breaking its promise. Even coming before the House and seeking money in the Budget and then not bothering to – what would you do with the excess money? Is this just to throw into the big hole to cover Muskrat Falls? Are they taking lots and lots of money

from people all across the Province just because of the shortfalls? These are the questions that people are asking, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

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

I have a petition to the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled, the petition of the undersigned residents humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS the residents of the community of Fox Roost – Margaree, of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, must use Route 470-10 on a regular basis for work, medical, educational and social reasons; and

WHEREAS Route 470-10 is in a deplorable condition, such that the shoulders of the road continuously wash away and there are huge potholes on the road; and

WHEREAS the condition of Route 470-10 poses a safety hazard to residents and visitors to the community of Fox Roost – Margaree; and

WHEREAS the Department of Transportation and Works is responsible for the maintenance and repairs in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador; and

WHEREAS the local division of the Department of Transportation and Works does make periodic repairs to this route but these repairs are only temporary patchwork and the road needs to be resurfaced;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to support the users of Route 470-10 in their request to have Route 470-10 resurfaced.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this is my first petition in this new sitting of the House of Assembly, but it certainly will not be my last one when it comes to the condition of side roads in my district, especially this route to the community of Fox Roost-Margaree.

It is a vibrant little community. It is a community that is actually growing. There are a number of housing starts there, but the unfortunate part is that it is a deathtrap road when you are driving in there. The road actually degenerates into parts where there is one lane.

I have had calls not just from the residents of that community, but I have had calls from taxi services, from delivery services, from people, from tourists, people who are trying to use this road. God forbid they try to use it in the dark, because there is going to be an accident.

Again, I am hoping that the new Minister of Transportation and Works is going to take a look at this. I am hoping that there will be an allocation in next year's Budget. I know that we are at the point where there is probably going to be very little done this year. In fact, I have another road that was promised to be done before the fall was over. I am losing faith that it is going to be done; that is the road to Burgeo which had a washout.

Again, this is a serious situation. There are a lot of side roads in this Province that need work. As members from all sides of the House, we need to have a strategy to fix this.

I am going to call upon this now and I am going to continue to do so. I look forward to working with the new minister in this regard because it is a project I am sure we all take seriously, we all want to see done, and I look forward to seeing it done in the near future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for The Straits – White Bay North.

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

To the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament Assembled, the petition of the undersigned residents of Newfoundland and Labrador humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS government has a responsibility to ensure that Internet access is broadly available so people have the right to be able to access the Internet in order to exercise and enjoy their rights to freedom of expression and opinion and other fundamental human rights; and

WHEREAS St. Anthony Bight still remains without broadband services; and

WHEREAS residents rely on Internet services for education, business, communication and social activity; and

WHEREAS wireless and wired technologies exist to provide broadband service to rural communities, to replace slower dial-up service;

We, the undersigned, petition the House of Assembly to urge the government to assist providers to ensure St. Anthony Bight is in receipt of broadband Internet services in Newfoundland and Labrador.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of pages signed on this one. St. Anthony Bight is a small community, but it is just on the outskirts of St. Anthony. There are a number of communities in my district that do not have high-speed Internet. We should be, in Newfoundland and Labrador, looking to be a leader in broadband, working towards universal coverage when it comes to broadband. I know we can get there with the right strategy. The government has made great strides in moving forward.

There are still nine communities in my district without broadband, and St. Anthony Bight is one of those. I think it is quite unfair to certain pockets of the population to not have access to basic broadband and higher-speed broadband services. There is quite a divide when it comes

to providing coverage in urban areas and in rural areas. Right now there are a number of people who have just the slow dial-up service and it is just completely unacceptable.

I really urge members here that we develop a strategy that is certainly going to be much further reaching because there are still about 200 communities that do not have broadband.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. KIRBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

To the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled, the petition of the undersigned residents of Newfoundland and Labrador humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS the lack of services and supports in the school system is a serious obstacle to learning for children and youth with autism spectrum disorder; and

WHEREAS long wait-lists for pediatric assessment and diagnostic services are preventing many children with autism spectrum disorder from receiving needed early diagnosis; and

WHEREAS the Intensive Applied Behavioural Analysis Program is currently not available for children after Grade 3; and

WHEREAS Applied Behavioural Analysis has been shown to be effective for many individuals beyond Grade 3; and

WHEREAS there is a lack of supports and services for children and youth with autism spectrum disorder after they age out of the Intensive Applied Behavioural Analysis Program; and

WHEREAS it is unacceptable to expect parents in Newfoundland and Labrador to pay thousands of dollars out of their own pockets to cover the

costs of privately delivered Applied Behavioural Analysis after Grade 3;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to extend eligibility for the Intensive Applied Behavioural Analysis Program beyond Grade 3 in consultation with parents, advocates, educators, health care providers, and experts in the autism community.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this is something that has consistently come up to me from parents and others in the autism advocacy community. I will not get into details about what Applied Behavioural Analysis is, but I will simply say it is a home-based therapy program that basically helps kids to develop behaviours and skills through a teaching intervention. It is currently provided up to Grade 4.

Many people in my district who have children who are on the autism spectrum have been asking for this, and I have been getting calls from all across the Province over the last year or at least eight months for certain. I think now that government is going through its pre-Budget planning process, this is a good time to look at that, to consult with those people in the community, and to see if this is something that we can do. I think if this is the direction that government chooses to go in; it is something we will all benefit from, all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, not just the kids who we will be helping.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

To the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled, the petition of the undersigned

residents of Newfoundland and Labrador humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS the process of slickwater hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, injects hazardous chemicals into rock formations to extract oil, and is polluting groundwater and air across North America; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has commissioned an assessment of the potential environmental impacts of shale oil and gas extraction in Canada, including fracking; and

WHEREAS Quebec, Nova Scotia, and a number of US States have halted fracking and others are introducing regulations specific to fracking; and

WHEREAS it is incumbent upon the provincial government to ensure that our natural environment is protected from harmful industrial processes;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to impose a moratorium on slickwater fracking until it develops comprehensive regulations and ensures that each proposed project undergoes a conclusive environmental assessment to determine whether it is safe for the environment, the integrity of water supplies and human health.

As in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, again like I said earlier I was pleased to hear the Minister of Natural Resources stand up in the House earlier – and if I can quote from it, he says, “Today, I am announcing that our government will not be accepting applications for onshore and onshore to offshore petroleum exploration using hydraulic fracturing.” I was so pleased to hear those words.

I think that I can probably speak as well for the people who signed the petition to press government to indeed step back and take that second look. No doubt in March of 2014 it is going to be incumbent upon us to be listening to Mr. Scott Vaughan, the environment

commissioner of this country, when he comes out with a very important report that is going to be talking about the issues concerning fracking.

I am glad to stand up in this House and present this petition. It probably will be the last time for a while, but every now and then I imagine as I get them in still, I will be presenting these petitions as a constant reminder to government on whose side they should be on. They should be standing up for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, in particular, for the people who are under threat from this harmful industrial process.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. Barbe.

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, a petition to the hon. House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Parliament assembled, the petition of the undersigned humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS the marine environment off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador supports a diverse ecosystem, a multitude of organisms and species – above and below the ocean – as well as supports social and economic development in our Province; and

WHEREAS our fishery is a billion-dollar industry and employs over 20,000 people; and

WHEREAS oil leaking out of a sunken paper carrier on the Province’s northeast coast has been identified as the cause of recently discovered oil seabirds; and

WHEREAS this sunken vessel has the potential to pose an even more serious threat to the marine environment and wildlife, and this threat is causing concern for many residents, in particular the fish harvesters in the region; and

WHEREAS the provincial government is failing to be proactive and transparent in protecting our marine environment from this catastrophic

threat, instead passing complete responsibility on to the federal government;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the provincial government to show accountability and transparency involving the urgent issue of this sunken carrier and its current and potential impact upon our Province by producing a comprehensive joint action plan with the federal government, to immediately extract the remaining oil in the ship so that damage to our ecosystem, fish resources, and economy is mitigated before a more catastrophic event occurs.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, it is fortunate that we have had notice by way of oil leakage starting back in the spring in this area, this very important fishing area. It is unfortunate that we have now lost the last six or seven months or more, and now we are looking at going into the winter season without any effective repair being done.

Reports indicate that the federal government sent some sort of a mechanism or some kind of an undersea submarine unit and basically patched the hull. How reliable is it to patch the hull of a vessel which is approximately eighty metres, or 250 feet deep in this area, and is absolutely full of Bunker C? The vessel was full when it was heading out of port.

It is approximately 680,000 litres of oil. That is a litre of oil for every resident of this Province with 180,000 litres left over. If that breaks open – if it breaks open in the wintertime, with ice all over it, it would be an absolute catastrophe to the area. The provincial government has been content to stand back and say: Oh, this is a federal responsibility.

Well, it may be constitutionally a federal responsibility, but what is the Province doing to impress upon the federal government the importance of protecting our ecosystem and our

fishery in that area? What exactly has it been doing? Absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker.

Most recently there was a sheen of oil over the surface. On inquiry of the minister, I was advised that it was approximately one litre. Well, how on earth the minister could know if it was one litre, did it come from there, or where did it come from. This Bunker C is heavy, it is cold, it is hard, and it should be able to be removed now. This is not something that we can forget about forever. Ultimately, the vessel will break up. Ultimately, they will not be able to patch this effectively. Ultimately, we will have a disaster.

It is only an accident if you do not know it is going to happen. We know it is going to happen. It is complete negligence on the part of the provincial government to do nothing and not pressure the feds.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Before we get to Orders of the Day, I want to introduce our two new Pages who have started with us this year. This lady right here is – forgive me if I mispronounce your name – Fatimah Rathore.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Here we have, this lady here, Morgan Gear.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Obviously, we have Michael and Devin back with us again, and four of them are students at Memorial University. Welcome to our session again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day.

Orders of the Day

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, to ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act To Amend The Services Charges Act, Bill 5.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the hon. Minister of Finance shall have leave to introduce a bill, An Act To Amend The Services Charges Act, and that the said bill be now read a first time.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the minister shall have leave to introduce Bill 5 and that the said bill be now read a first time?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Services Charges Act", carried. (Bill 5)

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend The Services Charges Act. (Bill 5)

MR. SPEAKER: This bill is now read a first time.

When shall the bill be read a second time?

MR. KING: Tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 5 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move once again, seconded by the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador, to ask leave to introduce a bill

entitled, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act, Bill 6.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the hon. Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador shall have leave to introduce a bill, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act, Bill 6, and that the said bill be now read a first time.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the minister shall have leave to introduce Bill 6 and that the said bill be now read a first time?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act", carried. (Bill 6)

CLERK: A bill, An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act. (Bill 6)

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

When shall the bill be read a second time?

MR. KING: Tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 6 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I move that we move back into Address in Reply to pick up where we left off previously in Orders of the Day.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion that the report of the Select Committee be now approved?

The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Intergovernmental Affairs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

They are keeping me busy today, Mr. Speaker, and rightly so. It is a great pleasure to take my place once again in the House of Assembly this afternoon to talk about some of the good work that has been happening in the departments that I am now responsible for and in government generally.

What a year it has been, Mr. Speaker. When I look at some of the good news that has come to our Province in the last little while, it is significant. The federal loan guarantee, for instance, which will mean \$1 billion for Newfoundland and Labrador. The Premier stood her ground against all kinds of pressure in order to get an agreement that was good for the people of the Province.

We have also heard about the White Rose Extension Project which was announced just in recent weeks, which will mean up to \$7 billion of revenue for Newfoundland and Labrador.

AN HON. MEMBER: How much?

MR. KENT: Seven billion dollars, Mr. Speaker.

We have heard a lot of good news in recent weeks about the settling of public service contracts, which is good news for the hard-working women and men who work in our public service in Newfoundland and Labrador. There has been some reference to it in the House already today. After five years of hard work and tough negotiation, the Premier and this government has brought good news to the people of the Province through the CETA deal. A lot of good things are happening throughout government and throughout the Province.

As the new Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs and the Minister Responsible also for Fire and Emergency Services, I am pleased to have a chance today to talk about some –

AN HON. MEMBER: Clean up the mess.

MR. KENT: To clean up the mess, according to my predecessor. Unfortunately, I do not know who I have upset, Mr. Speaker, but every time there is a seating configuration done for this hon. House I end up right in view of the former Minister of Municipal Affairs. In the past few weeks, he has been a good advisor and a good coach. I do not know if I want to say good mentor yet because he occasionally leads me astray I think too, Mr. Speaker.

It is an exciting time in our department, as he well knows, and as my colleagues know as well. I have had opportunity in the first few weeks that I have been on the job to have conversations with many members of this House on both sides. Certainly MHAs have been diligent in making me aware of some of the needs and challenges facing the communities they represent in their various districts. The officials at Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs have a good handle on what is happening out there and what the needs are in terms of infrastructure in communities large and small in this Province.

There is a lot happening and a lot to talk about. In fact, just this morning I had an opportunity to join my colleagues, the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services, the MHA for Mount Pearl South, and the Premier herself, in Mount Pearl, in my district, for a very special announcement pertaining to Campia Gymnastics. We announced a \$1 million cost-shared investment from the provincial government to construct a new 12,000 square-foot gymnastics facility – not only for Mount Pearl, Mr. Speaker, but for the entire region.

In fact, only 30 per cent of the thousand young people who are using the current Campia facility, who are part of the Campia Gymnastics program, only about 30 per cent of them are actually from Mount Pearl. There are a large

number of young people from Paradise. There are a large number of young people from St. John's. There are a large number of young people from Conception Bay South and other municipalities who benefit from the programs that are provided by Campia Gymnastics.

I think that investing in our youth, in families, and in seniors is critically important. This new facility is going to allow Campia to accept more participants into their programs. It is going to allow them to reduce their waiting list, and that is positive news for indeed the entire region. This facility, which we have been talking about for years in Mount Pearl, is going to be a place that can host provincial and regional, and perhaps even national competitions.

We had a chance to unveil the plans today, with the help of the Premier. I know there is a lot of excitement in Mount Pearl and Paradise, in particular, today as a result of this announcement. It has been a long time coming, but it just goes to show what is possible when communities work together and partner together. Thanks to the hard work of Campia Gymnastics, the City of Mount Pearl and the provincial government, we have been able to make this happen. So, congratulations to everybody at Campia.

They will now embark on a fundraising campaign. The total project is going to cost about \$2.3 million by the time all is said and done, so they still have some funds to raise. Today's announcement confirmed that there is about \$1.8 million in place, which means there is still some work to do. I hope that Campia will get great support from families and from businesses as well in the region.

Mr. Speaker, overall, as a government, we have made tremendous progress on funding municipal infrastructure for our municipalities. This Budget, in this current 2013 year, provided the second year of a two-year, \$130 million municipal infrastructure fund. Since April, we have approved over 112 new municipal infrastructure projects, both under the regular Municipal Capital Works Program and under the Multi-Year Capital Works Program as well. The

provincial contribution to those 112 projects is \$31.3 million since April 1, Mr. Speaker.

There are currently more than 500 projects underway in this Province that relate to municipal infrastructure. This is an unprecedented investment, a must needed investment. Over the past decade, I am pleased to say, we have really done a good job in playing catch-up to address the infrastructure deficit that we inherited as a government.

Making sure that citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador in every community have access to clean and safe drinking water is one of my highest priorities, and I know it is one of the highest priorities of my department and this government. There is work continuing on significant water and waste water treatment projects in Corner Brook, Bishop's Falls, and in St. John's as well. In fact, in the spring of this year the former minister cut the ribbon for a new \$15 million water treatment facility in the Town of Marystown on the South Coast. That is certainly –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) Burin Peninsula.

MR. KENT: On the Burin Peninsula, as I am being reminded. Thank you, Minister.

Also, during our recent Budget we announced the continuation of Municipal Operating Grants for municipalities with less than 11,000 residents, and we committed \$22 million for 2014 MOGs. We have established a new formula that is based on a remoteness index, as well as the number of occupied dwellings in the community.

The new formula is transparent. The new formula is certainly equitable. It is sustainable, and it is understandable for all municipalities. In fact, my officials will be leading a session at the Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador Convention this weekend so that municipal leaders from across the Province will have an opportunity to learn more about the new formula.

It is just this week that I have signed letters and distributed to all municipalities in the Province to advise them of the funding amounts going into the next fiscal year for them. No communities in Newfoundland and Labrador will see a decrease in funding. The majority will see an increase in funding for their Municipal Operating Grants, which is good news for municipalities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: Some have inquired: What will that mean for our largest communities? For the seven communities with populations larger than 11,000, which include St. John's, Conception Bay South, Mount Pearl, Paradise, Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, we set up a \$25 million Capital Works fund over the past year which has been made available to those communities. It has funded many exciting projects, such as the Campia Gymnastics facility which was announced this morning. We recognize that our largest municipalities, which serve a large percentage of our residents, have significant infrastructure needs as well.

Even more significant than all of this tremendous funding is that during the Budget this year we announced we would begin working with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador on a comprehensive review of the provincial-municipal fiscal framework. It was referenced in Question Period today, and the Leader of the Opposition said: Well, get on with it; get it done.

This project is complex and it is a critical one for municipalities large and small throughout this Province. In the few weeks I have been in the department, I can already see that it is a large focus for our officials. We are working collaboratively with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador and I predict that this effort is going to take us about eighteen months to bring to a conclusion.

We want to do it right. We want to ensure that stakeholders across the Province are consulted. We want to hear from municipal leaders. We want to hear from the leadership of local service districts. We want to hear from people in

unincorporated areas in Newfoundland and Labrador. We want to talk to anybody in the Province who benefits from municipal services in the Province.

It will be an extensive consultation. We will work closely with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador. I look forward to talking with municipal leaders throughout the Province this weekend to share with them some of the progress we have made, but also to seek their input into what is really going to be a game changer for local government in Newfoundland and Labrador.

As I heard the former minister say many times, everything is on the table. We are going to look at how services are delivered. We are going to look at how services are shared in regions. We are going to look at every aspect of local government through this process to make sure we can come up with the best possible framework to address the needs of all of our communities in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Over the next couple of years that work will be a priority for my department, and it is work that is well underway. I look forward to talking about it a lot this weekend in the corridors of the Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador Convention. We are renewing municipal infrastructure. As I have said, Mr. Speaker, we are building stronger communities.

There many people, most of whom are volunteers around this Province, involved in helping build stronger communities in Newfoundland and Labrador. As I said in my first Ministerial Statement earlier today, we saw about 2,000 residents of this Province step forward in September to offer themselves for public service through the municipal election. Putting your name on the ballot is a big deal, as members of this House can attest, and to see so many residents of this Province step forward I think says a lot about the strength of our communities in Newfoundland and Labrador.

We saw lots of diversity in age of the candidates. We saw lots of diversity in terms of gender. In fact, we saw an increase in the

number of women elected in Newfoundland and Labrador in this recent municipal election, which we were very pleased to see, and it certainly is not enough. We certainly hope that number will be much greater in four years' time.

We will embark on another Make Your Mark campaign. I believe strongly that the Make Your Mark campaign cannot be something we think about every four years. We need to be working with communities around the Province today and over the next four years to encourage more people to consider playing a leadership role in their community.

So I am pleased, certainly, with the results of the recent municipal election campaign. We still have a lot of work to do and we will work co-operatively with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador to advance that work.

I talked a little bit about water and water treatment, which is a high priority. We are also making some real strides in the area of the Provincial Solid Waste Management Strategy. By the end of this current fiscal year, 2013-2014, over \$147 million will have been invested in the Provincial Solid Waste Management Strategy. About \$84.7 million of that amount has been provided by the Province, and we have about \$62.5 million coming from gas tax revenue as well, Mr. Speaker.

As a result of these investments that we have made in the Provincial Solid Waste Management Strategy, approximately two-thirds of the Province's population is disposing of waste in one of two lined landfills with leachate collection, almost 50 per cent of the population has access to recycling facilities, and 60 per cent of the Province's dumpsites have been closed.

We have made major progress in terms of the implementation of our Provincial Solid Waste Management Strategy. It continues to be a high priority for us, and it is one that I will be paying close attention to in the weeks and months ahead.

We also announced an investment of \$15 million for a new materials recovery facility. It is going

to be constructed in Central Newfoundland at the Norris Arm site, which will allow residents of the Central Region to participate in recycling activities as well.

We have also announced \$3 million of funding for the construction of a transfer station in the Eastern Region. This facility is going to accept both residential and commercial material, and it is going to be transferred to the Regional Integrated Waste Management Facility, which, of course, is located at Robin Hood Bay.

I am pleased to say that we have numerous regional services boards in place that are doing good work to advance our Waste Management Strategy in Newfoundland and Labrador. Just this spring, my department announced two new regional services boards for Burin and the Bonavista, or Discovery, regions. With these additions, we now have a total of six regional services boards in place and they obviously play a critical role in advancing our Waste Management Strategy.

Early in the summer, the department assisted in the opening of the Lab West waste management facility. This event was also an important milestone for waste management in that region. The new facility includes a landfill and material recovery area. It has the capability to run recycling and composting programs in the future as well.

Mr. Speaker, in the first few weeks on the job I have also learned a lot about Fire and Emergency Services, which is part of my new responsibilities. There is an incredible amount of work being accomplished by a very small team of people in Fire and Emergency Services. The work that they are doing and the accomplishments that they are making are quite astounding.

Through Budget 2013, \$1.5 million has been allocated for the purchase of new emergency response vehicles in communities throughout the Province. Those communities that will be receiving new emergency response vehicles as a result of this Budget investment include Burin, Cox's Cove, Grand Le Pierre, Greenspond,

Lethbridge, Point Leamington, Triton, and St. Lawrence.

When we look at history, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to tell you as well that since 2010, sixty-two emergency response vehicles have been allocated to communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. That represents a total investment of over \$12.8 million.

Approximately \$380,000 in funding from Budget 2013 has been invested in equipment, new fire and emergency response equipment for over thirty communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. I will not read the list of the thirty communities, but I will tell you those purchases included items like breathing apparatus, bunker gear, communications equipment, and other necessary equipment that is so important to our Fire and Emergency Services personnel throughout the Province – also, many of whom are volunteers.

We have about 6,000 volunteer firefighters in our Province, which is an impressive number when you consider the size of our population and the number of communities. So this funding is critical to helping those volunteers carry out their important work in volunteer fire departments in every corner of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Since 2010, approximately \$2.8 million in funding has been invested in 344 projects related to providing fire and emergency response equipment throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Through Fire and Emergency Services we also do a great deal of training. We deliver training programs to municipalities, to local service districts, and to other emergency management partners as well. These training programs are really important in bolstering the capability and capacity of emergency response partners throughout the Province. FES-NL spends approximately \$100,000 in funding to support training initiatives each and every year.

Mr. Speaker, in 2012, the new Fire Protection Services Act was enacted. That modernized and

updated the old Fire Prevention Act that some members of this House would certainly be familiar with. The new regulations associated with the act require working smoke alarms in all new and existing homes and cabins, and in all sleeping areas of dwellings.

The clocks fell back this past weekend, and I certainly discovered last week that Daylight Savings Time is one of the things that I now have to be concerned about as the Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs. The clocks falling back also serves a reminder for residents to check their smoke alarms, their smoke detectors, and to check the batteries. If you did not do so on the weekend, here is another reminder to make sure your batteries are changed regularly, which is an important measure in terms of fire prevention.

Fire and Emergency Services, the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Fire Services, and the Insurance Bureau of Canada partnered to deliver a public education campaign to promote these new regulations that we brought in, in 2012. The Alarmed and Ready NL Challenge has already seen tremendous results with over 2,000 smoke alarms distributed to approximately fifty communities throughout the Province. A second phase of this program is underway and we suspect it will have comparable results.

Also in 2012, Mr. Speaker, we commissioned a feasibility study related to the development of a Province-wide basic 911 system. As a result of the study, the provincial government is moving forward to implement a basic Province-wide 911 system. I am pleased to report to this hon. House and to the people of the Province that we are on track to deliver that Province-wide basic 911 system by the end of next year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KENT: As part of that process, we will be exploring how best to develop a next-generation 911 system in areas throughout the Province where conditions permit.

Significant progress has been made in recent months. I have met with officials to discuss our progress with the implementation of our plan, and I am pleased to say we are on track. We have confirmed decisions on the governance structure and the user-pay system that will be utilized. A project lead has been hired by Fire and Emergency Services to do the necessary work to get the system in place. This basic 911 system for Newfoundland and Labrador is a really positive step forward.

Mr. Speaker, I know I am running quickly out of time. We are making priority investments, some of which I have had a chance to mention here today. These investments in areas such as municipal infrastructure and some of the other areas I mentioned will do great things for communities and for families in Newfoundland and Labrador. I look forward to future opportunities during this session to rise in this House and talk about work we are doing with communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for St. Barbe.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak today about the general state of affairs in the Province. I have had an opportunity over the last four or five months to travel around. I have been involved in a certain leadership activity. It is a really good way to get to see a province, and I really encourage members opposite to arrange their own leadership contest, and the members here, they should arrange theirs. That would give them an opportunity to travel around and see how the Province is really working, or not working.

Mr. Speaker, it is safe to say that based on what the polls are saying, that confidence in government is shot. People do not believe government knows what it is doing. They

believe government makes up for not knowing what it is doing by being secretive. That is the prevailing sentiment. That is the prevailing feeling. That is what people are saying.

Mr. Speaker, when I have this discussion with people about what is happening in the Province, they say: well, government must be really complicated. I say no, government really is not that complicated. I did not say it was easy. I did not say it was not tough, but I did say government is really not that complicated. You have 500,000 people. You have so much revenue. You have so much expense, and you have people who have fixed costs.

Government has certain program spending in place already, and only a certain amount of discretionary spending to deal with. Those usually are where the wants and the needs come in, and not everybody's wants and needs can be satisfied. People understand that. People believe that.

What has happened in the last little while because we have had a boom and bust type of economy, an oil driven boom and bust economy, is there has been no consistency in how government has approached governing, has approached budgeting, and has approached spending. This has caused a rapid growth in the size of government, followed by this year, a pretty tough budget whereby the reins were hauled in. People who had expectations before now have had those expectations shattered. Maybe the mistake was less in shattering the expectations than it was in creating unrealistic expectations, which realistically could not have been satisfied.

A few years ago this Province crossed a threshold after approximately sixty or so years in Confederation whereby we became a have province. Mr. Speaker, that seems to have been presented or understood as meaning we have all kinds of extra money. In fact, becoming a have province does not mean and did not mean we had all kinds of extra money. Mr. Speaker, what it actually meant is it is almost like a young person leaving home and becoming responsible for their own expenses.

That means instead of expecting a subsidy from the federal government, which actually is a subsidy from other provinces that we have provinces, that we as part of the Canadian fabric, the Canadian Confederation were entitled to receive certain payments, payments whereby we could maintain a certain level of benefits that are deemed to be appropriate in Canada. That means we did not have extra money, it means we had to be even more careful about managing the money that we did have.

By looking at the budgeting over the last handful of years and the way the size of government has exploded, and some of the wastes documented by the Auditor General, it looks like we got carried away with the chequebook. It is almost like a young person on leaving home, maybe graduating from high school or university, getting a first job, ran off and got a whole pile of credit cards, bought an expensive car, expensive apartment, never mind a house, and all of a sudden realized: I cannot spend the money three times. As a matter of fact, if I spend it even once I will have nothing left. Spending really did get out of control and the size of government grew exponentially. It was something that was not reasonable to do or to try to maintain.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the thing that most people in our Province want first and foremost is a government they can rely on as being sound, prudent, fiscal managers. People all around the Province need to know that when they pay that tax cheque, when they pay HST, when they look to government, when they look to what all of us are doing here – primarily the governing party, but all of us are doing here, is that we know what we are doing and we are proceeding on a sound, fiscal framework. That means we have an obligation to reliably and reasonably project revenues and then spend according to our means over the long term, not over the short term.

People are more and better informed now by way of electronic news, daily newspapers, and the Internet. People have a better idea of government than they ever did have in bygone years. You cannot slide things past people and have them not figure out that you are up to

something, or you are not doing the job properly.

I say to people, if somebody in government tells you we cannot explain it to you, or the explanation is so complicated that you do not understand what the person in government is telling you, that means one of two things. Either they do not know what they are doing and they cannot explain it to you in the first place, or they do know what they are doing and they do not want to explain it to you in the second place. Those are the only two possible reasons an explanation to a regular, run-of-the-mill, average resident of this Province cannot be understood from government. Those are the only two reasons.

Mr. Speaker, after sound, fiscal management, the thing that is on most people's minds is health care. Everybody knows, everybody in this House knows, and I suspect a lot of people outside of this House know that the health care budget consumes approximately 40 per cent of our revenue. If you take the health care budget – if you take 40 per cent of the money you had to start with at the beginning of the year that has to be committed to health care, that is a huge whack of money, and health care is far less than perfect at this point. People are dissatisfied, to a large degree, with the results they are getting for the health care spending.

Clearly, if government would actively audit every single health care dollar, bigger seems not to have turned out to be better. Health care decisions that could have been made locally seem not to be made locally. The consolidation of health care into fewer, larger health care authorities has not demonstrated better benefits.

Furthermore, this government invests little to nothing in preventive medicine, preventive health care. Granted, if there is a pressure today to do current procedures, whether it be hips, knees, heart surgeries, all sorts of current pressing health care concerns and we are already at 40 per cent of our budget, we cannot continue to go on steadily increasing the amount we spend; therefore, we need to find a way to identify efficiencies in health care to have a

proper independent review audit of our health care system.

Whatever dollars we can pry loose by maintaining a current percentage of our budget today – so if the budget goes up, health care spending goes with it. The budget flattens out, and budgets tend never to go down. If it flattens out, we need to stay committed to the same percentage of our budget for health care and then pry loose some dollars for preventive health care.

By that I mean the ones that are perfectly obvious, smoking cessation. Every dollar we collect in taxes from smoking generates far more than that dollar in health care costs. The results will not be immediate. The results will not be between now and the next election, but there will be results in improved health care with smoking cessation. With people who adopt healthier lifestyles, in addition to that, healthier lifestyles that include maybe more exercise.

Thirty or forty years ago the federal government was very concerned. The ad or commercial used to be, when I was a much younger person, that the average twenty-year-old Canadian was only as fit as the average sixty-year-old Swede or Norwegian, because people in Nordic countries had a better and healthier lifestyle. We pressed participation, participation, participation. We seem to do so little of that anymore.

The biggest area I can see in urban areas where they have malls with participation is older people who feel they cannot afford to heat their homes, and probably cannot, so they turn down the heat and go to the malls so they can walk for hours on end to get some exercise and they save on their fuel bill. That actually is happening in Canada's newest have-Province. We need people to be more fit. We need to encourage more fitness and more fitness programs. We need people with healthier lifestyles through weight reduction.

We have a crisis in lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer, a whole range of them. If we would focus health care savings in those areas, over three, four, five or

longer years, we would reap benefits and the population would be better off generally.

Mr. Speaker, then there is education. People are very concerned over what we have had happen and this government has done to our school boards and to our educational system. The outcomes on testing for fifteen-year-old students have declined steadily under this government for the last ten years.

Ten years ago when we were a have-not Province, when we were barely scraping by, no money, no money for infrastructure, no money for very many services, we had a government struggling with all sorts of difficulty, 15 per cent of our Budget went into education. We are not putting 15 per cent of our Budget into education any more. The number of students has declined, but ten years ago when what is now this government, this party, was trying to get elected, they said in their Blue Book that any savings due to declines in population will be reinvested back into education. They have not been.

As a matter of fact, one of the big issues with education is the way this government approaches education. This government approaches education as an expense. I say, and most people agree, that education is an investment, not an expense. If it is an expense, you try to minimize the expense day after day after day; you try to cut corners and save dollars. By doing that and not treating it as an investment we are getting poorer and poorer outcomes in our students in numeracy, literacy, and science which are critical pillars in a person's long-term education.

Mr. Speaker, if you pay for your education today, you benefit from it for the rest of your life. As a society and as a Province if we pay front-end for a better education today, we have a population that is more productive, healthier, lives longer, less expensive to govern, and a better population generally. If we cut corners on education then people are less able to effectively navigate through life, they are less productive, they are more difficult to employ, and they require more government services. So the front-end investment in education is absolutely

paramount, and this government is trying to save money in the wrong direction.

The consolidation of the school boards is not going well. People as far away as Labrador are absolutely in shock because Labrador itself really ought to have its own school board. Those decisions ought to be made locally. Even in Labrador, you still have at least four distinct regions. You have Lab West, which is essentially a mining town, industrialized town, with a compact, large and growing population. You have Central Labrador, Lake Melville area, which has some of the pluses of growth and some of the negatives of growth, and there is a significant Aboriginal population in Lake Melville area. So, there is a competing type of issue and concern.

There is the North Coast of Labrador with very, very cold winters and small communities and absolute isolation, and then there is the Southeast Coast and the Straits area of Labrador, which is an entirely different region. For that matter, if Labrador were spread over maybe Europe, Labrador would probably be four countries; yet we have a part of a school board that is governed from St. John's.

It was a real irony to me when I heard recently that the appointed trustees decided to have an election and they elected their Chair. What is the point of electing a Chair if the people in the first place were appointed? It is not much better than the Senate being an appointed body, who are all appointed, all political appointees, and now they elect who is going to be the Chair. It gives the appearance of some sort of democracy, but it is not.

Clearly, the people who have the biggest interest in the outcome of the education system are the students, and the people who are the most participatory are the parents of the students. Those parents really ought to be considered; they ought to have input. Clearly, the decision on a school board really should be reversed.

Mr. Speaker, another area that I never thought that I would see in my lifetime in this Province is public safety. This Province more than

twenty-five or thirty years ago would have probably a murder every year or every other year, very low crime rates, and now we have holdups practically on a daily basis, we have armed robberies in convenience stores in St. John's, and now armed robberies in Gander, armed robberies on the West Coast, armed robberies in Labrador. We have biker gangs taking over. We have organized crime.

This government's response in its Budget was to cut the number of sheriff's officers in the St. John's region from forty-two to twenty-one without even any sort of an insight that sheriff's officers who deal with the courts are the people who have to deal with the most dangerous criminals. People that the judge says you are too dangerous to get out on bail, so we are going to keep you in, and then this government was so short-sighted that it cut the number of sheriff's deputies handling dangerous criminals in the St. John's courts by 50 per cent.

Mercifully, that decision was reversed very quickly. Regrettably, it shows a lack of insight into the criminal justice system. Mr. Speaker, this government really needs to get serious about organized crime, it needs to get serious about violent crime, and it needs to take public safety as the much greater concern that it is.

I spent most of the month of September calling on people door-to-door, visiting them in their homes. You have people who never locked their doors for a long, long time – elderly people. They are very afraid. They are afraid of someone stumbling in off the street, maybe kicking in their door. They wonder who is going to protect them.

Mr. Speaker, if a government cannot look after your health, does not look after your education and cannot protect you from dangerous criminals, what kind of government do we have? That is why this government is so low in the polls, because that is the perception and the statistics bear the perception.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we can get on to the roads. When I travel in places like the Cape Shore, it has some pretty bad roads. So does the road out

to La Scie; the trees are almost out to the pavement. People are rightfully concerned because of the condition of the roads. Part of the road going down to Harbour Breton is pretty bad. Some of it is okay; a lot of it is pretty bad. These people complain about the roads and so they should.

Then you drive the Trans-Labrador Highway, and the gravel road from Red Bay to 150 or so kilometres along the Trans-Labrador Highway is worn out. Not only is it a gravel road, the ballast is coming up through; trucks are flying by at breakneck speed.

Granted, there is some paving on the Trans-Labrador Highway. This year they finished from Labrador West to Churchill Falls. I was actually going through when they were doing the last kilometre or so. I really believe that this government needs to make a much more serious commitment to building the gravel road in Labrador before we spend too many dollars on the Island in paving. There needs to be equity in how transportation and roads dollars are spent.

If government would provide a timetable and say we know you have concerns and yes, we had infrastructure problems, yes, we have been at it for ten years, and yes, we still need another three, or four, or five years to get there and provide the people with a timetable that says we are not going to do your road this year or we are not going to do your road next year. In three years from now, three-and-a-half years from now, four years from now, we will do your road. Government then needs to call tenders early enough in the season so we are not getting way into the fall season with roadwork getting done, because by calling tenders early – now, maybe under CETA, if it comes through, since government procurement has been given away to the Europeans –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Littlejohn): Order, please!

MR. BENNETT: – as well as the minimum processing requirements, maybe Europeans will be bidding on our roadwork. Mr. Speaker, if

government would provide a timetable, then this would fit into government being able to demonstrate to people that actually the people who run the show know what is going on.

I hear from time to time people say: Well, I think you should run government like a business. Then I say, okay, what kind of a business would you like to run the government like? Would you like to run it like a restaurant? Are you going to run it like a real estate office? Are you going to run it like a bank? Of course you are not going to run government like a business. You cannot run government like a business because government is not business. The business of government is people.

Government should be run like a family. In families, you have a certain amount of money, you have a certain amount of needs, you have a certain amount of demands, and the revenue must be allocated according to the needs and within the means of the unit. Mr. Speaker, I say instead of running government like a business, we need to run business like a family, and a family that is responsible, cares for the people who need to be cared for, and gives an opportunity for growth to those who have more opportunity, more ambition, and more skills.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure we will back on these issues over this session.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS DEMPSTER: Mr. Speaker, I know it is only my first day in the House, but the good people of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair never elected me to see how comfortable the seats were in the House of Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and a humble spirit that I rise today to pay tribute to a beautiful piece of this Province, the District of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair in Southern Labrador. First, I would like to thank my

family, my hardworking campaign team, and my loyal supporters for believing in me. Without them, my successful outcome would not have been possible.

Mr. Speaker, I grew up in the small community of Charlottetown on Labrador's southeast coast, a community of about 350 people. It is a thriving little town and we are proud to say that we are home to the only shrimp processing facility in Labrador, a plant that employs about 120 people from several communities.

Mr. Speaker, my grandfather, Ben Powell Senior, who will be ninety-three in February, left Carbonear in 1936 when he was just fifteen years old. At that time, 85,000 Newfoundlanders were on what he called able-bodied welfare. Every day he would walk to the beach, look out over the ocean, and say to himself: Somewhere there has to be a better life.

He came to Labrador to fish for the summer with his older brother. He stayed that winter to trap, and from there, as they say, the rest is history. With only a Grade 3 education, he became a very successful businessman and accomplished much in his life.

Together, with my grandmother, Aunt Effie Powell as she was affectionately known, they raised a large family of whom I, as the oldest grandchild, was privileged to be a part of. He instilled in us a firm work ethic and a belief that hard work and determination could take you just about anywhere you wanted to go.

I am the only child of Glenda Goulding of Point Leamington, a now retired nurse. My dad, Lester Powell, an icon in the aviation industry, have spent more than four decades flying the skies of Labrador and have saved many lives through successful medevac flights. I make my home in Charlottetown with my supportive husband and beautiful daughter. Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the legacy of my family.

I moved away from home for a brief period only to pursue post-secondary studies. I have spent the last two decades working and volunteering in my community, district, and Province, so I know

first hand the many issues that plague our community and our people. It was during the crises time of the closure of the cod fishery in the early 1990s that I fully realized my greatest passion was in helping people.

I became actively involved on many boards and committees. I spent seven years heavily rooted in the literacy needs of the region. Our people were without jobs. Many were without a high school education. Our towns were in turmoil.

I served for eight years as a trustee with the Labrador-Grenfell Regional Health Authority and was instrumental in helping to set up the Provincial Career Practitioner's Board. From my role as Deputy Mayor in my town, I went on to represent every town in Labrador on the provincial municipalities' board. It was through all those experiences that I learned of the inadequacies and injustice that abound in so many of our towns; but, Mr. Speaker, through it all I maintained hope, hope of a better quality of life for the people of my homeland.

As I became more heavily involved in Memorial University's Faculty of Medicine through the Admissions Committee and the Aboriginal Health Initiative, I saw that clearly there is hope. It is in educating our youth and giving them opportunities that our forefathers and mothers never had. With this realization comes the added emphasis on education.

One day the students we are supporting will be the leaders in our Labrador. They will do things differently. They will not sit idly by and accept mediocre when we can be great. They will not accept the exploitation of our resources for other towns while our small towns are bleeding out.

Mr. Speaker, we are struggling now but the time will come when Labrador will finally take her rightful place on the stage and be accepted for the value she holds and the jewel in the crown that she is to this Province. I truly believe that.

Mr. Speaker, the District of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair has a population of 4,000 people who make up our twenty communities and stretches some-600 kilometres. We have a qualified

workforce. We are ready to fill jobs. Our people have been working away and living at home for generations. Now we have work in our own Province but the provision, sadly, is still not there for many of them.

Mr. Speaker, it is awfully important to highlight the presence of two Aboriginal groups in my district. The Southern Inuit of NunatuKavut, of which I am a proud member, and the Inuit from the Nunatsiavut Government. This is a people who have their own unique culture, heritage and tradition, and we must work with them to ensure their rights are protected.

Mr. Speaker, we have many things to be proud of in my district. Perhaps paramount would be the Labrador Fishermen's Union Shrimp Company Ltd. This company is owned by the fisherpeople of Labrador from L'Anse au Clair to Paradise River. They are producers of high-quality products such as cod, shrimp, scallops, snow crab, capelin, and other species caught in the cold, clean waters of Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, they started with a mandate to create jobs in Labrador by developing the inshore fishery and fish plant. Today, they have plants in L'Anse-au-Loup, Mary's Harbour, Cartwright, Charlottetown, and Pinsent Arm. They employ more than 600 people on a seasonal basis and serve some-800 fishermen.

We are also very grateful, Mr. Speaker, to this company for the presence of the Eagle River Credit Union, the only financial institution in my district. In 1984, after a bank pulled out of the region, our fisherpeople decided to establish their own. The Eagle River Credit Union, with a strong backing from the Labrador Fishermen's Union Shrimp Company, became very successful in the Town of L'Anse-au-Loup, with branches in Mary's Harbour and Cartwright.

Mr. Speaker, although I had shared with you two success stories from my district, we are not without our struggles. We have many towns that do not have their most basic infrastructure needs met. We have tourism attractions that we have not begun to capitalize on, from the Jersey Trail in L'Anse au Clair to the Point Amour

Lighthouse, and the Labrador Pioneer Footpath. We have Red Bay, which just recently celebrated receiving UNESCO World Heritage status. We have Battle Harbour, a step back in time to when cod was king; the majestic Wonderstrands and the Mealy Mountains National Park Reserve. We now need a tourism development officer to help us market those attractions.

Mr. Speaker, there is evidence all around that when transportation and energy needs are met, economies flourish; yet our small businesses are paying an astronomical commercial electrical rate. This is a deterrent for business growth, expansion, and new business start-up. Where are the cheaper commercial rates promised in the Northern Strategic Plan three years ago?

Mr. Speaker, our dilapidated ferry, coupled with the twenty-year old inadequate ferry schedule that changes seven times in the run of a year, has to go if we are to move forward. We have thirty-five-year-old pavement in the Labrador Straits that is unsafe to drive on while the rest of the district has a gravel road that most times is in a deplorable condition, not to mention health hazard from the dust. We have huge communication needs like cell coverage and broadband. We are promoting Red Bay on world markets, yet residents are on a dial-up service.

Martin Luther King had a dream that one day his four children would live in a nation where they would be judged by the content of their character and not the colour of their skin. Mr. Speaker, I also have a dream, that one day the people of Labrador and, in particular, the people of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair will live in a world where they do not feel like second-class citizens.

I have a dream that one day basic needs like water and sewer will be given for every household, that our children's education will not be compromised by allowing them to learn in triple-grade classrooms, and children who leave home to pursue post-secondary studies will have jobs to return home to. I have a dream that one day people living in Labrador will be the

primary beneficiaries of large-scale industrial developments, reaping real benefits from multi-billion dollar projects happening in our own backyard.

I have a dream that seniors who live in rural areas will have affordable access to quality health care and that small, unconnected communities like Normans Bay, Williams Harbour, and Black Tickle will have access to clean drinking water, an affordable hydro bill, and a reliable transportation network to get them to and from their homes.

Muskrat Falls: Has there been anything more debated in the history of our Province? My grandmother used to say if it is doubtful, it is dirty. If that rings true for this project, then it has to be the dirtiest endeavour our Province has ever been connected to. It started out being a \$6 billion project. Now we are expecting it to be more than \$8 billion. If Emera pulls out, we lose the loan guarantee; that means another billion for our grandchildren to pay for.

Mr. Speaker, while many parts of the world are researching ways to use wind and small hydro, government has barred this in our Province and is plowing ahead creating permanent destruction of our lands and waterways. What is worse is the fact that there is nothing in it for the people who live next to it.

Where are the principles of adjacency rule and primary beneficiaries evident in this major development? Massive towers will run through and over our land, yet our people will not even receive power from it. It is very difficult to get the people who live in my area to see the fairness in all of that. We also have to ensure that any type of development is done in an environmentally friendly way so that the footprint left behind on the landscape is minimal.

The environment: We are more educated than ever before on the necessity of being environmentally friendly, yet in Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair we are lagging far behind. We have dumps – yes, garbage dumps that are filled to capacity. Crow Head in the Labrador Straits

is one example of this. It has been ten years since studies were carried out and recommendations put forth, but we are still waiting for action. There is not one single sanitary landfill site in my district.

Mr. Speaker, we must continue to ensure the fishery survives as an industry, as it is the backbone of my district and many others. We all watched the demise of the cod stocks from poor management in the early 1990s. I have to ask: Have we learned from that?

We are concerned about crab stocks and yet we are using resources to pay for exploratory surveys, while government shrinks from its responsibility to pay for them. We must work together to ensure the Hawke Channel remains closed to shrimpers and gillnetters if we are to protect our crab stocks. We need to work on new initiatives; we need to work together to access quotas for new fisheries like red fish, herring, mackerel, and turbot.

Mr. Speaker, we have aging demographics throughout the Province and Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair is no exception. We have many concerns in health care. We are currently spending forty cents on every dollar and yet clearly not meeting the need. Our Province has the highest rate of diabetes in the country. It is critical that we place more emphasis on prevention and education.

Mr. Speaker, services like ground transportation in St. Anthony must stay in place because the hospital is fifty-five kilometres from the airport. Patients, most of whom are seniors, cannot afford to pay this cost up front and wait four to six months for reimbursement, which is the norm under our current medical transportation program. Home care is becoming an increasing pressing issue and we cannot rest until it is addressed.

We have lost so much in services to our rural towns in recent years. Our zone boards played a valuable role in co-ordinated economic development. I can tell you now, Mr. Speaker, the loss of those boards through recent cuts is being keenly felt throughout my district. EAS

offices played a vital role in helping people find meaningful employment. At a time now when the labour market has never been stronger in Labrador, we are going to end up with more people on Income Support. Five offices in my district recently closed because this government did not see value in the work they did. There was no duplication of services in our small towns.

Mr. Speaker, we have had strong representation in the District of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair for nearly two decades. A young woman, as tough as the land she comes from, has set the bar high for me. I pledge to work equally as hard to ensure the voice of my constituents is heard. Someone once told me: You will know when you have done some good for a place if you leave it better than you have found it. As I embark on this new career that will be my challenge: to fight for fairness and equality for the constituents of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

Mr. Speaker, do I believe the things I dream of for my district will come easy? No, but I close with a quote by Calvin Coolidge who was the thirtieth President of the United States, because it encourages me that change is possible. He said, "Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of education derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent."

I look forward to working with the Liberal caucus and my other colleagues in the House, and to participating in lively debate and discussion on important matters affecting the people of this Province. Most importantly, I look to the creator for wisdom and guidance to make right choices and right decisions each day as a leader in my district both inside and outside of the House of Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is indeed good to be back in the House, Mr. Speaker. I want to offer my congratulations to the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair. She mentioned the previous member from the area; there is no doubt about it, she has big shoes to fill.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I have worked rather closely with the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair and we have made a major investment in her community. She talked about education and the importance of education. We have made a major investment to the children in her community in the provision of a new school.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: I think she is very much aware of the investment of other schools in her district. Mr. Speaker, it just speaks to our commitment to education and to children. It does not matter what district they are in, all children in this Province deserve the dollars that come from government and we will invest in that. Our record will attest to that.

Mr. Speaker, I have been in this House now for ten years, and I have had people say to me: What kind of a bloody skin do you need to be in politics? I think I came into it with a little bit of a thin skin. I have developed, I think, a little bit of a harder skin. Some days you wonder about it, but it is the work you do over the course of time that makes a difference.

I am going to give an example. There is a lady being laid to rest today in my district. She is sixty-nine years old. She will be sixty-nine in November. I mention her because of one particular thing. When I came into this in 2003, there were four people on the Burin Peninsula seeking dialysis. Most of them would travel to Clarenville to receive it or to St. John's. Anyway, this particular lady, Ms Olive Fancy,

and another lady who had lost her husband to dialysis, started a campaign to bring dialysis units to the Burin Peninsula.

This is why I say there are rewards in being an MHA in government, because it is with those people you work to bring a service to the peninsula. Because of this particular lady, and because of her workings with government, with ministers, and the approach that they took, today on the Burin Peninsula there is a unit there that serves twenty-four people. That means there are twenty-four people who do not have to trek three times a week to St. John's or to Clarendville or to elsewhere, to receive dialysis.

So my hat I tip to these types of people. They are people who do not play politics with issues. They go at the issue simply because it is the thing they want. They know they have been impacted by it, and we, as a government, know the challenges of doing budgeting and we know the challenges of everything that is required of a budget to provide that service. In this particular case, I think – no, I do not think, I believe it is one of the best things that have happened in my ten years in government. It has been one of the best.

Those other members who know of the units that have been placed around this Province know the impact that that has had on somebody who is relatively up in age, who have to pound back over a highway – and these people were leaving in the morning, driving to St. John's, getting three or four hours of dialysis and then get aboard their car and drive back. Now I am not a dialysis patient myself, and I hope I never get there, but the people who tell me, it is a rather intense treatment. You have to drive three hours and then drive back again. So to this lady, Olive Fancy, and the other folks who worked to make that possible, it was an honour to be able to work with individuals such as that.

Mr. Speaker, people can call this whatever they want to, this next part of what I am going to say, they can call it political because I am on this side of the government or not, but I am going to speak to it anyway. We have heard all of the debates about the CETA talks, and we have

heard about the \$400 million that has come into government. Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak about it as a former Fisheries Minister.

I have to say, I think, second to education, it has been my most favourite portfolio. Controversial, yes; it almost killed me, yes; but the best portfolio that I think I would have gone into. I remember going in there and for the first bit they were talking about these CETA talks. They had begun the talks, and everything was around the tariffs. If we could only get rid of the tariffs and we could tap into that European market.

I know the Member for St. Barbe will dispute some of the things that I am going to say. I have said I am going to speak to this whether people think it is political or not. I can guarantee you – and we have had regular updates from the Premier on this. She was adamant that she was going to bring something to this Province that would have an impact on the fisheries. If there is anything that is going to have an impact, we have the opportunity in this \$400 million, I can guarantee you that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I do not need any notes to tell you what was being talked about when I was in fisheries, whenever it was, three or four years ago. What was being talked about? We need access to that European market. There is huge potential in that European market.

The other thing that was being talked about continuously is we have a product coming from Newfoundland and Labrador that goes out in bulk. We are not branded as a Province around the fishery. We have an opportunity now to brand an item such as cod so that it is unique to this Province. It is a fish that is caught off our shores, it is done here. It is sold as a Newfoundland and Labrador product. That was the whole thing about marketing, promotion, and access to big markets.

What the Premier has accomplished here – and it is the negotiating team who went up there, who did the work, and direction from the Premier.

We stood firm that we wanted something, and we got it and it is going to make a difference. I can guarantee people of that much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the history of this Province we know as it relates to the fishery. Investments of this nature, done right, will ensure that the fishery survives well into the future and it is going to exist –

MR. BENNETT: (Inaudible).

MR. JACKMAN: The Member for St. Barbe says the people want – I challenge him to come and sit down with a young fellow in my community, who today, Sir, is out sanding his boat off. You tell him that he does not think there is a future in the fishery and he is going to tell you something very, very different – very, very different.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would even challenge the member – I went out with this gentleman a couple of times this summer. I fished with him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. JACKMAN: The Member for St. Barbe smells the water, Mr. Speaker. I doubt if he has ever dabbled in it. I doubt if he has ever dabbled in it.

Mr. Speaker, I am telling you that the fishery of this Province is going to be different. There is absolutely no doubt about it. I still contend that if we do things right that thirty-four year old is not only going to have a future in the fishery, he is going to have a darn bright future in the fishery in this Province. I can tell you that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, for the last half of my twenty minutes I have to speak about

education. I am going to tell, because I think examples sometimes tell us exactly where we were, exactly where we wanted to go, and exactly where we are now. I will tell an example.

A few years ago we decided, and we continue to invest in the skilled trades in our schools.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: We still do. It is in junior high, it is in senior high, and we are starting to bring it into the elementary so you start to –

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. JACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, you are going to have to –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Protection.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, protection is right.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, we went into the skilled trades. The other part that we did is we encouraged young women to enter those fields, the non-traditional fields. I am going to tell you two examples that I recently heard.

One I heard last night, of a young thirty-year-old female who went and did welding tech. She is a welding inspector. Just think of this, and I know this young girl, so I know of the circumstances. By the way, she is a single, young woman who is a welding tech inspector who is in the business right now of purchasing a \$300,000 home, and she did not need anyone to co-sign for her, or anything else. She is standing on her own, Mr. Speaker – she is standing on her own. She is independent, she is strong, and she is a top-notch welding tech inspector.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, another example, the second example, is a young lady

who is a pipefitter. I was sitting down the other day and she was sitting down, and she pulled this handful of stuff out of her pocket. I said: What are those? She said: Those are some of the connectors that we use in scaffolding. I am thinking this is very different from the situation for young women twenty years ago. Think about where we have come.

The Member for St. Barbe can heckle and mumble all he wants, Mr. Speaker. Those are two examples, and this young lady, too, is purchasing a new home under her own purchasing power.

Mr. Speaker, if you do not call that, and if the Member for St. Barbe, who is mumbling over there, does not think of that as being, successful then he has missed the point altogether. To me, those are two successful young women, successful because of the investment and the direction that was established by education; exactly it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I have to before I get down make a few points about where we have come in education. Now, some of these points, people will have heard me say before, but I have to say them again because I think it is important every now and then that people be reminded of the investments put in education. I am not going to go down the road of the Liberals did not do this or the Liberals did not do that. I am going to point to the investments that we have made in education.

Mr. Speaker, just listen to this one. Somebody should tweet this several times. Our per-pupil investment in education has increased by almost 70 per cent.

AN HON. MEMBER: How much?

MR. JACKMAN: Almost 70 per cent in ten years. Get this now. In 2003 our per-pupil investment was \$7,400. Our investment in 2013 is \$12,500. In ten years we have increased our per pupil investment by 70 per cent. Mr. Speaker, yes, we have the revenue to do the means, but it just points out where our investments are going.

Another one - and I have to say this again. I said it so many times last session, and I have to say it again. I have to say it. Newfoundland and Labrador continues to boast the best pupil-teacher ratio in any province in the country.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: Newfoundland and Labrador boasts the best pupil-teacher ratio in any province in Canada at 12 to 1. Go to any of our schools –

MR. BENNETT: (Inaudible).

MR. JACKMAN: The Member for St. Barbe, I do not know what it is about him. I just think he does not like students or teachers. I have not heard him say many positive things about it. I am waiting for him to get up after the leadership and make that inaugural speech on education.

Mr. Speaker, since 2004 we have put \$620 million for new schools, extensions, redevelopment, renovations, and repair maintenance. Just think, what was the number somebody gave me? In 2003, the repair and maintenance budget – listen, Member for St. Barbe – in education was \$5 million. A couple of years ago, because we needed the investment, it went to \$40 million. It went up \$34 million. Even this year it is still \$21 million – \$21 million for our repair and maintenance.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of work that has been done. Any member, I do not care, any member on either side of this government in any of the three parties, can go to schools in their individual districts and find where there has been a major infusion of money into having safe, secure schools.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: I do not care what member you are, you can go into any district and you will find where we have made major investments. As a matter of fact, I said this in the last session, too, there are forty major projects going on, new schools that have been opened: as I said before,

Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair, St. Anthony, and Carbonear. I go on and I go on.

Mr. Speaker, I have to mention this one because any of us who are into education, and to parents, this one will be recognized. Since 2004, we have spent \$50 million to provide free text books.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: I know I have said that before and I know members in here have said that before, but I think it is important that we just take a look back to see quality.

Mr. Speaker, I am sorry; it was \$20 million for free textbooks. Here is the \$50 million: The \$50 million was to offset school fees. Any of us who were school administrators or teachers knew that every September, what did we have to do? You had to go and collect fees. So here were parents having to come up with money for textbooks, for fees, their new clothing, their lockers, and whatnot.

Mr. Speaker, what we did as a government is we took that burden of textbooks and fees away from parents. Everyone in this Province recognizes the impact that has had on students and parents. It is money that they did not have to come up with, and it was a challenging time every September.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to save the last one for my Ministerial Statement for tomorrow. I will leave that hanging. We have something that will be the first time in the Province’s history that I, as minister, will be very, very proud of. I am very proud of it now.

I am hoping that when I announce it tomorrow even the Member for St. Barbe will stand up, he will applaud, and say: Do you know what? In education in this Province, our teachers, our students, and our parents are doing a tremendous job supported by people at board offices and supported by all the administrators in the school. I look forward to the Member for St. Barbe standing tomorrow with us and applauding when we make that announcement.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O’BRIEN: Mr. Speaker, it is so good to be back in the House of Assembly, to be around our colleagues, and listening to some of the things that are being said here in the House. There is one thing I will say about the hon. Minister of Education: He has only scratched the surface in regard to the good things we have done for this Province since 2003.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O’BRIEN: As a matter of fact, you would have to be blind, deaf, or something of that sort not to see exactly what we have done in this Province. Most people in this Province would recognize that on the streets of Newfoundland and Labrador. You cannot compare the place we are today as compared to what we inherited in 2003, I say to the hon. members across the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O’BRIEN: All you have to do is go out there and look at the economy that we have created. Look at the things we have built. Look at what we have invested in all areas of the Province from all departments.

I can go back to my former department in Municipal Affairs; \$650 million in municipal infrastructure over the last five years, Mr. Speaker. This was investments in communities in all parts of the Province. The last time I checked, Newfoundland and Labrador was a complete Province. We are all in this together and we do value the things that Labrador brings to the table in regard to this Province; absolutely, we do.

Do we have challenges in other areas of the Province as well not including – no differently

than Labrador? Absolutely, we do. I try to address them on a daily basis, not only from my hon. colleagues on this side of the House but also the colleagues across the House.

It was only this summer that I was in Cox's Cove addressing an issue that the hon. member had there. He has recognized that on Open Line, he has recognized that again and again whenever I have been present, and he appreciates it.

Have we been everything to everybody and do we have other challenges left to accomplish and do? Absolutely, we do. There is absolutely no denying in comparison where we have carried this Province since 2003. You cannot compare the two, absolutely not.

You can go somewhere, you can get up, and you can present a petition on a stretch of provincial road that needs to be paved, absolutely. You go to any jurisdiction in Canada, any jurisdiction in the United States and you will find the same. You cannot have everything done today and you will never, ever accomplish everything that you might want to do in any government to be quite honest with you. Once you get it all done you start repairing the things that you did fifteen and twenty years ago. It is an ongoing process. The one thing that you cannot deny is the impact that this government has had in regard to rural Newfoundland and Labrador in general, and also Newfoundland and Labrador. You cannot compare.

As well, I would like to speak a little bit in regard to our Premier's leadership, and the leadership that she has shown over the last couple of years. It is undeniable the leadership she has shown. As a matter of fact, she delivered a number of key things for Newfoundland and Labrador; the first being the federal loan guarantee which will mean over probably \$1.4 billion actually to the taxpayers of this Province. That is what it will provide, putting money right straight into their pocket really in a roundabout way, straight in there because it is a saving of \$1.4 billion. That is exactly what it is, the loan guarantee, and she accomplished that.

As a matter of fact, I would predict that she was probably the only one who could accomplish that, in getting that loan guarantee and how important it was for the Province. The White Rose Extension Project which will provide another \$7 billion worth of revenues to the Province, settling the public sector contracts and CETA, to say a few in the past couple of weeks, I say to the hon. member. That is not stretched over years and years and years; that is only stretched over a few weeks, a few months.

Those are the kind of things that we are doing in this Province because we hold the Province dear to our hearts and the people of the Province dear to our hearts. That is the reason why I put my name on the ballot back in 1999, because the simple reason is that I thought I would make a difference, that I had something to bring to the table.

As a matter of fact, looking at my district, you cannot compare the District of Gander today to back in 2003 and nobody in Gander can deny that as well. When you go out there you see the prosperity, you see the number of houses being built, you see the investments in infrastructure, you see the investments in schools, you see the investments in municipal issues and in the James Paton Memorial Hospital – I thank the hon. the Minister of Health. We have invested heavily in that. As we have invested in our district, we have invested in the City of St. John's, and we have invested in Corner Brook, absolutely.

When I sit here and listen to the hon. members across the way, mainly what they talk about is doom and gloom, just like nothing happened in the last ten or twelve years. They do not see anything; it is just like they have their blinders on and do not see a thing. It is amazing to me.

As you probably would venture to guess, I follow politics very closely; I listen to the Open Line shows and I listen to all of the items that are out there. It is amazing to me that you criticize or you bring things forward denying what has happened from 2003 until now, you do not mention any of the good things, that kind of stuff, just like nothing has happened. You know all of that and you just concentrate on very

minute things – important, absolutely, to people. I heard a petition today with regard to a stretch of highway. It is absolutely important to the Minister of Transportation and Works and absolutely important to the people who live there. Can we do it all today? Do we have the capacity to do it all today?

Let's say for instance that we had all the money we possibly could have; let's say that there was no question about the money, there is no sitting down in regard to the budget process and defining a budget, that whatever you wanted you are going to get, so you are going to get it all. Let's say we lived in that perfect world. Well, we don't have the capacity to do the work. You cannot get it done in one year. It is just impossible to do in regard to the industry, in regard to construction, in regard to the engineers. You just cannot get it done, absolutely not. We have moved on a strategy over the last ten or twelve years to address the issues in Newfoundland and Labrador.

You go out in rural Newfoundland and Labrador – I ask the hon. Member for St. John's North to go out in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, if he has the time to get out of the City of St. John's, and see all of the Province and have a look at the provincial roads. I guess he has lots of time these days. In the meantime, I would advise you to read the fine print when you are going around Newfoundland and Labrador, when you are getting something to eat or whatever it might be. It is important to always read the fine print. You should get out there; you should absolutely get out there and have a look at the investments we have made in the provincial roadway systems out there.

As a matter of fact, it was only a week or two ago that I was talking to somebody from, I believe it was Nova Scotia, and they said: Your provincial highways in rural Newfoundland and Labrador are phenomenal. That is because of the huge investments we have made over the last number of years. Now, do we have it all done? Absolutely not. Will we be investing in the future? Absolutely.

We are also a fiscally responsible government. We, especially the Premier, have made some hard decisions over the last year; decisions that are not going to make her popular. It is so easy to make the popular decisions. It is so easy, absolutely, and then you are a hero to everybody. Then you go home out of it and you retire or whatever it may be, and somebody else has to clean it all up. We are not going to have that on this watch.

The Premier has expressed that many, many times. That is certainly not going to happen on her watch, absolutely not, because we are going to manage this Province in a fiscally responsible way. We are going to diversify our economies and we are going to move forward. The people of the Province and their children and their children's children will benefit from it for a long time to come. That is exactly what this is all about, I say to the hon. members.

What I say to you as well is instead of getting up and talking about the doom and gloom or whatever, come with suggestions. If you have suggestions make them. We, as a government – I would be willing to listen, absolutely, but I do not hear any suggestions. I do not hear anybody out there in the political airways in all the interviews that are being made in regard to some of the processes that are happening right now in the Province, the leadership and that kind of thing, that they would do anything different. They are not offering anything. They are not offering anything in my mind. I cannot see anything.

Have we affected each and every soul in Newfoundland and Labrador? Yes we have, actually. We put more money in their pockets with such things as the elimination of tax on auto insurance. That put money right straight into the pockets of every Newfoundlander and Labradorian who owns an automobile. That is the kinds of things that we have done. You cannot go on denying that.

It is just the thoughts that are going through my mind in regard to our Province and to this great House of Assembly that we have. It is supposed to be productive. It is not about doom and

gloom, and it should not be about doom and gloom because it is not doom and gloom.

As a matter of fact, if you look at Canada and you look at the five major banks and you look at the economists and world leaders when it comes down to economists, they are saying Newfoundland and Labrador is leading the way, and we will continue to do so. We are the envy of the rest of Canada when it comes to leadership, when it comes to the place that we find ourselves in.

As a matter of fact, one of the other things they said to me, it came in such a short period of time, because it is phenomenal. It is fine enough to change one of your businesses and change the face of your business over a short period of time, maybe four or five or six or seven years, but to actually change the face of a Province over ten years – only ten years, I say to the hon. members. That is phenomenal. That is absolutely phenomenal.

I remember back in 1999, I lost that election by thirty-two votes, but one of the captions in the local newspaper at the time was a picture. It was a picture down one of the streets in Gander. As a matter of fact, it was Byrd Avenue. The picture had: Elect Kevin O'Brien on the sign, and in between it there was probably about forty or fifty real estate signs. The caption was: Who will win, O'Brien or real estate?

That is the place that Gander found itself in, in 1999. It did not get much better between 1999 and 2003; I can guarantee you, because I was in business there. It was hard. It was difficult to make a dollar. That has changed. That has absolutely changed because it is the land of opportunity. Not only is it the land of opportunity for skilled trades workers, but it is the land of opportunity for business people. They are investing. They have confidence in the economy to invest where they were not investing before, because there was no bright future. There was nothing, absolutely nothing.

I have often said as well when I speak, that as politicians sometimes we have to remind people about where we came from. It is not a bad thing

to reflect on the past, absolutely not, because it reminds us of where we came from and where we are today. Certainly, I try to remind people exactly where we found ourselves back in 2003 and where we are today. I think it is really important to do so.

Now, some of the members across the way do not like us doing that, that we remind people, but it is not a bad thing. As a matter of fact, it is not a bad thing for them to do, if they are going to offer something to the Province. It is a good thing to reflect on the past because it makes you think about the future and exactly where you want to go. That is exactly what we do on a daily basis.

I have been appointed now as the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills. As a matter of fact, on Saturday night past, I was at an event in Gander and a prominent doctor in Gander came over. He said to me: How are you doing? I said: Boy, I am busy, blah, blah, blah, whatever, and that kind of stuff. He said: Boy, the way I see it, you are probably in the most important department for the Province today in regard to all of the things we have, all of the opportunity we have. All the big projects we have on the go and on the radar and the amount of skilled trades and the people who need to avail of the services and certainly get work there. It is a great opportunity for Newfoundland and Labrador. It is. It absolutely is. There is no doubt about that.

I see it as a very bright future, a really bright future. We are investing in Newfoundland and Labrador. Not only are we investing in infrastructure, but we are certainly investing in our youth. The lowest tuition fees in Canada. People are coming here to take their education. Some of them are staying afterwards, and I hope more of them will. There is a reason why it is the lowest tuition. It is because we as a government believe in our youth, we believe in our people, and we believe in our future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'BRIEN: That is where we are with it, because we know it is one of the most important things you can invest in. It is one thing to say it;

it is another to do it. We have done it. We have continued to do it, and will continue. I, as a minister, will certainly engage the student bodies and the youth of our Province. The simple reason is their future is here, and we want them to have a great future.

Memorial University, even just the new residence there – I went there a long, long time ago, I say to the hon. Member for Mount Pearl.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. O'BRIEN: Yes, it was a long, long time ago. My children were a part of that residence, too. I have three girls who went there. I insisted on them going and staying in residence the first year because I thought it was good for them, to teach them to become independent and whatnot. Now to see the new residence down there today, what a fabulous investment, a fabulous investment in our future, a fabulous investment in the youth of this Province.

I just cannot remember off the top of my head here. I think it is somewhere around \$88 million, something like that, or \$89 million in regard to the residence, that we have invested in the residence in this Province.

How can someone from the opposite side of the House get up and criticize that? Really? Can you get up and just get into individual things and zero in on something that is individual? Sure you can, absolutely, and you could do it in any jurisdiction in Canada regardless of what government there is.

I see one of the hon. members shaking her head over there. It is easy to shake your head when you are hearing the truth. That is probably why you are shaking your head. That is the reason why you are shaking it because there is no denying what I am saying. I invite the hon. member to get up on her feet, shoot me down, and deny what I am saying here today, how we have invested in people, how we have invested in our youth, how we invested in our municipalities, how we invested in our educational systems, how we invested in health, how we invested in transportation and works,

our roads and infrastructure, how we invested in our children in Child, Youth and Family Services, how we invested and grew the tourist industry to \$1 billion industry today.

There is no denying those ads, is there? It kills you to watch them probably. There is no denying it, is there because you are on the opposite side? Newfoundlanders and Labradorians take pride in those ads, absolutely. I have had it said to me many, many times, but it kills you from the Opposition point of view maybe, because you are in denial. I am not in denial, I can guarantee you that. I am going to make sure that over the next couple of years I am going to support my Premier, support this government, and I am going to make sure that I do everything possible to keep us on the right course, and that course is prosperity because we are into it now; absolutely, we are.

I invite anybody to get up there in their places, as soon as I take my seat, and deny that we are not in prosperity; we are not in a place of prosperity. As a matter of fact, I have one minute and twelve seconds left; I will even give you that time as well to contemplate your thoughts because there is absolutely no denying it. That is a challenge I have.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. O'BRIEN: Absolutely, go to it.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) will tell you.

MR. O'BRIEN: Yes, I will tell you, do not worry. I will take back your fire truck.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. O'BRIEN: Do not eat the pancakes.

No, I am serious here today, absolutely I am. I have been a businessperson in this Province for a long, long time. Yes, I have done fairly well. I thank the people of Gander and the people of my district for that. I will continue to support them in any way I possibly can.

I will achieve what I possibly can in regard to investments from this government, not that we have not invested. We have invested heavily in my district over the last ten years. I welcome that and I thank the government for that.

MR. SPEAKER: I remind the hon. member his time is up.

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

I am only going to take a second. I will give the hon. member ample time to go into denial.

MR. SPEAKER: I remind the hon. member his time is up.

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

We will be talking again very soon.

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

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

I am very happy to have the opportunity to follow my colleague. We are in a time of prosperity and it is a wonderful thing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS ROGERS: We have seen prosperity on many levels; there is no doubt about that. That is because of the hard work of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. That prosperity is on the backs of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador who have dedicated their lives to working for their families, working for their communities, and working for their Province. It is a good thing.

Mr. Speaker, it was interesting to hear our Premier speak today. The Premier today said that she wanted to compare the fact of commercializing the surplus power of Muskrat Falls to a family home. Maybe there is a \$1,000 mortgage on it, but there is a basement apartment for \$600.

I thought, as a matter of fact, using her little analogy, where is that basement apartment? I tell you, Mr. Speaker, I have so many constituents and, particularly, a lot of seniors in my district that would do anything to find a basement apartment for \$600. Mr. Speaker, that does not exist in this Province. That just goes to show, even though it was an analogy, how out of touch this government is with the day-to-day lives of the citizens who are not experiencing –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

For the citizens who are not experiencing this prosperity, and particularly our seniors – our seniors all over the Province. We are in this supposed time, an historic time of prosperity; we have 500,000 people, and we should be able to get this right. This government should be able to get it right.

We have seniors living in fear. They are living in fear because maybe they do not have a safe place to live, or they are so vulnerable in terms of their current housing situation and they know that they are precariously housed; that the housing that they have now, it cannot be guaranteed that they are going to continue to live in their housing, either because they are living in rental units and we have no guarantee of rent control or rent stabilization, or they are living in their own homes and their homes are too big for them; their homes are not energy efficient, and they need to be able to downsize.

Mr. Speaker, there is nowhere for them to go, and we know that. We all know that. Every single MHA in this House knows that because every single MHA in this House has had calls from seniors in their district saying I do not know what I am going to do. The thing is that we do know – there have been studies done – that 90 per cent of seniors in Newfoundland and Labrador want to live either in their own home or in an apartment. That is what they want. Yet, they are so precariously housed.

There is nothing really concrete. There is a little bit of a band-aid approach here and a little bit of a band-aid approach there, but not enough to address the incredible housing crisis that we do have. We know that in Newfoundland and Labrador we have the fastest growing proportion of seniors in the whole country. That poses real specific challenges, challenges that this government has not faced, challenges that this government is not planning for.

It is good that we have this prosperity. It is good that we have companies that want to come here and work with us in partnership to take advantage of our natural resources. That is a good thing. It is a good thing that there is wealth that is generated. It is a good thing that there is all kinds of great potential wealth, but wealth that also belongs to every citizen of Newfoundland and Labrador, whether they are working or whether they are seniors who have retired.

So I posit, Mr. Speaker, in fact that this government is out of touch with the lives and the realities of the many people in our Province who are not experiencing the great prosperity. As a matter of fact, I believe this government itself is in denial. I also believe this government itself is the doom-and-gloom government, because I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we do have such great prosperity and wealth, and therefore nobody should be living in poverty, particularly not our seniors who have worked so hard all their lives, who have helped to build the wealth and prosperity that we have.

So, Mr. Speaker, what are some of our main issues, for instance, for seniors? The cost of housing, again; many of them are over-housed, but what we see on the market are condos that are being built starting at \$300,000 and more. Many seniors, perhaps most seniors, I would like to say – because in Newfoundland and Labrador we have the highest proportion of seniors who are in receipt of the Old Age Security and the GIS, the highest proportion in the whole country. Yet again, that is not a sign of prosperity. That is not a sign of historic wealth or of historic prosperity, if our seniors are living in poverty and if our seniors are living in fear of

not having a safe place to live. So rather than doom and gloom, I am saying I have hope. We can do much better than that and we must do better than that.

For instance, many seniors in our Province who are living in rental units fear the next rent increase. I had a woman come up to me a few weeks ago and she said that her husband had died two months previous. Their apartment is \$950 a month, plus utilities, a very simple, basic apartment, and her income is now cut in half. Her income is about \$1,000 a month. She can no longer live in this apartment that is \$950 a month, plus heat and light. That is more than what she brings in. She has nowhere to go. She wants to go on a waiting list for a rent supplement.

As we know, Mr. Speaker, there are hundreds and hundreds of people on the waitlist for Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, either for a direct unit or for a rent supp. This year, this Budget that is supposed to reflect a Province of absolute prosperity actually did not increase any number of rent supplements, even though we know our municipalities and our mayors all over the Province have said that housing is one of the main crisis issues facing our people today in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Our government in fact did nothing to address that or to ameliorate that. In fact, what they did was cut back. The very fact of not even increasing rent supplements by one or two is backsliding because we know that there are more and more people who are precariously housed.

The Residential Energy Efficiency Program that is available to very low income earners so they can stay in their homes and so they can fix up their homes so that their homes are more energy efficient was cut by 50 per cent in this last Budget, Mr. Speaker. We know that people need to save on their power costs – people need to save on their power costs. They are already living, particularly seniors, from day to day. What does this government do? This government, who has such prosperity and can tout about how wonderful the prosperity is, cut that program in half on the backs of the most

vulnerable people in our Province. That is what we see happening.

Home care and accessible housing; I attended a meeting this summer in St. John's of representatives from groups who represent people with physical disabilities and they talked about the impossibility, the absolute impossibility, of the majority of people who are physically disabled to find housing. People are living in housing where they cannot even get out. Their housing is not accessible. In order for them to get out of the house is a huge undertaking, and they need a number of people to help them. Mr. Speaker, that is not the face of prosperity. That is not the face and the picture of a society that is prosperous and healthy. It is a picture of a society that is lopsided.

For instance, we know that in British Columbia to address their growing housing crisis they started – I know the hon. member asked me for some examples of solutions. Well, British Columbia has a rental program specifically for seniors and they have a whole host of workers within their social housing program that help seniors. There are special rent supplements for seniors. There are ways they can help seniors find affordable housing and keep them in their homes.

Home care is a huge issue for seniors. Again, without a doubt, 90 per cent of them say they want to be able to age in place. In order for that to happen, they have to have home care. We need a home care system that is an extension and part of our health care system. There are no ifs, ands, or buts about it. Instead we have seniors who do not have enough home care, they have to pay for home care, or they have to supervise their own home care. We do not have people who have enough backup and support. It is not properly supervised.

Again for seniors is the dental program. It was so wonderful when the dental program in fact was increased. That was a sign of prosperity. That was a sign of taking care of people. That was a sign of sharing wealth. That is the picture of a healthy and prosperous society, but what did

this government do? They cut it back; they cut it back to what it was years ago.

I had a man call my office who waited six months for authorization to be able to get the dental work that he had to have done. He needed eight teeth pulled, but because of the rollback in the dental program he got one tooth pulled, although his doctor said he had to have eight teeth pulled and he needs a partial plate. He will not get that partial plate this year.

Mr. Speaker, that is not the picture of prosperity. That is not what prosperity looks like. That is not what a healthy society looks like. We have people living in pain. It is bad for their health. It is heart health. This is not that wonderful picture they like to paint of what prosperity is.

Long-term care, Mr. Speaker; I visited a number of seniors in long-term care who talked about not having access to enough physiotherapy, who feel like they are being warehoused. They talk about the exceptional care from the workers, that the workers in these long-term care facilities who are so overworked, work with compassion –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS ROGERS: They work with compassion and they work with expertise, yet they are overworked and the seniors talk about not being able to get enough physiotherapy and that they feel like in many ways they are warehoused.

The other thing is the issue of not getting enough personal care and not getting enough bathing. It is wonderful when the families can help, when they can intervene, but we know that because of our very transient work population and how many of our Newfoundlanders and Labradorians leave to work, many seniors do not have a lot of family members close to them because their family members are away working. So they feel so vulnerable, and not because the staff are neglectful, but because they are understaffed and because they do not get the care they should be getting. Again, this incredible prosperity we are

facing today was built on the backs of these people.

I also had the pleasure of attending the Public Sector Pensioners' Association this fall. They are concerned about benefits. They are concerned about pensions for younger workers as well, and how important that our pensions must continue to be defined benefits for all of our public sector workers.

Mr. Speaker, I talked to them and I said you are not a liability and your pensions are not a liability. They have worked for these pensions. They have contributed to their pension plans. We must assure our seniors that they are not a liability in our communities. They are not a liability in our society.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, at this particular conference, a representative from CARP talked about the increasing number of seniors across the country, including Newfoundland and Labrador, who are going into bankruptcy, who are going into insolvency because they are living on their credit cards. One of the reasons they are living on their credit cards is because their housing is so expensive. Their cost of shelter surpasses even 50 per cent of their income, when we know shelter costs should never even surpass 35 per cent of income. How many people talked again about housing, and housing as it affects seniors. It is one of the number one issues for them.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, we have heard is that we know there are more working families with increasing credit card debt; credit card debt and insolvency. Even though they may be buying the \$400,000 or the \$300,000 houses, they are living on their credit cards. Why is that, because housing cost so much, because we do not have a publicly funded and administered child care program, where we have young working family paying \$800 to \$1,000 a month per child for child care.

This is not sustainable for most working families; for most young working families who have credit card debt, who have student loan debt, who have a car payment, who have

mortgage payments, and then on top of that, who have exorbitant child care costs. They are living on the edge, and we know that.

We know how many of our young people have moved away because of the extreme costs. We also know about the research that shows young working families are attracted to communities where there are good social services, where there are good safety nets, because that means they can get on with their lives. It means they can do –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. member.

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

We know working families are very attracted to communities, to provinces where there is accessible, affordable child care, where there is affordable housing. This government promised in their Blue Book that they would introduce a home ownership assistance program. We have not seen hide or hair of that. We have not seen a thing about it, Mr. Speaker. Is the promise real, or maybe their promises are not promises.

Again, Mr. Speaker, families look for healthy, thriving communities where seniors are taken care of, where children are taken care of, where there are parks. They look for that. That, in fact, grows prosperity all across the Province when we have young working families who are able to get on with life, who are able to get on with work.

Let's not forget the huge cuts we saw in the last budgets. They are cuts that do not reflect prosperity. That, again, is not what prosperity looks like.

This government went from a situation of surplus that they were so proud about, to a situation of a deficit in a matter of a few weeks. This government has created this situation. In the last Budget we saw the loss of over 1,000

public sector jobs that served the population; that served the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

In those cuts, Mr. Speaker, we lost some of our youngest, some of our brightest, some of our most educated public servants. People who wanted to serve the public. People who wanted to bring their expertise, their energy and their education to serve the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, and we lost them. I do not know if we will ever get them back.

I know this government, because of their knee-jerk reaction in terms of laying people off, have had to hire back so many people in so many fields that it was a knee-jerk reaction with no plan at all. It was absolute chaos. Some of these brightest and most committed workers who wanted to serve the people here are gone. Their jobs have been eliminated. They have been told: We do not need you. People who wanted to serve the people were told: We do not need you.

The ramifications of those job cuts, we are still feeling them, Mr. Speaker. Everybody knows that, about slowdowns in processing services for the people of the Province. When we look at what has happened in the Justice system. We are still seeing the ramifications. They are not over. The fall out is still hitting us, Mr. Speaker. In a time of prosperity, this is not what prosperity looks like.

Mr. Speaker, if we are so profitable, and if this government is so prosperous and talking about prosperity, why are they dooming and glooming it and not taking care of people the way that a healthy, thriving community should, the way a healthy, thriving economy should? Because we can, but this government has lost touch with the needs of its people. It is just totally in denial; that is what is in denial.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to wrap up now, I have a few seconds left. I think this government has to do better than this. This government has to be better stewards of the wealth and the prosperity of this Province in order to serve the people of Newfoundland and Labrador better so that they

too can serve the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to speak in this House today.

It is great to be back in the House of Assembly. After listening to the previous speakers, I would like to speak about some positive initiatives this government has planned and put in place for the benefit of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

The Muskrat Falls Project is a great project. Nalcor is doing great work. You know it is the lowest-cost option. Any project where over 3,300 jobs are created is certainly going to be a benefit to all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Many constituents from my district will work on this major project. Other communities in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, the people in the communities will be working on this project. This is very positive for the future of our great Province.

I listened to some comments regarding the Member for St. John's Centre. She talked about some social programs and affordable housing. Under the Residential Energy Efficiency Program there was a pilot project started back in 2009, and actually extended for three years in 2011. It is called REEP and provided grants, mostly to senior citizens, homeowners of up to \$3,000 per household, \$4,000 in Labrador, and has made energy refits to 4,700 homes to date.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LITTLE: What an accomplishment, 4,700 homes to date.

For the first time, our own Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation inspectors conducted pre- and post-audits and insulation was the number-one energy retrofit. What an accomplishment the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation is doing with the support of this provincial government.

The provincial government, under the Rent Supplement Program, doubled the Rent Supplement Program to \$8 million – doubled the Rent Supplement Program to \$8 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LITTLE: The Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation has gone from having 1,000 rent supplement units for twenty-five years to now having 1,732 rent supplement units, Mr. Speaker.

Supporting affordable housing for persons with complex needs is an area in which we are all proud to be partners, with Stella Burry Community Services, Choices for Youth, the St. John's Status of Women Council, Canadian Mental Health, and many other groups that are changing the face of supported living affordable housing in this Province.

I can stand here with pride to say our social programs are definitely improving and this government is definitely paying attention to the needs of our seniors and social programs of the future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LITTLE: Coming from one of the largest fishing districts in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, I actually attended a very important announcement at The Rooms last week. I was delighted being the MHA for the District of Bonavista South with that announcement. I can stand here and say with all certainty that the CETA agreement is very beneficial to all coastal communities in Newfoundland and Labrador, and very important to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador as a whole.

Four hundred million dollars, a deal that was announced by our Premier at the time, it certainly is going to improve the fishery of the future. Marketing: It is going to open up new doors in the European market, which is certainly going to give us opportunity to have competition levels lifted in the markets in the fishing industry. That is an improvement. When you look at tariffs, tariffs have been lifted and that is going to help our Province in the fishing industry which was a major, major improvement in the agreement in relation to trade of the future in the fishing industry.

Any time that you can move into a new market and the competition levels grow, it opens new doors. Coming from a fishing community, I know that there are going to be some great movements on the marketing initiatives of the future. The competitiveness in this industry will help all people in the fishing industry, which is another great announcement that came as early as last week.

I attended a seminar this past week. It was a three-day event. There were parliamentary people from all over this great country. We had a number of discussions. At this event I have noticed that people from the different provinces, different territories, actually are looking at this Province as a leader in the country. I was so proud to be able to talk to those people, leaders from all different parts of this country.

They realize that Newfoundland and Labrador is a Province that means so much to Confederation. It is a Province that has become a leader in this country. It gives me pride to be able to stand up and talk about that, and definitely have discussions with people from all over the country about how this Province is growing economically and improving. I can only speak about the positives in what is happening on the ground.

This government is actually investing in infrastructure. We are paying off the debt. We are going to continue to invest in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. Most recently, the Minister of Innovation, Business and Rural Development actually came to my district, and

there was a major announcement there: \$1.7 million for what used to be Jamestown Lumber; it was closed down for approximately eight years. It is actually up and running. A new company from New Brunswick, Marwood Lumber, has come in there, created jobs, and I was really delighted.

The people in that part of my district actually came out to that announcement. They were delighted and they were excited. This is certainly going to help grow the economy in that part of my district, in rural Newfoundland and Labrador in Jamestown, and it is certainly going to be great for the future of the District of Bonavista South.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LITTLE: So, I can stand here today with confidence and make it known to the people of this Province that this government has made some great investments in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, and we will continue as a government to make further investments in the future.

There are a lot of bright things happening out in the rural parts of Newfoundland and Labrador and will continue to happen. We have a tourism industry that has reached over \$1 billion per year, and it continues to grow. The district that I come from is actually very tied into the provincial tourism industry. So, as a Province, we have another industry that is growing and growing and growing. We are competitors in that industry. We are competing with other jurisdictions, other provinces in Canada, and other countries around the world.

The tourism ads: Every time I look at a new tourism ad, I honestly have to replay it. I have to replay the ad. I play it over and over because the ads are certainly letting people all over the world know how important we are as a Province. We are attracting people to the Province, and they are investing and spending their money in this Province. This government is definitely paying close attention to that, and will continue to invest in that area.

AN HON. MEMBER: A billion-dollar industry.

MR. LITTLE: A billion-dollar industry, Mr. Speaker, and continually growing, I must say.

I cannot get up and speak on the negative because there is a lot of positive happening out there. I often hear my colleagues across the way speak about the negative, but my job as government, as an elected official in my district, is to promote the positive. Energy comes from the positive and I am going to continue to promote the positive, along with my colleagues on this side of the House.

We need to tell the truth. The truth and the positive together certainly allows our Province to grow, and will continue to grow. We are a force to be reckoned with all over the world. The world economy, everybody is looking at Newfoundland and Labrador. Why? Because this government over the past number of years have made good decisions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LITTLE: Great decisions, and decisions that my children and your children will see years to come down the road because we are investing in the future. We do have a plan, a sustainable plan, that will work for years and years and years to come, Mr. Speaker, for generations down the road.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LITTLE: I cannot see how somebody can stand and criticize a minimum wage increase and the way we are actually rolling it in and allowing small businesses to work their business plan around the roll in. We are leaders and we do need to take care of all our people. This is what this government is doing, looking at the needs of the people and the future generations.

This is a great time to be in government, based on our prosperity, but you need a great government to be in power when you are in times of prosperity. Some other provinces had great prosperity, did not plan for the future, and

they are in a hard situation today with major debt, deficits; but this government is fiscally responsible. We have a proven track record and we are going to continue to plan for the future, Mr. Speaker. It is all about our people, prosperity, and the future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LITTLE: When I got involved in this government, I actually looked at the plan, the future. I looked at how important it was in relation to paying off the debt, and this is what this government is doing. This government has a balanced approach, not an approach to spend, spend, and spend, all of a sudden there is a major deficit and a major debt, and to spend money that we do not have. This government has a balanced approach, and we will continue to stay on that track.

This past summer, I was very fortunate when Premier Dunderdale and Cabinet came to my district outside the overpass and out into the rural parts of Newfoundland and Labrador to have meetings out there and to have discussions about what is happening in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. I was delighted as the local MHA. I can tell you this government is on track. This government is listening to the people. In light of some comments made earlier, this government listens to the people. This government takes what the people say and puts it into action.

I can say that with comfort, based on the last number of pre-Budget consultation talks that occurred in different regions of Newfoundland and Labrador, which I feel is very open, transparent, and the message gets out. We listen to community groups, community leaders, community councils, and organizations, and what they are saying on the ground. We bring it back, evaluate that, and some of that goes into the Budget. That is the process.

Now, can we give all to everybody as a government? No, and we are being honest about that. We are being upfront. As a previous public sector employee, I can stand here today and look with confidence and say the last

collective agreement with the public service, a \$1,400 signing bonus; I do not know if there were ever signing bonuses. I cannot remember, but it seems like the union recommended this offer and people I talk to are delighted we are moving ahead. We recognize the importance of the public sector; this government recognizes how important all of our public sector employees are.

To me, we are moving forward in a positive manner and we will continue to do that as a government. Some major announcements have occurred in Municipal Affairs in my district and around the Province because we continue to invest and upgrade our municipal infrastructure around the Province, whether it is recreation, water and sewer, or waste management. In fact, since 2008 we have invested \$650 million in infrastructure. That is a substantial amount of funding to invest and it is certainly going to improve infrastructure projects all across Newfoundland and Labrador.

I have noticed since I have been elected, more than before, the rural parts of Newfoundland and Labrador are always included. This government have listened to the people in rural Newfoundland and Labrador and will continue to listen and work with the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I would like at this time to commend all of the outgoing municipal leaders and the new municipal leaders who are certainly doing a wonderful job. I would also like to commend the many volunteers in Newfoundland and Labrador.

It has been a privilege to speak in this House again today. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER (Wiseman): The hon. the Member for Bay of Islands and the Leader of the Official Opposition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will take this opportunity to raise a few issues. I usually do not comment on other members' speeches, but it is hard not to.

I say to the member who just spoke, if you are going to take speaking notes from the fourth floor you should at least read them. When you stand up and say how fiscally responsible we are for a \$600 million deficit that you found out a month later – that you found \$600 million. You just laid off 1,800 people. When the Minister of Natural Resources at the time was out in Corner Brook saying we are flush with cash, we are laying off 1,800 people. You should read your speaking notes that are sent down from the fourth floor before you stand up here and make such statements, Mr. Speaker.

The College of the North Atlantic, up to two weeks ago out in Corner Brook, never had instructors. There are three programs that never had instructors. How fiscally responsible we are. You are talking about how fiscally responsible – laying off everybody, cautioning them of being cut to the bones, a big, huge deficit, next year another projected deficit. Read your speaking notes I say to the member, before you get up and just (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: I ask the member to direct his comments to the Chair, please.

MR. JOYCE: Yes, ask him to read it, Mr. Speaker, because obviously he did not do it.

I have to speak of one issue in the District of Bay of Islands before I go on. It is the roads in the Bay of Islands. I know I spoke to the Minister of Transportation and Works about them. There are some major concerns there. There is not a lot can be done this year but I have to raise them, especially going out towards York Harbour, that way, Mr. Speaker. There is one over there –

AN HON. MEMBER: We bought a new fire truck over there (inaudible).

MR. JOYCE: I can say to the member, who is over there talking about a fire truck, it is on the North Shore. At least you should know what

you are talking about before you speak. It is on the opposite side. This is a very serious issue because there are a lot of safety concerns out there, Mr. Speaker.

Down by the copper mine, the speed limit is down to thirty now. The former Minister of Transportation and Works – I am glad he is gone. The former minister, who was well aware of it, never did anything. I have to give this minister credit. This minister sat down and discussed it with me. He said we might not be able to do anything this year, but we are going to get an engineer to look at it. Hopefully, there is something to at least make it a bit safer for the winter.

There is another spot up in John's Beach which is very, very unsafe. These are safety concerns. This is not luxury. This is a safety concern that I have to bring up. There is another one in McIver's, that has been about two or three years now. Once again, it is very unsafe for school buses to go over it. That is where the fire truck is over on that side. That is another very unsafe area. A lot of fish comes out from Cox's Cove and into Cox's Cove, Mr. Speaker, very unsafe.

These are the kinds of things that when you talk about it, you cannot bring it up because it is negative. You have to bring it up if you are doing your responsibility as a member. You have to bring these concerns up. Do I expect everything is going to be done overnight? No, but I expect safety to be very, very important to this government.

The former minister, I say I am after writing at least six or seven letters about it, and I do not know if I received a response back. The only opportunity I have is to bring it up in the House of Assembly. Then you wonder why we do not want the House of Assembly, the only opportunity when you write a Minister of the Crown four, five or six times –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. JOYCE: - with the same concerns, Mr. Speaker, and they do not even address it, not even look at it.

We even have councils writing them on numerous occasions, and it is not even addressed. I am not talking about going over it because it is a bit rough. I am talking major, major safety concerns. This is what we have to do. This is the kind of thing we have to do as MHAs.

The former Minister of Transportation and Works did not even respond to it. One letter I received back in June when the former minister wrote me, said: yes, they will be fixed. I received another one in September, saying: yes, we will try to get what we can get done this year. That was the floods from last March; the floods from last March that I was writing about, Mr. Speaker, and it is still not fixed. It is still not fixed.

This is the kind of stuff, the arrogance of the government, and you say we should not bring up negative stuff. We should let that just slide under the rug. Let the people drive on unsafe roads because some minister does not want to deal with it. Some minister writes a letter in June, saying: yes, they will all be fixed. He writes again in September and says: no, we will get what we can. You wonder why we would not close the House; we do not want to close the House.

This is my opportunity, and the members here with me, this is our opportunity to raise concerns because you do not listen unless there is pressure put on. You do not listen. It is a sad day when a private citizen wrote the minister as a private citizen – he was the mayor of the town also, he still is the mayor – saying how dangerous the roads are. He brought it to their attention on numerous occasions. He is getting the same letters that the former Minister of Transportation and Works got. Everybody was happy. Yes, we are going to get it fixed. It is still not done nine months later.

Safety concerns, that is what I am doing here, Mr. Speaker. So do not say I am negative. I am

doing my duty, because if any government was here for safety concerns they should be fixed. It should be a priority, not a luxury. A priority for safety concerns, Mr. Speaker. Please do not say I am being negative when I am doing my job here.

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about the hospital for a small bit in Corner Brook. Mr. Speaker, I have to bring this up on a few occasions about some of this because for at least a year or a year-and-a-half by the Minister of Health, the Minister of Transportation, the Minister of Finance, the Member for Humber West, I have been criticized. I have been ridiculed for all the statements I made.

Mr. Speaker, guess what? Even after the former Minister of Transportation stood in Estimates and said I can have the reports, Stantec report, I did not get it. Do you know what I had to do? I had to go to Freedom of Information. We had to reapply again and finally got the report of the proposed hospital in Corner Brook.

AN HON. MEMBER: Did you have to pay for it?

MR. JOYCE: We had to pay for it. We had to pay for the review that was done on the hospital for Corner Brook, the proposed hospital in Corner Brook.

I want to say to all my colleagues here, after dealing with the Minister of Transportation and Works last year in the Estimates – and I have it in Hansard. I showed them a tape before on numerous occasions on other things. When you get a reply that we will get back to you on the information that is in the Budget, do not listen to it. Stay there until you get it.

I can hear the minister now, the former Minister of Transportation – we are still waiting, by the way, that you committed to give us the cost. We will give you the cost for the security out in Grand Falls. Show your hands and I will go down and see the roads, which you were supposed to fix this past June which you –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I remind the member again to address his comments to the Chair.

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, if the former Minister of Transportation and Works wants to get over there and ridicule me, go down in York Harbour and Lark Harbour where you wrote the councils; where he wrote the councils and said the roads will be fixed. I will challenge him to do it. Do you know why? He will not do it, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you, I stood in the Estimates here and I took that minister on his word that I would get all of these reports. I could not get them.

When the minister wrote the town councils out in York Harbour and Lark Harbour, and wrote me and said those roads will be fixed, I believed him. I can honestly say I believed him. I went to the town councils: no, this minister – no, no, he is good. He speaks it as it is. I was wrong. Those roads are still out there and a safety concern from the floods last year.

The roads in Copper Mine are down to thirty kilometres. I cannot say it is going to be fixed overnight, but I know the current minister said we will have a look at it. If we can get some repairs done before the winter, and that is all you can ask for. I respect the minister for at least sitting down with me and discussing this and saying that.

I will get back to the hospital, Mr. Speaker. Finally when we get the reports of the hospital, that everybody was so happy to give out, that we had to go to the Freedom of Information to get, Mr. Speaker, and then also we had to pay for it and we had to wait for the extension. We finally got it. I can see why they kept it hid. I can honestly see why the Minister of Health and the Member for Humber West hid it. I can see why. There are no new services in this hospital; absolutely no new services. For the next sixty or seventy years when this hospital is built there will be no new services in this hospital. I will let the people in Western Newfoundland, Labrador, and the Northern Peninsula know this.

PET scanner – I heard the minister stand up on numerous occasions: Oh, there are only thirty in

Canada. That may be true, there are only thirty in Canada, but what she forgets to add is Quebec. I use Quebec for an example. In Quebec there are twelve. Do you know what Quebec did? Instead of saying oh, let us have one for the Province, Quebec said: We will do it on geography. So instead of having people all travel to one location, we will spread it out so people can have the services, Mr. Speaker.

Do you know the funny thing about it, Mr. Speaker? I spoke to a friend of mine about two weeks ago. His name is Dr. Bob Cook. He does not mind me saying his name. He is right now maybe the only one who can read a PET scanner in Newfoundland and Labrador. He is the only one. Yet we cannot put a PET scanner out in Corner Brook.

So I said to him: Bob, can we put in a PET scanner? He said: Ed, it is not a problem. He said: We need to read it, we need a technician to do it; we will read it. He said: All of the other stuff is done in Quebec; what they do is they have one place where they make – when you need the information, we can get it from anywhere, but if you have one location where you have the radioactive material, which we need to read the PET scanner, it is shipped out daily to all of these sites. He said: In Newfoundland, all we have to do is ship it out because the life expectancy of the material is low, so we can bring it out every day and do it here. He said: It is not a big deal; it is done in Quebec.

So I did the research. Sure enough, Mr. Speaker, in Quebec there are twelve, a proposed twelve. I just want to give you an example in twelve. They talk about: Oh, well, Newfoundland only has 500,000 people, therefore you only need one; there are only thirty in Canada. A bit of research: Chicoutimi has one, 265,000 people; and Trois-Rivières, 151,000 people, they have one and the same catch basin for Western Newfoundland. I know the members are opposite with their eyes open, looking up. I can give you this. I can actually give you this here. Quebec City has 536,000 people; Rimouski, 50,000 people, and have a PET scanner.

Can anybody here tell me why we cannot have two in Newfoundland and Labrador? Why can't we put one up in the new facility, which is going to serve us for the next sixty-seven years? There is no one who can tell me why, absolutely nobody. Nobody can tell me why, Mr. Speaker. They just cannot do it, and is very important. You take it that it is going to serve a lot of people, even Grand Falls West. It can serve a lot of people in the Baie Verte area, a lot of people in the Springdale area. It is much easier to go to Corner Brook than it is go to St. John's. Look at the Northern Peninsula, look at Labrador, that area, Mr. Speaker, that is what this can service.

There are doctors in Corner Brook right now – I know the minister in one of her comments said if there are any experts who can tell me, let me know. Here is a challenge: Phone Dr. Bob Cook in Corner Brook, Western Memorial Regional Hospital, if you want information, if there should be and if they can operate a PET scanner in Corner Brook.

Now, the minister set out the challenge to me. I went out and found a specialist on it. Here is your opportunity. When you want to talk about one for thirty, look what Quebec did. They did it on geography, that is what they did, and that is what we should be doing instead of saying oh, we are like the rest of Canada.

We hear about family caregiving here in this Province, Mr. Speaker. What do we hear about family caregiving? We are going to be the leading edge. We are number one in this. We look at housing: Oh, we are number one in housing across Canada. Why can't we be number one in PET scanners? Why can't we? Does it just fit our bill when we think that we are doing something good that we are leading, yet we will not take the step for it?

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, if it is not in now, it will never be in the hospital; I can assure you that. So, if people want to know why I am so adamant about it, that is why. If you want it, I can show you. It is populations of 45,000 people who have a PET scanner. So, there should be one in Corner Brook. There should be

definitely one put in Corner Brook because it is going to serve us for the next fifty, sixty, seventy years, and PET scanning is the way it goes.

Mr. Speaker, we look also in Corner Brook that there is going to be no radiation unit, absolutely no radiation unit. So if there is no radiation unit from here to eternity – and I just got it today about the number of people from, say, Grand Falls West who get radiation in St. John's. I just got the information of how many people.

Mr. Speaker, you would be surprised how many people get radiation in St. John's. The question is: Why can't we do it in Corner Brook? If it is going to be a new state-of-the-art hospital, why can't we do it in Corner Brook? Let's sit down, let's have a very frank discussion about it. Let's sit down and educate us all and say why it cannot be done. You just cannot say: We are not putting one in there. You cannot just say: Oh, we do not feel like doing it. You cannot say it.

Let's sit down and have a rational discussion. Let's sit down and have a rational discussion on it. We already know about the PET scanner, it can be done very easily. I am very confident that the radiation unit can be put in Corner Brook also. I am very confident that it can be done.

Mr. Speaker, those are just a few things on the hospital. I am going to go on the report now, Mr. Speaker, and a few issues that were discussed. Anything I am saying here is in the report or I can table whatever information they want because I have it here. We are talking about the reduction of acute care beds in Corner Brook. If anybody thinks that I am the one making up these numbers, I can give you the date and time that it was said. It is not from Eddie Joyce; I can give you the date and time.

If anybody wants to know about the confusion about the hospital in Corner Brook with the long-term care facility, how it was cut down by 100 beds, now they are putting 100 back and saying look what we are doing which was cut back. I do not even know if the other wing is still even open yet. I know the tender was supposed to be called three years ago. The

Member for Humber West may know because it is in his district, but I do not know even if it is open yet.

Mr. Speaker, the new hospital will have 260 beds, 138 to be acute beds. There are 162 there now. Do you know who said that? Minister Sullivan, the Minister of Health. That is what she said. I am the one who was supposed to have made this figure up. Here is the quote Minister Sullivan made herself –

MR. SPEAKER: I ask members to refer to members by their title if they are a minister.

MR. JOYCE: Oh, the Minister of Health, sorry. I apologize for that,

The Minister of Health made that statement out in Corner Brook, Mr. Speaker. Then everybody is saying that it is me making up those numbers. Here are the numbers that she said. If you look at it, if you go back and check through it all, Friday, April 26, 2013, it was in the *Western Star*. It is not Eddie Joyce making up those numbers. It is not me; it is the minister herself.

Mr. Speaker, I will go on to the next point. You wonder why I am asking questions. In August out in Corner Brook the Minister of Health walked out and said construction of the new hospital will start in 2015. That is what the Minister of Health said and you can read it right here. It was in the *Western Star* – 2015.

Two weeks later, the former Minister of Transportation and Works walked out and made this announcement about some roads being done out around the West Coast. They put a mike in front of him and said: Listen here, the Minister of Health just said the hospital is going to be starting in 2015. Can you verify that?

Here is what the minister said, the former Minister of Transportation and Works who is actually getting the design done. Here is what the former minister said, after he said: Is the Minister of Health correct? Here is what he said: It is being worked on as we speak, but I could not commit on a timeline for when the construction of the estimated \$500 million to

\$600 million facility will begin. Until the phase of work is completed, I would not be able to give you a solid timeline.

The former Minister of Transportation and Works was out in Corner Brook two weeks after the Minister of Health saying no, that is not true; we cannot give you a timeline. You want to know why I am asking questions, Mr. Speaker. That is a prime example. The question is: Which version is true? The former Minister of Transportation and Works would not give a commitment of the hospital when it is going to start in Corner Brook, yet we have to sit down and listen when the Minister of Health walks out, big bubbly: Oh yes, construction is going to start in 2015 with no foundation – we heard that before; we heard it in 2007. We heard it in 2007, Mr. Speaker.

That is why the people out in Corner Brook – and I have to add one thing, Mr. Speaker, and I know it seems like I am harping on this, but I am going to keep harping until I think I am going to do it to the best of my ability. The Minister of Health is saying: Oh, people out in Corner Brook loved the announcement.

It is funny, Mr. Speaker. The day that they called around to some municipalities to come up for a briefing, guess what, Mr. Speaker? They had it in the City of Corner Brook. They had the special constables on duty outside. Do you know who could not get into the meeting, who called up and was not allowed because he was not invited? Israel Hann. A seventy-four-year old advocate for seniors and health called the municipal police and they said: No, you are not on the list; you cannot get into the meeting. You cannot get into the briefing.

MS SULLIVAN: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services, on a point of order.

MS SULLIVAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct some information. There were no

constables that were assigned there by any of our doing.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

There is no point of order.

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. JOYCE: As usual, Mr. Speaker, there is no point – but where they had it, they had it in the City of Corner Brook, city hall, with invited guests only, with special constables and that people were not to get in.

I challenge the Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker, if it is not true, here is an opportunity: Phone Israel Hann yourself and ask Israel Hann was he allowed into that meeting. He was told no because he was not on the list, because it was invite only, Mr. Speaker. Here is an opportunity for the minister.

Mr. Speaker, I see it is time, I will adjourn debate, and I will continue my time later.

MR. SPEAKER: Debate is now adjourned.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So enjoyable as it is listening to the Leader of the Opposition, given the hour on the clock I move that we adjourn debate and we will come back tomorrow to listen to him again.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that this House do now adjourn.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion carried.

This House now stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow afternoon.