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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.

Earlier in the week there was a point of privilege raised. The Opposition House Leader has raised a question of privilege by way of contempt with respect to the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island.

The member, as a result of findings of the Commissioner for Legislative Standards and concurred in by this House, was reprimanded and asked to apologize for his failure to file an accurate conflict of interest statement and for breaching the Members of the House of Assembly Code of Conduct.

The member apologized in the House, but when answering questions from the media outside the House, the Opposition House Leader says that the member's comments indicate a less than unequivocal apology to the House.

The Opposition House Leader raised the issue as an affront to the integrity of the House and therefore a contempt against the House and its members.

I just want to make a few comments about the principle of contempt. Contempt, which is considered in the same way as a breach of privilege, is an affront to the authority and dignity of the House, or an action which brings the House, its members or a member into disrepute.

O'Brien and Bosc says, at page 82, "Thus the House also claims the right to punish, as a contempt, any action which, though not a breach of privilege...tends to obstruct or impede the House in the performance of its functions...obstructs or impedes a Member, or is an affront against the authority or dignity of the House...."

Again, with respect to contempt, Maingot, on *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada, Second Edition*, at page 250, says, "There are actions

that, while not directly in a physical way obstructing the House of Commons or the Member, nevertheless obstruct the House in the performance of its functions by diminishing the respect due to it...."

O'Brien and Bosc goes on to say, at page 87, (There is a "...reluctance to invoke the House's authority to reprimand or admonish anyone found to have trampled its dignity or authority and that of its Members..."), but rather, members have often been chastised for "intemperate and irresponsible" behaviour.

The authorities, O'Brien and Bosc and Maingot, make it clear that an affront to the integrity of the House, its members, or a member must be very apparent in order for a contempt to be found.

As required by the House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act, and as recommended by Chief Justice Derek Green's 2007 report, the Commissioner for Legislative standards, as an impartial administrator, not the House itself, has investigated and made a recommendation to the House as to the appropriate action. The House has concurred and an apology requested has been made.

The point of privilege raises the question of whether the comments made outside of the House, in this instance, are an attempt or an affront to the dignity of the House, whether they impugn the integrity of or impede this House or a member or members of this House.

I have reviewed the video clip of the media interview with the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island and find that his words were intemperate, maybe even irresponsible. It is important that all members truly understand the nature of their responsibility beyond this House and the need for following their conflict of interest rules and Code of Conduct. There does not appear, however, to be an affront to the integrity of the House. The House itself and its members have not been impugned.

I find that there is no prima facie finding of contempt.

There is, however, a need, I believe, to provide some comments with respect to the Code of Conduct. Before taking his seat in this House, a member swears or affirms to abide by a Code of Conduct and by the Conflict of Interest Rules made under the House of Assembly Act. It is incumbent upon all members to understand and to comply with both. Members are held to a very high standard by this House and must conduct themselves accordingly. This matter is not about a half-hearted apology in or outside of the House. This is about a lack of understanding of the conflict of interest requirements and the Code of Conduct as they apply to members of this House.

Clearly, Chief Justice Green intended that MHAs understand the public trust that they hold. Self-regulation of one's behaviour in accordance with the Code of Conduct (and Conflict of Interest Guidelines) that one has to swear to should be held paramount. It is incumbent upon members to acknowledge their duty to the public in general and not just to this House in particular.

Chief Justice Derek Green's report in 2007, titled, *Rebuilding Confidence: Report of the Review Commission on Constituency Allowances and Related Matters*, goes on to say, "I am satisfied that a code of conduct is an important element in fostering public trust in our elected officials and in the institution in which they operate....a code will reinforce the notion of accountability that should permeate the organization and set an appropriate tone for the House...."

It goes on to say, "The focus of a code is usually not on obvious illegal behaviour since that is already the subject of normative rules of the land. Instead, codes often focus on areas of activity that would generally be regarded as unethical or inappropriate according to community expectations...."

"In those jurisdictions that have adopted codes of conduct for elected officials, it is generally

accepted that standards of proper behaviour need to be declared PUBLICLY...."

A member is bound by the conflict of interest rules made under the House of Assembly Act, but it is doubly bound to uphold those provisions and to conduct himself or herself in a manner that withstands the closest public scrutiny, protects the public interest, and is in the best interest of the public in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct. All members have taken a code to do so.

The Code of Conduct is the standard to which we, as members of this House, must hold ourselves. It is incumbent on each and every one of us to live up to that standard and we uphold the standard of the oath that we take.

This concludes the issue with respect to the point of privilege.

Statements by Members

MR. SPEAKER: Today we have members' statements from the Member for the District of Bellevue; the Member for the District of Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune; the Member for the District of Baie Verte – Springdale; the Member for the District of St. John's Centre; the Member for the District of Lake Melville; and the Member for the District of Terra Nova.

Before I acknowledge the Member for the District of Bellevue, I want to acknowledge a couple of special guests in the Speaker's gallery today. We have joining us today from Maryland, the Secretary of State, Mr. John McDonough, accompanied by Mr. Christopher Barlow.

Welcome to our House, gentlemen.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Bellevue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PEACH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize an annual fundraising event that takes place in Arnold's Cove each year in September called the Fog Trot. It is a ten-kilometre run or walk and its proceeds go to the Children's Wish Foundation.

This event was founded and started by two gentlemen, Howard Brown and Michael Penney. The committee has now grown and there are many who volunteer their time to help organize this event each year.

This year the Fog Trot had participants from Clarendville to St. John's and the surrounding areas. There were sixty participants, and they raised \$4,600 from this ten-kilometre walk or run event. They also held a Fog Trot musical festival that same day from 3:00 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. and raised another \$1,800, for a total of \$6,600.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Fog Trot Committee for promoting healthy living and for the successful fundraising they had again this year, and say thank you for caring and for volunteering your time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune.

MS PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in this hon. House today to recognize the outstanding public speaking abilities of youths in the Coast of Bays region who have participated in the annual Lions Club Speak-Outs this year.

The first place winners for 2013 were Renee Langdon of Harbour Breton, and Jordan Collier of St. Alban's. Jordan then went on to win the Regional Speak-Off for the Lions Club. In addition, he took his stellar performance to Grand Falls-Windsor, where he also won the Rotary Speak-Off too. Congratulations, Jordan, a great job well done.

I would also like to thank the Lions Club, Rotary Club, teachers, parents, and volunteers who assist the youth in any way for these important events, which provide an excellent opportunity for young people to develop their oratory talent and skills.

I ask all members of this hon. House to join me in delivering accolades to these fine young students and future leaders.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Baie Verte – Springdale.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. POLLARD: It is with great pleasure that I rise in this hon. House today to congratulate the community of Baie Verte for a very successful Come Home Year celebrations.

For the week of August 5 to August 11, the whole community was inundated with family and friends coming from near and far to participate in the fun-filled festivities. Chairperson Cathy Alyward, along with co-ordinator Leonard Downey, and their organizing committee are to be commended for spearheading such a monumental task. Their hard work and commitment certainly ensured that the event was a resounding success.

New friendships were forged; old acquaintances were rekindled; and lasting, endearing memories were etched in the memories of so many people as each person reveled in the captivating events. In fact, the whole community is to be praised for embracing the Come Home Year celebrations. In addition, a big thank you to all the volunteers who unselfishly gave of their time, talents, and energy, to make it happen.

Please join me in recognizing the successful Come Home Year celebrations organized by the community of Baie Verte.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to congratulate the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador. Last weekend, thousands of people had the great pleasure of attending the Christmas Craft Fair at the St. John's Arts and Culture Centre.

This was the fortieth anniversary of the craft fair – the fortieth!

In 1973, Donna Clouston, Isabella St. John, and Albert Rippurger organized the first-ever craft fair at the Arts and Culture Centre. Over the years, the fair has grown, and it is great.

A visit to the fair is a strong reminder to us of how vital the craft industry is across our Province. In every community people are creating their works of art with expertise and pride. The quality of the merchandise, the sheer number of people who earn their living as artists, and the enthusiasm on the part of the public for locally produced goods, is a reflection of how far the Craft Council has moved the industry along since it began.

Donna Clouston has exhibited at every fair since the first one forty years ago, and many of us have her calendar wall hangings to show for it.

Bravo to Donna and to all the artists, and bravo to the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Lake Melville.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to recognize the recent heroism shown during a search and rescue operation by the 444 Combat Support Squadron based out of 5 Wing Goose Bay.

On November 1, Mr. Speaker, a call came in from the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre in the evening hours to the squadron regarding a swamped motorboat in Lake Melville. They were tasked for the search and rescue mission and quickly responded. The squadron utilized their night vision capabilities and co-ordinated with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans officials offshore who guided them in using lights.

In the middle of the night, Mr. Speaker, during the beginning of our cold Labrador winter, two search and rescue technicians entered the icy waters of Lake Melville and proceeded to hoist all five passengers of the boat to safety and then transported them to hospital.

Had it not been for the brave members of the 444 squadron, this unfortunate situation could have been a lot worse.

I ask all hon. members of this House to join me in recognizing the great work of the 444 Combat Support Squadron who risk their lives for others' safety.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. S. COLLINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On October 13, the Town of Gambo lost a tremendous citizen. Lloyd Noseworthy, born in Pouch Cove in 1941, would later marry the love of his life, Joan Curran, and relocate to Gambo in 1959. Upon moving to Gambo he opened a business which he would operate for thirty years. He also became an active member of the Lions Club there.

Then, in 2005, Lloyd was elected Mayor of Gambo and would serve in that capacity for four years.

While business and politics were big parts of his life, Lloyd's first love was music. Lloyd was a regular face at festivals and fundraisers in town. Mr. Speaker, aside from performing music he was also great at composing it. He would write what would become the town's unofficial anthem, entitled Good Ole Gambo. A wonderful song – so catchy in fact, my young daughter sings the title every time we drive by the 'Welcome to Gambo' sign.

Lloyd passed away peacefully with his family at this side after a courageous battle with cancer. He will be missed by all those who were fortunate enough to have known him.

I ask all members to join with me in recognizing my good friend, Lloyd Noseworthy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Statements by Ministers.

Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is an exciting time to live and work in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: The economy and business environment is thriving. We are leading the country in economic growth and our government remains committed to strengthening the business environment, developing innovated industries, and diversifying the economy. There are great successes, Mr. Speaker, happening right here in our Province, success stories that we need to share.

Today, I was so proud to launch a new multi-media campaign, *Innovation Lives Here*, a campaign that highlights some of the exciting and unique work being done by our entrepreneurs, industry and research institutions throughout the Province.

Mr. Speaker, this energetic, story-focused media campaign will provide an opportunity for our innovators and business leaders to tell their stories and promote Newfoundland and Labrador as a destination of choice to live, work, invest and create successful industries.

This exciting campaign begins today, Mr. Speaker. It will feature television commercials and featurettes in Cineplex theatres in St. John's, Mount Pearl and Corner Brook.

Mr. Speaker, just think of the many incredible stories emerging from all over the Province that demonstrate creativity, tenacity, and that special spark we have as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Our young people need to hear about, and be inspired by, the amazing things that are happening right here.

Through the *Innovation Lives Here* campaign, our government is launching a movement to celebrate those successes and acknowledge those who are excelling in innovation. We have an amazing story to tell, Mr. Speaker, and who better to tell that story than those whose ingenuity and drive are writing it.

Mr. Speaker, innovation truly does live here.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the Premier for the copy of her statement.

It must be a polling period. We see when a polling period starts the Premier is out trying to make all of these good news announcements with all of the media stunts in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, people on this side of the House also want to recognize entrepreneurs. We have five running for the leadership right now of the Liberal Party, five successful business people, so we do want to recognize all of the leaders in the business community in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that there have been a lot of great stories in Newfoundland and Labrador. There have been a lot of great initiatives in Newfoundland and Labrador. I just find that when the Premier said our young people need to hear about it, I would just let the Premier know that Wayne Trask, our dear friend, junior achievement, years ago, so our young people of today will be our entrepreneurs in the future. A lot of them who were back ten to fifteen years ago are our leaders today.

We welcome all good news here in Newfoundland and Labrador. We welcome all the inspiration that we can give the people we are going to inspire, but we cannot forget Bill 61 where no new energy right now in Newfoundland and Labrador can be looked at, can be done in Newfoundland and Labrador, no innovation into energy all because of Muskrat Falls. That is one sector that has taken out.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I thank the Premier for the advance copy of this statement. I have no doubt at all that this is going to be a good campaign. We know that we

have expertise and we have people who we hire through contracts to do that; we have seen it in the tourism campaigns. I am sure it is going to be very good. I am sure visually it is going to be good, and I am sure the stories are going to be good because I know we have those stories.

I would also like to know: What is the government going to do with regard to really putting incentives in place for new initiatives for smaller entrepreneurs, and especially for not-for-profit and social enterprise businesses?

This is something that the CSC, the Community Services Council, asked for after they did a full study of economic development two years ago and asked, prior to the 2011 election, for the government to look at and for all parties to look at what incentives need to be put in place to help those social enterprises because they are at the heart of our communities and there is not adequate money going into them.

That is something I would like the government to do, besides putting on this wonderful campaign.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I remind the member her time has expired.

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

AN HON. MEMBER: Leave.

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

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the Premier for an advance copy of her statement. This is very exciting news and I congratulate the campaign because –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MITCHELMORE: - business and innovation is key, a key pillar of our economy. We have exciting stories to tell; they need to be told. We have other great programs.

What I would like to say is that we need to keep investing in research and development, especially in rural regions of our Province.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. O'BRIEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this hon. House to provide an update on how the provincial government is helping adult learners in Newfoundland and Labrador achieve better results.

We are doing this by meeting a growing demand for skilled labour – both at the College of the North Atlantic and through delivery of the provincial Adult Basic Education program by private training institutions and community groups.

Earlier this year, we changed the delivery of the Adult Basic Education program so that people have the tools they require to be successful, find jobs, and establish careers. As we made this change, we also took steps to ensure that the programs at the College of the North Atlantic became more responsive to a growing demand for skilled labour.

Today, 884 people are enrolled in Adult Basic Education in the Province. Across Newfoundland and Labrador, students are getting the literacy and numeracy skills they need to participate in our modern economy.

Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, the college is enjoying success in its efforts to train women and men to meet a growing demand for skilled labour. In response to a challenging waiting list in programs such as Mobile Crane Operator, Paramedicine, Medical Laboratory Sciences, Heavy Equipment Operator, Welder, and Sheet

Metal Worker, the college increased capacity and mounted additional offerings for these and other programs. These changes have resulted in a 20 per cent reduction in the college's wait-lists and an 8.2 per cent increase in student enrolment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'BRIEN: Recognizing that education is a proven path to prosperity, adult learning – both post-secondary programming and Adult Basic Education – is one of the government's highest priorities.

Mr. Speaker, we are proud of the partnerships that we have built with the College of the North Atlantic and the private training institutions and community groups.

We offer congratulations to our adult learners for making the decision to further their education and training, and we wish them every success in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS DEMPSTER: I would like to thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement.

Mr. Speaker, this government committed to developing a Strategic Adult Literacy Plan in 2007 and they spent \$150,000 in consultations, and six years later they admitted that the information they have is outdated because they left it for so long.

For the minister to say that students are getting the literacy and numeracy skills they need when this government has failed in regard to their commitment to develop a strategy, I believe it is shameful. This government cut the college out of the ABE delivery with no literacy strategy in place. Taking literacy out from under the roof of our public college, I believe, is a tremendous

disservice and disconnect for meeting the demand for skilled labour.

With the lowest literacy rates in Canada, and education a predeterminant of health, I might add, it is no wonder that we have some of the worst health outcomes in the country. This government is failing to meet the demand for skilled labour, despite a Skills Taskforce and a report –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS DEMPSTER: – as well as a Try the Trades program.

We have thousands of apprentices stalled in their plans of training, unable to secure work to gain experience. Government has failed to adequately support the apprentices and the adult learners in general.

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.

I thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement, but I have to say I am rather in shock that he had the gall to stand and say some of the things that he said there today.

The minister knows that cutting the ABE program from the public college system has negatively affected attendance and opportunities for people to enter and succeed in this program and go on in trades training. We are still getting calls in our office because of the cuts that were made to that program. The College of the North Atlantic had over 1,000 –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS MICHAEL: – ABE students enrolled, and we know that not all of them have been able to get programs where they are now. They are clearly falling through the cracks.

Farming ABE out to private colleges has reduced access to ABE classes in rural areas that used to exist in the public college system.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS MICHAEL: Mr. Speaker, students are in ABE because they had trouble finishing school. A lot of them need extra supports, and we know the college offered those extra supports. They do not get the extra supports, Mr. Speaker, in the private college system, and the minister knows that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The member's time has expired.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Leave.

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

MR. KIRBY: Thanks to the minister for an advance copy of his statement.

There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that there is a role to be played in post-secondary education for private training institutions; however, Adult Basic Education is a fundamental component of public community college programming, so I would strongly recommend the decision that was made this year to remove that programming be reversed.

I also suggest to the hon. minister that he should look at speeding up funding, processing the funding for Adult Basic Education students, because that tends to lag, even now.

Thank you.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am sure that all members in this hon. House will be very pleased to hear that there are 42,000 seniors in our Province who have recently received a payment of up to \$971 as a result of the Newfoundland and Labrador Seniors' Benefit, which is a refundable tax credit for low-income seniors.

Mr. Speaker, our government is very pleased to have been able to significantly increase the benefits under this program three times in recent years. In 2003, the annual budget for the program was \$7.5 million. This year that has increased to \$36.7 million, an increase of 389 per cent. In 2003, the maximum payment provided under the program was \$350 for single seniors. This amount has increased by 177 per cent. The amount for senior couples in 2003 was \$700. This amount has now been increased by 39 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, the refundable tax credit is an amount paid to an individual, even if they have no tax payable. They receive a cheque either by direct deposit or in the mail. With the October 2013 payment, whether single or as a couple, seniors with net income of up to \$28,231 are eligible to receive the maximum benefit. The amount of the benefit will be phased out as net income increases between \$28,231 and \$36,559. In order to qualify for this benefit, the person must be sixty-five years of age by December 31 of the taxation year. The benefit is paid in October of each year and it is included in the same cheque as the GST/HST credit. The amount of the credit is based on family net income from the previous year.

Mr. Speaker, the government is very proud to continue our commitment to assisting seniors once again by providing the Seniors' Benefit. As a result of the benefit being indexed on an

annual basis, this year's maximum payment to seniors will be the highest ever at \$971.

Payments for those who qualify for the Seniors' Benefit were automatically issued in October either by cheque or direct deposit. If a resident has not already received their payment for this year, they are encouraged to contact the Canada Revenue Agency toll-free at 1-800-959-1953, or call the Department of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, the Seniors' Benefit is just one of many initiatives that our government is investing in to benefit seniors in our Province. The vision the Premier has of a prosperous Newfoundland and Labrador is certainly demonstrated in our commitment and investments in important social programs, strengthened communities, and the health and well-being of our children, Newfoundland and Labrador families and our seniors.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. 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. He did start by saying that people will be pleased to hear it today, but most people received this cheque, as he said, back in October. It is a good announcement; \$971 is something that most seniors in our Province who qualify will certainly appreciate.

We all know, in our jobs as MHAs, we talk to seniors every day who find themselves struggling. We have many widows who, we know as our constituents, are living on less than \$1,200 a month. These are the people who are finding it very hard to make ends meet. This benefit will go a long way in helping them.

One thing, though, I will say, that could be done that really would not cost anything at all is around medical transportation assistance. This is no money at all. It would not cost the

government any money at all. It is about timing, and many people today are waiting weeks and weeks to get those cheques back when they need that money to travel to and from medical appointments.

We should also recognize the great job and contributions that seniors in the Province have made over the years. They have laid the foundation for many of the benefits that we appreciate and use today. Indeed, in many of our communities, they are still the foundation of many of our volunteer associations. That was obvious this week with the many November 11 ceremonies we seen throughout the Province.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for the statement today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement. Bravo for this step, but may I suggest a few other initiatives government can support to ease the financial burden of seniors in this Province, as we have the highest proportion of seniors in receipt of GIS in the entire country? How about lower the co-pay for drugs for seniors? Raise the income ceiling for eligibility for the 65Plus drug program. Create a dedicated seniors' rental assistant program, as we know housing is a huge, crucial problem for many seniors Province-wide. Create and administer a universal, publicly funded, and administered home care and long-term care program based solely on need as in other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, we know the prosperity we are experiencing today is the result of the hard work of the many seniors who live in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Oral Questions.

Oral Questions

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

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Natural Resources said that Muskrat Falls, and I quote from Hansard, will "...lower the utility rates in this Province..." Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. The Premier herself said that Muskrat Falls would increase power rates by at least 50 per cent from what they are now.

I ask the Premier: Why is your minister saying that Muskrat Falls will reduce rates when this is clearly not the case?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, let me explain it to the member opposite. When we started this process of Muskrat Falls, it was about finding the cheapest way that we are going to be able to get power to the people of the Province in the future. We know that if we continue to depend on oil and the volatility of oil prices our rates are going to escalate possibly 4 per cent, 5 per cent, 6 per cent, or 7 per cent a year.

Mr. Speaker, we need to bring that under control. We always talk about seniors in this House, and it is important to all of us. We respect the position they are in because we all know if we live long enough we are going to be there, too.

Mr. Speaker, our efforts are to control those rates, to bring them down so that the cost of the utility bill will be less into the future. That is exactly what we are doing with Muskrat Falls, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Once again, I ask the minister to read Hansard, your own comments to the people: it will reduce the rates in this Province – which is just not true, Mr. Speaker, according to the Premier herself.

Mr. Speaker, the energy minister in Nova Scotia is concerned with the Muskrat Falls Project and says he agrees with most of the critics of the deal. He worries about the effect of Muskrat Falls on ratepayers in Nova Scotia.

I ask the Premier: Since you are charging people in our Province three times as much as Nova Scotia, why are you not worried about ratepayers here and send this project to the Public Utilities Board to ensure ratepayers are getting their fair price?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Nova Scotia has a new government, Mr. Speaker. They are familiarizing themselves in great detail with the deal that has been signed between Nalcor and Emera. While they were in Opposition, Mr. Speaker, we kept them in the loop. We did regular information sessions with them, but they would not have had the same degree and level of education around this project that the NDP government of the day have, Mr. Speaker.

So, responsibly, the government is informing itself. It may have some concerns. I am not a bit surprised at that, Mr. Speaker, but we are assured that those concerns will be alleviated. This is a good deal for Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker. It is a good deal for Nova Scotia. It is not half as good as the Leader of the Opposition thinks, Mr. Speaker, otherwise the energy minister would be embracing it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, fifteen cents for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, fourteen cents – you do not have to be a genius to realize we are subsidizing Nova Scotia, Premier. You do not have to be a genius, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Roddickton pellet plant has never produced any commercial pellets, despite \$10 million in taxpayers' money that the Premier approved without proper oversight. On top of this, the owner of the pellet plant was given \$1 million more in HST breaks which were over and above the original cost.

I ask the Premier: Why did you allow the owner of this company to keep the extra \$1 million in taxpayers' money on top of the \$10 million already that your government gave him?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, there are two points I want to make, if I get time, but the first one is very important. The member opposite continues to allude to the fact that we are going to subsidize rates in Nova Scotia. Mr. Speaker, nothing could be farther from the truth.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to sell power to Nova Scotia - or we can let it flow down the river, which is obviously what they are proposing. Well, we are going to sell it to make money; but, Mr. Speaker, we are going to sell it at a cost, a cost to Emera. They will sell the power to the ratepayers of Nova Scotia. The cost that the ratepayers pay and the cost that we are going to sell it to Emera are totally different. In terms of the cost to build it, the cost of transmission, the cost of return for the company, all has to be built into the rates in which the ratepayer of Nova Scotia will pay. There is (inaudible) –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. JOYCE: I just want to let the minister know – obviously, he does not want to answer the \$10 million of taxpayers’ money that the Premier, who was the minister, gave this company without producing one pellet, Mr. Speaker – not one pellet.

I will ask another question here. Obviously, they do not want to embarrass the Premier who was the minister at the time.

Mr. Speaker, during Public Accounts hearings, government officials stated, under oath, that they did not check or ensure that the invoices for the additional \$1 million in HST breaks were ever paid.

I ask the Premier, who was the minister at the time: How could you, when you were minister, approve additional funds without any due diligence?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes the economic challenges on the Northern Peninsula. There is a fibre basket up there, Mr. Speaker. They needed some support. Our government has shown in a number of areas – you can go to Fogo Island, you can go to the South Coast of the Province, where our government stepped up to support economic activity in a region that needed it.

Mr. Speaker, we did so supporting the sawmill operator on the Northern Peninsula. Through that process, the economics changed, and we continue to work with the sawmill operator on the Northern Peninsula to provide and assist and support so that we can continue to try to enhance the opportunities for the people of the Northern Peninsula.

Through the process and evaluation, obviously there were some things that we wanted to improve, and that has been done, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I will ask a very straightforward question.

Premier, when you were minister, did you check to see if those million dollars in invoices were paid before you gave out a million dollars of taxpayers’ money to this person? Did you check and see if invoices were paid, and what happened? Yes or no.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, with all of our programs there is due diligence, there is oversight, and we work closely with the public servants who help administer and deliver these programs throughout the Province.

In this particular case, Mr. Speaker, it was the intent on our part to support the economy on the Northern Peninsula. Through that process, as a result of where we are today, we continue to work with the sawmill operator on the Northern Peninsula. We still believe there is value in the fibre on the Northern Peninsula.

We will continue, Mr. Speaker, with good oversight and continue to work with our public sector to administer programs to help support economy in the rural areas. I certainly expect the member opposite would support that initiative as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Giving away \$1 million of taxpayers’ money when officials, under oath, said the minister did not check to see if those were paid is not due diligence, Mr. Speaker.

There are major safety concerns on the roads in the Bay of Islands at Coppermine Brook,

McIvers, and John's Beach. Residents are still concerned, despite reduced speeds and existing danger signs.

I ask the minister: Will you continue to monitor these roads and ensure the safety of the travelling public until permanent repairs can be made?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MCGRATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my department is very aware of the road conditions in Coppermine Brook, McIvers, and John's Beach. We have been up – we have monitored it. I had a discussion with the member opposite last week on one of those areas.

We will continue to monitor those. We have an independent consultant who is going to do an analysis on that. Before we can find a solution, we have to find the cause. Once we find the cause, then we will work on a solution there.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In 2009, Nalcor said that without a water management agreement, Muskrat Falls would have insufficient water for production requirements for many months each year. That is why the PUB imposed a water management agreement in 2009.

I ask the minister: How important is that water management agreement for the development of Muskrat Falls?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, during the process it has been very extensive in the efforts to get us to the end of Muskrat Falls and get us the least-cost power to the people of the Province. There are a number of issues, many of them very complicated, that we had to work through.

Obviously in order to get power out of Muskrat Falls, we had to have the water. We had to be able to build up the reservoir. We had to have those water rights in place, Mr. Speaker. We have had discussions, it is gone through the PUB, and it has been approved.

We have the water management rights in place so that we can ensure that into the future the water that flows on the Churchill River will indeed be able to provide us with the least-cost power into the future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Maybe the minister can provide us, just for the sake of the House, what is the update on the status of the court hearings right now with Quebec?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DALLEY: Mr. Speaker, the current court issue that the member opposite refers to is a challenge under the 1969 power contract, which the Liberal government of the day had signed. That is due to be renewed, Mr. Speaker. Although the contract had been determined back in 1969, it will be renewed in 2016.

What that means, basically, in that contract is that the flow of power to Quebec will change. From 1969 to 2016, they could take it in peaks and valleys; but, under the new contract, they must take it equally every month. They are

challenging that issue, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the flow of power from Churchill Falls to Quebec.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is interesting that minister says that the water management agreement is important, because just last week a VP from Nalcor said at the UARB hearings in Nova Scotia that the water management agreement has no material impact on Muskrat Falls at all. He basically said it is not needed.

I ask the minister: Who is right? Is it Nalcor or is this government?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, like most discussions around this piece, we are both right. Mr. Speaker, there is a water management agreement in place. CF(L)CO was not able to arrive at that place in terms of their internal discussions, so it was referred to the PUB. There is a water management agreement in place with CF(L)Co and Hydro-Quebec for the purposes of developing Muskrat Falls.

It is nothing short of incredible, Mr. Speaker, that we are at this stage in the development and the Opposition does not understand that the court case in Quebec is about continuous power under the 1969 hydro contract, Mr. Speaker, and not about water management.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BALL: I ask the Premier: If it was not important, why is it that in the contract between Nalcor and Emera that provision was made? If it is not important, why is it that Emera wanted to see that piece identified and addressed in that contract?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER DUNDERDALE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I remind the MHA for Humber Valley that that contract is in place. It is in place. The agreement between CF(L)Co and Hydro-Quebec on water management on the Churchill River for the development of Muskrat Falls is in place. It was put there by the PUB. The PUB was able to put it there because of the water management legislation that was introduced in this House in 2007 and gave them the ability to do it, Mr. Speaker.

The water management agreement that is in place between Nalcor and CF(L)Co, Mr. Speaker, does not have anything to do with the court case, which is the 1969 contract around continuous power.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, there are current media reports of escaped farm salmon now as far west as Burgeo. This is on the heels of escapees in the Garnish River and a large escape in Hermitage Bay. One of the environmental hazards of escaped farm salmon is interbreeding with wild salmon.

I ask the minister: Does he consider escaped farm salmon to be a risk to the wild salmon on the South Coast?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have built an inventory of a great industry on the South Coast, and certainly in terms of our security, our veterinarians, and the facility we built in St. Alban's, we have good infrastructure in regard to oversight.

To the member's question in regard to wild salmon as opposed to farm salmon, we are always concerned in terms of the environment in which they exist. We monitor it; we look for the best available information. Right now, there is nothing scientifically that links any negative effects from farm salmon to salmon in the wild, but we continue to oversee it. We think it is a great industry; it continues to grow.

If the hon. member has some scientific information, I would like to see it, but to date we have not seen any evidence of it, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, the federal government is currently carrying out consultations seeking input on whether wild salmon on the South Coast are threatened by escaped farm salmon.

I ask the minister: Has he made representation to the federal government regarding a threat posed to all wild salmon by escaped salmon?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HUTCHINGS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, again, the pessimism and negativity; he refers to a threat. If he has information or documentation on the threat, and scientific information, certainly bring it forward. We are always in consultation, obviously, with

the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the federal department of Environment, back and forth in regard to issues that come up. We work collectively together to grow the industry.

Right now, this year it is expected to be a \$180 million industry. We continue to say 50 per cent of the seafood in the world now is farmed. It is a global industry. We are part of it. We are a player. We want to grow it. We have the infrastructure in place to oversee it. We will continue to improve it. If there is information that comes forward, we will use that in our buyer security methods as we move forward. It is a great industry, and we believe in the South Coast of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. EDMUNDS: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transportation and Works said yesterday that the RFP for two new ferries for Labrador would be ready before the end of this year. He also committed to 2016 as a date for the completion of the new vessels.

I ask the minister: Will he release the details of the RFP, and what is the timeline between the release of the RFP and a tender being awarded for the new vessels?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MCGRATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the RFP for the two ferries for the North Coast and the Straits of Labrador is a very complex RFP. As a matter of fact, the RFP that is being designed has never been done before in Canada, let alone in Newfoundland and Labrador. The RFP that we are doing there is going to be for a long-term service to the Straits and to the North Coast. So we are working on it. It is a very complex piece.

As I said, I am hoping – I do not use the word commit – that it will be ready by the end of 2013, and we will get that out. Then we will be providing and hopefully meet our 2016 deadline.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. EDMUNDS: Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House the minister ranted at my colleague, the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, about separating Newfoundland and Labrador.

I ask the minister: Being a representative from Labrador, do you believe that Labrador is entitled to the same quality of ferry service as the rest of the Province?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MCGRATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak as the Minister of Labrador Affairs, and I am very proud to be the Minister Responsible for Labrador Affairs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MCGRATH: I chose thirty-five years ago to move to Labrador and I have been there ever since. It has given me a very good living, but I do not distinguish a difference between the Island portion of the Province and Labrador. We are one Province, and this government gives equality to all of the Province. We will do our best for every one of our population.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Following last week's landslide in Daniel's Harbour, government officials confirmed that

more landslides are expected. Elsewhere in our Province, part of the road in Duntara has been washed out since April. It is still not repaired and it is still not safe. Based on a report that has been sitting on the minister's desk for two and a half years, there are twenty-five areas considered to be extremely sensitive to coastal erosion, like Daniel's Harbour, like Duntara.

In the interest of public safety, I will ask the minister: Will you commit to further geological work in these twenty-five extremely sensitive areas?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Environment and Conservation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SHEA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, coastal erosion and the effects of that, and how we work with our communities is extremely important. The Department of Environment is willing to provide research and the toolkit to help communities assess their risk so they can determine what work may be necessary.

Mr. Speaker, we do see this as a very serious issue, and this department is committed to work with any communities that want to work with us to help them develop plans.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. OSBORNE: Mr. Speaker, there are 250 areas considered to be highly sensitive to coastal erosion. I asked the minister last week if she would revisit government's policy on allowing future development to close to coastlines. Now that she has had time to do her research, I will ask the minister again.

In the name of public safety, will you now commit to updating coastal development policy to better reflect our current realities with coastal erosion, rising sea levels, and storm surges?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Environment and Conservation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SHEA: Mr. Speaker, all the issues in relation to the coastline erosion or potential erosion is important to the Department of Environment, as I had said. The report is available. There is a toolkit to help communities assess their vulnerability and we are willing to work with the communities to help them assess their risk. Mr. Speaker, that is all in an attempt so that we can work with them to help them solve the problems or the issues that they may see.

Mr. Speaker, we have never walked away from this issue, and we are more than willing to work with the communities that are affected.

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

MR. A. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, today is World Diabetes Day. We have the highest rates of diabetes and pre-diabetes in Canada. We also scored a D in a recent national report on health care on obesity, fruit and vegetable consumption, and physical activity; all lifestyle factors that contribute to diabetes.

I ask the Minister of Health: Given our Province's poor performance on lifestyle factors that lead to diabetes, why did you eliminate the Director of Health Promotion and Wellness, as well as three health promotion consultants in Budget 2013?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad the member opposite pointed out that today is World Diabetes Day and I had the pleasure recently of signing a proclamation with the Canadian Diabetes Association of Newfoundland and Labrador.

We will have a news release later on this afternoon as well.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to work on issues around diabetes throughout the Province. In fact, we have twenty-four diabetic clinics that are operational in the Province right now. We commit more than \$19 million in terms of diabetes medication; \$2.1 million in terms of insulin pump therapy programs for persons up to the age of twenty-five, Mr. Speaker. We also, in terms of dialysis, have \$225 million...

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The member has time for a quick question.

The hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

MR. A. PARSONS: I ask the minister: Will you lift the age restriction and fund insulin pumps for people of all ages with type 1 diabetes?

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

MS SULLIVAN: Mr. Speaker, just to continue on: \$225 million invested in our dialysis sites across the Province. When we started, we had seven sites across this Province. We now have fourteen sites that are operational. We have one other in Harbour Breton that we hope to get opened up very soon, Mr. Speaker.

We continue to make steady progress in the treatment of diabetes.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

In Happy Valley-Goose Bay and in Bonavista overworked registered nurses are forced to shoulder the burden of extra work due to permanent and temporary vacancies. Nurses are

even working twenty-four hour shifts because of this situation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier: Will this government act now to support initiatives that address fatigue, heavy workload, and the increasing complexity of care to ease the burden on nurses and keep them working?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, within the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, we now have more nurses working than ever before in our history. In fact, 40 per cent of the health professional workforce in Newfoundland and Labrador is comprised of nurses.

We have 6,400 RNs working in our Province and we have 2,500 LPNs working in our Province. We have 53 per cent more nurses per capita working in Newfoundland and Labrador than the Canadian average, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would appreciate the minister to stand some day and tell us how many of the positions are empty.

Mr. Speaker, reliance by government on the professionalism of registered nurses to provide care, despite terrible working conditions, seems to be government's short-sighted plan. This situation cannot continue without patient care and the health of our nurses being affected.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Health and Community Services: When will she stop solving her problems on the backs of the nurses

and develop a more responsible, long-term staffing plan?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we have done in terms of ensuring that we have more nurses working than we have ever had before. We have nurses working the full scope of practice which they never did before. LPNs in particular are very proud in this Province these days to be working to their full scope of practice.

We are very proud of the work that we are doing with our nurses within this Province. We are hearing back from the people of Newfoundland and Labrador that they too are very proud.

Mr. Speaker, if I just might continue on in terms of other work that we are doing. If you look at the number of nurses who are graduating every year in Newfoundland and Labrador and the percentage of those that we are hiring, we are now 85 per cent plus in terms of the numbers of nurses (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Nurses work in a constant crisis of understaffing. The minister is not acknowledging that. The cost of nurse turnover is estimated to be 20 per cent to 30 per cent more than an RN's annual salary, plus overtime costs, which puts added pressure on health authority budgets.

I ask the Minister of Health and Community Services: What long-term plan has she for addressing government's failure to properly provide for appropriate nursing levels in the health care system?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Mr. Speaker, I can only tell her again, I suppose, that we have more nurses per capita working in Newfoundland and Labrador than in the country; 53 per cent more nurses per capita working in Newfoundland and Labrador –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: – more than we have ever had in our entire history, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there may be pockets every now and then where there are more nurses who happen to call in sick on a particular day and so on. That happens in any profession, Mr. Speaker, absolutely any profession that you can consider.

There are initiatives in place to mitigate that, Mr. Speaker. We constantly monitor that; we constantly work on that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Government cut the budget for RCMP policing in the Province by \$4.3 million, negatively affecting rural communities. Due to these cuts, the Town of Victoria is facing a policing crisis. Residents are complaining the RCMP are only able to respond to serious crimes against persons. Meanwhile, ATVs are running amok;

there is an increase in vandalism, speeding, drug-related crimes and criminal harassment.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister: What is he going to do about this public safety issue?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, policing is something that is important to all of us in Newfoundland and Labrador, and we have to ensure that our policing services, the RNC and the RCMP, are fully supported. I think we all agree with that.

The Minister of Justice and our government have clearly indicated that we are always willing to sit down with the RCMP and the RNC to look at their resource needs and we will provide human resource and operational funding, if required.

We have done that in the past. This year the new joint combined RNC-RCMP task force in Central Newfoundland has started its operations, and this builds on over \$920 million in investments in policing over the last nine years and over 140 police officers. That support will continue.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, in the Conception Bay North area many of the towns are lucky if they see a patrol car even once a week.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister: What is he going to do to bring the policing service up to an acceptable and safe level?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, let me say clearly we have confidence in both the RNC and the RCMP in this Province. We have confidence they know what they are doing. We have confidence that they will deploy their resources to where their greatest priorities are, and that will continue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS ROGERS: Mr. Speaker, town councils in the Conception Bay North area are talking about the lack of police servicing in their areas. Their populations are quickly growing.

What is this government going to do about the issue of lack of appropriate policing services in these towns?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I would say that if any town has any concerns about policing, they should sit down, contact their police force, sit down with the RCMP, sit down with RNC if it is applicable, and have proper discussions. The government will certainly be there to support that. We will ensure that we have and will continue to have more resources in policing in this Province than probably most places in the country.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

Presenting Reports by Standing and Select Committees.

Tabling of Documents.

Notices of Motion.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Petitions.

Petitions

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

MR. A. PARSONS: 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 humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS residents of the Southwest Coast must travel the Trans-Canada Highway between Channel-Port aux Basques and Corner Brook for work, medical, educational, and social reasons; and

WHEREAS Marine Atlantic ferries dock at Channel-Port aux Basques at various hours on a daily basis resulting in extremely high volume of commercial and residential travellers using this section of the TCH; and

WHEREAS the world-renowned Wreckhouse area is situated along this section of the TCH; and

WHEREAS the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador initiated a twenty-four-hour snow clearing pilot project in 2008 that excluded the section of the TCH from Channel-Port aux Basques to Stephenville;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to include the section of the TCH from Channel-Port aux Basques to Stephenville in the twenty-four-hour snow clearing project.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that has been on my plate since the time I got elected. I have had meetings with previous ministers, but they never showed any inclination to want to work together or to actually get anything done. They simply like to go on black-and-white numbers without reflecting some of the grey areas that exist. In many cases, I have actually had conversations with bureaucrats in the departments. They showed me numbers which later just did not acknowledge the realities of what is going on here.

There is another thing, though. I look forward to meeting with the new minister to talk about his issue. This is a great project and it is necessary. We have an area where we have more rubber-tire traffic arriving in Port aux Basques than anywhere else in the Province. We have the transport trucks and we have people who are not familiar with the roads. They have to pass along by the Wreckhouse. Everybody has to leave that area if they want to go to work, if they want to get flights, if they want to go to hospital, they have to travel to Corner Brook; however, the snow clearing only goes as far as Stephenville.

We are just asking to be treated the same. It is not just us, it is the tourists, it is the business travellers and it is people from all over who are using this section. We hope that it can be included in the project this year. At some point, I look forward to dealing with the new minister on it in the future.

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 assessments and diagnostic services are preventing many children with autism spectrum disorder from receiving needed early diagnosis; and

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

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

WHEREAS there are a lot of supports and services for children and youth with autism spectrum disorder after they age out of Intensive Applied Behavioral Analysis; 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, educators, advocates, health care providers, and experts in the autism community.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I have been receiving copies of this petition with signatures on it from communities across Newfoundland and Labrador since the petition drive was started earlier, I guess in the late summer. Parents have consistently expressed this concern about the availability of Applied Behavioural Analysis or ABA into Grade 4 and beyond.

I know that we have made reasonable progress to date in providing this. Really, it was only a few short years ago that this really did not exist at all. I know government made a decision earlier this year to extend coverage for Intensive Applied Behavioural Analysis to the end of Grade 3. We really need to look at extending it to a point beyond that.

As the petition notes and as I have stated before, the research in this area – and there is certainly all kinds of research emerging all of the time – indicates that Applied Behavioural Analysis is actually effective for individuals throughout their lifespan. It does not work for everybody all the time for the same length of time, but certainly, by and large on the whole, the research indicates that this is effective for individuals certainly beyond Grade 3.

We are not talking about a huge proportion of our population, but it is pretty significant. I think we really have to sit down, crunch the numbers while the government is going through its pre-Budget consultation period, and see that we can do this. I ask members to urge the government to go in that direction.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS DEMPSTER: 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 humbly sheweth:

WHEREAS Cartwright is an existing port of call for the *MV Northern Ranger*; and

WHEREAS Cartwright is connected to the Trans-Labrador Highway, providing access to truck freight destined for the North Coast of Labrador;

WHEREAS Cartwright would eliminate unnecessary travel and cost for freight destined

for Northern Labrador now being trucked to Happy Valley-Goose Bay; and

WHEREAS there has always been, and continues to be, commercial trade between the South and North Coasts of Labrador;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to designate Cartwright as a shipping port for freight destined to the North Coast of Labrador, beginning with the 2014 shipping season.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke to this yesterday. Because it has been probably the biggest issue that my office has dealt with since June, since I became the member, I do believe that I will be speaking to it for a number of times yet.

It is not acceptable when the minister comes back and says: No, we will not do that now because you have a road. Mr. Speaker, our road is not complete. The gravel road is in a very, very deplorable condition and can change from morning to evening.

This is impacting several classes of people – number one, small businesses. Everybody who has ever been connected with someone with a small business knows that their profit margin is very small; they have a high overhead cost. Time is also money for them, Mr. Speaker.

We have small businesses that are driving an extra 600-700 kilometres on a gravel road, bypass Cartwright, where the ferry is going in – the same ferry is going into Cartwright and docking. If I am taking freight and going to Black Tickle, that is fine; but if I am going farther up the North Coast, I have to drive on to Goose Bay. There is something wrong with that picture, Mr. Speaker.

Also, the people on the North Coast – we are talking about World Diabetes Day and the poor health in our Province. Everybody only has so

much money, Mr. Speaker. Here we are, people on the North Coast in my colleague's district, paying an average of \$700 extra on a snow machine just because of the extra cost incurred from having the extra day of travel. Then a lot of times that results in poor eating and things like that. It is very, very difficult for contractors from the district to do business on the North Coast.

Mr. Speaker, all of this is for no other reason than a blatant disregard from this government, a lack of will to provide a basic service to the people of Labrador, where historically there has always been this trade between the South and the North Coast. Mr. Speaker, I hope the government will revisit because we are not asking for extra money here.

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 there is no cellphone service in the Town of Trout River, which is an enclave community in Gros Morne National Park; and

WHEREAS visitors to Gros Morne National Park, more than 100,000 annually, expect to communicate by cellphone when they visit the park; and

WHEREAS cellphone service has become an important aspect of everyday living for residents; and

WHEREAS cellphone service is an essential safety tool for visitors and residents; and

WHEREAS cellphone service is essential for business development;

WHEREUPON the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge government to partner with the private sector to extend

cellphone coverage throughout Gros Morne National Park, and the enclave community of Trout River.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very vibrant town, particularly in the spring, summer, and into the fall when the park is more active. It comes as a surprise to visitors to our Province when they see all of the wonderful advertising done – much of the advertising is done by the Province, much more advertising and communication is done by the federal government. Then people come to the Town of Trout River and they cannot use their cellphones.

It is a significant handicap for local people. They feel they are really being taken advantage of because if they leave the area they can use their cellphone. Imagine if you were living in a place such as Trout River and you could not get cellphone service; you would just drive up over the hill, out through the gulch, and all of a sudden now you can use your cellphone in various parts of the Province. This is an issue that government seems to be completely ignoring. This is a part of the failure to serve rural parts of the Province. It is part of this government's apparent plan to abandon rural Newfoundland and Labrador. They did away with all of the RED boards. They fail to support the fishery in a proper manner that small communities can survive. They fail to provide various services. In this case, in the Town of Trout River, there is no cellphone service.

Surely, the number of individuals living in the Town of Trout River, the businesses, a variety of tourist businesses and the thousands and thousands of people who visit Trout River every summer as part of their summer vacation really expect cellphone service. The cost is not exorbitant. They are only asking to be able to partner with the private sector in order to extend cellphone service.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. OSBORNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WHEREAS the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act was introduced into the House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador, debated, approved by members of the House of Assembly and received Royal Assent in June of 2007; and

WHEREAS this legislation has not been proclaimed into force; and

WHEREAS this legislation was intended to make our communities safer and we believe if the government proclaimed this legislation into law, our communities would indeed be safer.

WHEREUPON we, the undersigned petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to proclaim into law the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act.

As in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I am familiar with this legislation. It was debated in the House of Assembly. It is good legislation. It was legislation that was – the RNC and the RCMP, and many community groups were consulted on this particular piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. I know of communities, we all know of communities in all of our districts, I am sure, that there are properties where residents live and those are considered to be problem properties.

One example I mentioned the last time I presented this petition, Mr. Speaker, and I will mention it again because it was highly publicized. It was Tessier Place, where the RNC knew of the property on Tessier Place, knew

there was questionable activity taking place at that property, knew there were issues regarding drugs and prostitution and other things happening at that property that were of great concern to the neighbours in that neighbourhood.

The RNC were not able to do anything with the property because without enough evidence, Mr. Speaker, to successful lay charges which would make it to court and see a conviction, the RNC are somewhat restricted in the results they can provide.

If this legislation were brought into force, Mr. Speaker, that property would have been able to be dealt with by inspectors of the Department of Justice. The property would have been able to be shut down and the problem to residents removed.

There was a death at that particular property, Mr. Speaker. The residents of that neighbourhood felt very unsafe as a result of the activity taking place at that property. That death possibly could have been avoided if the property was shut down.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation, I believe, is good legislation and I ask government, as do the people who signed this petition, to revisit the legislation, proclaim it into law, and ensure that the neighbourhoods that need this legislation to protect them receive it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Minister of Finance have leave to go back to Tabling of Documents?

AN HON. MEMBER: No leave.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day.

Orders of the Day

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

MS SHEA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move Motion 14, pursuant to Standing Order 11, that this House will not adjourn 5:30 p.m. today, Thursday, November 14, 2013.

Further, Mr. Speaker, I move Motion 15, pursuant to Standing Order 11, that this House not adjourn 10:00 p.m. today, Thursday, November 14, 2013.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that this House do not adjourn today, Thursday, November 14, at 5:30 p.m., and further moved that this House do not adjourn on Thursday, November 14, at 10:00 p.m.

All those in favour of the motion, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

MS SHEA: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services, to ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, An Act Respecting Food Safety In Food Premises, Bill 22, and I further move that the said bill be now read a first time.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 22.

It is moved and seconded that the hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services shall have leave to introduce a bill, An Act Respecting Food Safety In Food Premises, Bill 22, 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 22 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 Health and Community Services to introduce a bill, "An Act Respecting Food Safety In Food Premises", carried. (Bill 22)

CLERK: A bill, An Act Respecting Food Safety In Food Premises. (Bill 22)

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

When shall the bill be read a second time?

MS SHEA: Tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Tomorrow.

On motion, Bill 22 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

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

MS SHEA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

From the Order Paper I will call Order 1, Committee of Supply.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, that the House resolve itself into a Committee of Supply to debate Bill 9.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that this House resolve itself into Committee of Supply and that I do now leave the Chair.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

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

Committee of the Whole

CHAIR (Littlejohn): We are debating the resolution, Bill 9, An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Additional Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending March 31, 2104 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service No. 2.

Resolution

“That it is expedient to introduce a measure to provide for the granting to Her Majesty for defraying certain additional expenses of the public service for the financial year ending March 31, 2014, the sum of \$147,200.”

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

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will just stand and have a few minutes –

CHAIR: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

MS SHEA: I just want to clarify what we are debating, it is Bill 9.

CHAIR: Bill 9.

MS SHEA: Okay, I thought you meant sums of money to the public service. It was...

CHAIR: No, no, Bill 9 –

MR. JOYCE: Which is a money bill.

CHAIR: – which is a money bill.

MS SHEA: Right, in relation to the by-election.

CHAIR: Yes.

MS SHEA: Yes, okay.

Thank you.

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

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I thought I was going to get interrupted again like I usually do when I try to stand and have a few words.

Mr. Chair, I am just going to have a few words to debate Bill 9, which is a bill to pay for the by-election for Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair, which we have the great member here now for Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JOYCE: A great Liberal member again. I must say, Mr. Chair, the member herself is holding her own in this House of Assembly. She has very little experience, but I can assure you she can stand toe-to-toe with any member in this House to represent her District of Cartwright L’Anse au Clair.

When I was down campaigning with the member – I had a lot of family and still do have a lot of family in that area and it was great seeing them all and great hearing the issues in Labrador. I can assure the people of Cartwright-L’Anse au Clair that you may have lost one little tiger, she moved on to Ottawa; but I can guarantee you, you have another one who stepped in her place who is ready to take over the fight for the District of Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair. I look forward to dealing with the member and helping the member on a regular basis here in this House.

Mr. Chair, as we all know this is a money bill and we are allowed to have a few words. I spoke to the minister earlier on the roads in the Bay of Islands; I just want to bring that up. I did have a meeting with the minister on the roads and I thank the minister for that.

I just want to inform the residents of the Bay of Islands that the minister has made the commitment that he will monitor those three or four major sections in the Bay of Islands. There is a person on site who is monitoring it and if it does get worse, they will try to do something to make it safer this year. I thank the minister for that and I thank the minister for the co-operation

because there are some people concerned about it.

Minister, I can show you letters upon letters that I am after writing about those three sites, because it is a safety concern. Thank you for that. I thank the residents for saying to me that there is a concern, and I can assure you that the department is well aware of it and it will be looked at and monitored.

Mr. Chair, I brought up today in this House the pellet plant in Roddickton and, of course, everybody looks at me and says: What? You do not support economic development in rural Newfoundland and Labrador? When you stand up and ask a question, you get accused of not supporting something in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, instead of looking at the issue and answering the question.

I just want to go back on this pellet plant in Roddickton, Mr. Chair. Absolutely, no one on this side of the House is against rural development. Now, if we want to talk about rural development, let's talk about how many people were cut from the boards in Newfoundland and Labrador here that promotes rural development; let's just talk about how many people were cut – no need any more, the great engine for rural Newfoundland and Labrador, cut to the bones, gone, see you later.

Mr. Chair, when you want to attack me about not supporting rural Newfoundland and Labrador, I say: Look in the mirror; actions speak a lot louder than words – a lot louder than words, Mr. Chair.

I will just go back to the Roddickton plant and this was brought to my attention some while ago about the Roddickton plant. I put a Freedom of Information request in. I could not get any information, of course.

Lo and behold, the minister who administered this fund was the Premier. She was the minister at the time. I just want to give you a little background here. There was the Department of Natural Resources; within Natural Resources, there was a fund developed for diversification.

There was a fund developed in that department for these types of projects.

Before I get into this project in Roddickton, guess what? That fund did such a great job that it is cancelled. There is no such fund in that department right now, absolutely none. What amazed me, when we were in Public Accounts here and we asked questions on this pellet plant in Roddickton – if you want to talk about a big hoopla, the big announcements, the minister is up, all the lights and cameras and all of that, the big announcement was saving rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

In our discussions with the officials, under oath, Mr. Chair, about this pellet plant – I just want to give you an example, the question was asked: Did you have any market agreements signed? The answer was: No, but we were discussing it with some people. We are looking at some options. Were there any markets signed? Were there any markets that once the pellets were made you would be able to sell them? Absolutely, none.

The startling point about that – and this is very important – if people in this Province ever want to know why me as a person in the Opposition who is asking questions about Muskrat Falls here today, listen to this story: This pellet plant – no markets, absolutely none. The money went up, the proposal went up to Cabinet for the second or the third time, it came back through the minister, who happens to be the Premier today, came back and said let's confirm the markets. By the time it came back from the Cabinet to the minister in a Cabinet paper, back down to the fishers and said let's confirm the markets, there was \$9 million already spent – spent and no markets.

Once we had that established that there were no markets, we said: Okay, the big concern down there then was transportation. So, we asked: How were you going to get these pellets to market? They said: We were looking at Stephenville. As we know now, the port in Stephenville is privatized. What kind of agreement did you have in Stephenville? Well, we did not. I think they were talking to them.

I said: How much would it cost to ship the pellets out of Stephenville? We do not know. There was nothing signed; there is no agreement. I said: Well, how can you give out \$11 million, \$12 million of taxpayers' money and you do not know how you are going to get the product to market?

I said: Well, you looked at St. Anthony? Yes, we shipped a few out, but the cost of the supply, the bags that we had to put it in, to put down in St. Anthony, was too expensive. We said: Oh, how about the – this is what was said; it is in Hansard.

We said: There was a wharf in Roddickton; did anybody look at the wharf in Roddickton? The answer was told – in Hansard – by one of the officials who was involved with this project: No, we did not want trucks going to the wharf. Guess what? The wharf was torn down then.

The question I have to ask: If the wharf was torn down, what was the wharf for – it was for fisheries – if there were not already trucks going through the town full of fish? It was a federal wharf. Then, what happened, they did not even look at that wharf, the federal wharf; it is torn down.

So, here we are now, Mr. Chair, the minister, who happens to be the Premier, telling us about Muskrat Falls, that everything is in place. We have the markets, we know how to get it to market, and we have the cost of everything. Look at the pellet plant – a miniature Muskrat Falls. Money spent and no markets. No way to get it to markets. Do not know how much it is going to cost. No agreement signed. Anybody here who ever wants to know why we are asking questions about Muskrat Falls, read Hansard on the Public Accounts about the pellet plant in Roddickton.

Do I hope the pellet plant in Roddickton survives? Definitely. Do I hope that it will thrive? Definitely. We have to be conscious of taxpayers' money. Anybody on this side of the House or on the government side should say: Before we commit, what are our chances?

We asked the officials: Did you give a commitment or some level? They said: We informed the minister that it is high risk. I understand the high risk, but in order to ensure and put some protection in there for taxpayers' money, you must ensure there are markets, ensure there is transportation, and the travel costs to get it to market. There was not even a storage facility in the market plan. We have all these pellets produced and no place to store them. We have no place to store them.

When we look at Muskrat Falls and you want to talk about the pellet plant, it all in the same; this is why we need to do our due diligence. This is why as Oppositions we are asking these types of questions.

I will be back.

Thank you again, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O'BRIEN: How are you doing, Mr. Chair?

Mr. Chair, it is great to be up in the House again today. I was listening intently to the hon. member in regard to what he had to say in the House on this important bill.

The one thing I have seen in my time as a minister in this government is the investment that we have made in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. I will only speak from my own department, or my past department, Municipal Affairs; 65 per cent of all Municipal Capital Works money in my budget was invested in rural Newfoundland and Labrador during that time.

Where did all the fire trucks go to? – but in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. Did we invest in companies in rural Newfoundland and Labrador? Absolutely! Are they high risk? Absolutely, Mr. Chair, and that is the reason they come to government in the first place.

That will not deter us from investing in rural Newfoundland and Labrador and believing in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, I say to the hon. member. I wonder, actually, if they believe in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. That is the question I would have to ask.

I was also listening intently as the hon. member brought up his colleague in the House, his new colleague in the House. I welcome her to the House and I congratulate her in regard to her election. I was up and took part in that by-election process as well, as did the hon. member did, too. As a matter of fact, I think we had coffee one morning on the campaign trail in the same little place.

The one thing I would say to the hon. member, if I was going to give her some advice, I would tell her to try to be factual when she is talking about her district, Mr. Chair. Just the other day she was up in the House, and I will read from Hansard, Mr. Chair.

“Mr. Chair, every day last week in the House I did hear people stand on the other side and talk about the growth that is happening in the Province, talk about the small numbers of people on Income Support, talk about the benefits; but the reality of where I travel on weekends and where I live and where I make my home in Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair, the reality is very, very different.”

Well, if she had asked me, as the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills and having the data that I have at my disposal, I would have told her that only 2.2 per cent of the population of that particular district requires Income Support. There are a little over 4,000 people live in that district. Only 2.2 per cent, less than 100 people, require Income Support.

I would be proud of that, Mr. Chair. I would absolutely be proud of that. That is telling me that people are working in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, working in Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. O’BRIEN: Get your facts right before you get up on your feet and give a false impression to the rest of the Province that it is doom and gloom in your district, when it is absolutely not, I say to the hon. member.

As well, if I could just throw out another few facts: Since 2003, Employment Assistance Programs, over \$47,000 spent in the district; employment development programs, over \$452,000 spent in the district.

We will talk about the EAS closure in her district, which she talks about fairly often. The thing she does not say is that there are three people working in Mary’s Harbour in her district. As a matter of fact, one of them is a development specialist for that area. We recognize the uniqueness of the district and the uniqueness of Labrador. We have another one in Goose Bay. I think there are over twenty-three people working in the office in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, I say to the hon. member.

That is the way we invest. We invest in Labrador, we believe in Labrador. We believe in Labrador as a place and a part of this Province, and sometimes I would like to think the Province as a whole. That is exactly the way we do it, Mr. Chair. What we do is recognize some uniqueness between the geographic areas of the Province, including the South Coast of Newfoundland and Labrador; under the LMDA program, Mr. Chair, over \$1.6 million into that district.

These are big numbers. As a matter of fact, overall since 2003, there was \$16 million spent in that district by this government for various programs, in youth development, in youth and student services, the ABE program, CNA, and all that kind of good stuff. Over \$16 million was spent.

The only piece I am trying to impress on the hon. member is that when you stand in the House, absolutely I encourage you to do so; you are one of forty-eight. I try to get in my place each and every time that I can under the restraints of having forty-seven other people trying to stand up and speak and talk about their

districts, and talk about their departments when it comes to ministers. I encourage her, absolutely. The other thing I would impress on her is try to be factual before you get on your feet. Do your work.

The other piece I want to talk about – and I do not have Hansard. I was listening intently to the Leader of the Third Party. It was only yesterday I believe it was, if I remember right – and we can check Hansard – but she talked about immigration. She talked about, and what I got out of it, she is actually against immigrants coming into our Province. That is what she talked about in the Third Party. That is exactly what she talked about.

MS SHEA: That is her stand.

MR. O'BRIEN: Yes, absolutely, that is her stand.

She talked about people were complaining about immigrants coming into our Province. She talked about people coming in to work on Muskrat Falls, and people in this Province are talking about it, that they do not want them.

Well, I am proud to have 10,000 immigrants in this Province at this particular time in our history, Mr. Chair. Ten thousand of them, and I am proud of every single one of them. As a matter of fact, we are doing everything possible to attract other immigrants into our Province.

As a matter of fact, there was a business person on Open Line yesterday morning – he is not a good supporter of ours, Mr. Chair, but I respect what he said. He said the future of Newfoundland and Labrador is in our immigrants, and I believe that. I believe that because we have some great people in this Province who came from other countries, other cultures. Newfoundland and Labrador has welcomed them, taken them into our communities, and we are hoping to absolutely grow that community.

Now, as well, in regard to us as a government, we create the opportunities, absolutely, and we created a number of them over the last number

of years. The first priority is to employ Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Today, there are more Newfoundlanders and Labradorians working than ever in our history of the Province, Mr. Chair.

We will do anything at all to make it possible. We encourage skilled workers from other countries to relocate, yes we do, but we also encourage our own population base to educate, to get into the skilled labour force, to take the courses necessary, get through their apprenticeship programs, become journeypersons and avail of the opportunities. Absolutely, we do, Mr. Chair. We will continue to do that.

The other piece I want to touch on as well, Mr. Chair, is the affordable housing piece and what we are doing through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing. Through the investment in the affordable housing program, a part of Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, we built over 547 new affordable housing units, which are targeted specifically for seniors with low incomes, Mr. Chair. We have created partnerships with the private sector to accomplish this.

Also, we have 2,650 of our clients were assisted through the Provincial Home Repair Program. Guess who they are? They are mostly all senior citizens of low income. The program has certainly helped them to renovate and repair, and make their living accommodations more comfortable, absolutely.

Then we have the Province-wide Rent Supplement Program, Mr. Chair, which provides a total of 1,732 affordable private sector rental units to households with low incomes, too. Then we have another program called Social Housing Portfolio, which we have 5,556 units, I believe, in the Province and 34 per cent of that houses seniors in our Province.

Then we have the Residential Energy Efficiency Program and 83 per cent of that category is also seniors. What I want to impress on people is that we have not forgotten our seniors. We

invest in our seniors and we will continue to do so.

I will say to the hon. Member for St. John's Centre that you have to deal in reality. You go to any jurisdiction in Canada, any jurisdiction in North America, or any jurisdiction in the free world, you will have challenges. Absolutely, you will, but the aim of the game is to meet those challenges. As soon as you actually meet a challenge and you cure a problem, another challenge appears. Then you keep working towards that goal, always.

I will advise the hon. member, do not go out through the door like you have been doing over the last two or three years and promising everything to everybody and anything they want because you will not be able to give it. That is not reality. It is all under the budgets, Mr. Chair.

We as a government will continue to invest and continue to grow the economy in this Province, Mr. Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I take this time again to stand and have a few words. I hear the minister, and I do not want to go to and fro, but a lot of issues are facing Corner Brook. I will just go through one: the hospital. I know I am after bringing this up. People who know me know that I am going to continue until I see what the people of Western Newfoundland and Corner Brook deserve.

I heard the Premier just the other day when I brought up the issue about PET scanners. I made the statement that there were twelve in Quebec. There was going on to be twelve PET scanners in Quebec. You hear the Minister of Health saying there are only thirty across Canada. That may be true, with twelve in Quebec. The Premier was saying to me: Well,

look at the size of the population; look at the difference.

Mr. Chair, the Quebec government, when they were looking at Quebec for PET scanners, they did it on geography, not population. There are areas in Quebec with a population of 45,000 people with a PET scanner. There are places in Quebec, Mr. Chair, with a population of 65,000 people with a PET scanner.

So when the Premier of this Province looks at me and says: Look at the population, because of Quebec. Do what Quebec did and look at geography because if you look at the catch basin for Western Newfoundland, Mr. Chair, we are looking at probably about 145,000 or 150,000 and Labrador also would be included in that.

If you want to look at the hospital in Corner Brook – because the PET scanner is the way of the future and if this facility is going to be built in Corner Brook, if it is going to be built for all of the people of Western Newfoundland, if it is going to be built for residents of Labrador, we have to plan for the future. We cannot let it be like the long-term care facility that was built which was scaled down 100 beds, now we have to build another 100 beds because they scaled it down. There was no future planning for it, Mr. Chair.

That is my concern. From my understanding, the wing that was supposed to be open will be open sometime next month, I think. Next month, that last wing in the long-term care facility will finally be open.

AN HON. MEMBER: Next week.

MR. JOYCE: Next week that wing will be open. Four years later, we have an open wing of the long-term care facility not being used, yet we hear the Minister of Health on a regular basis – there are forty or fifty long-term care patients in acute care beds, but we had a wing that was supposed to be opened four or five years ago, was not opened, was not used. That is the kind of planning I am talking about, Mr. Chair.

These are the types of issues that are facing the seniors. I heard the minister previously talking about the seniors. Radiation: Why can't there be a radiation unit at the hospital in Corner Brook? Why can't there be? I would love to be able to sit down – I spoke to some doctors in Corner Brook who deal with it. They cannot see why there cannot be a radiation unit in Corner Brook. They cannot see why there cannot be a PET scanner unit.

I know the Minister of Health always said to me: Well, bring me the experts. Do you want to know an expert, if you think there should be a PET scanner in Corner Brook? Dr. Bob Cook, Corner Brook; there is an expert. Right now, one of the only people in this Province who can read a PET scanner, can read the reports, is Dr. Bob Cook from Corner Brook, yet we are not putting one in Corner Brook.

It just boggles my mind that if we are going to look sixty, seventy years into the future for this new hospital, why cannot we do it? These are the types of questions that the people of Corner Brook are asking me. I am sure they are asking the Member for Humber Valley also, asking the question. This is why we cannot get the answers. All we hear is money, population, oh, we cannot do it. We cannot do it. We have no reasons why we cannot do it.

The easiest thing in the world is to say we cannot do it. There is one thing that I have to say is that if there is a legitimate reason, tell us what the legitimate reason is. That is all I want to know. Tell us the legitimate reason. Just because we are saying oh, there is no contact – we are looking in the future; we are looking down the road.

This is the kind of thing that we need instead of coming back two, three, four years after the hospital is built in 2021, 2022, after it is built coming back and saying oh, we have to do renovations to put in for the PET scanner. That is the kind of thing that we need; we need to be proactive on this. We all know the way of the future is the PET scanner.

If you look at any research whatsoever, the way of the future is a PET scanner. Now, I do not know what other documentation you can get, what the government needs. I can supply any documentation they need to show the way of the future.

The radiation unit for Corner Brook – I would just love for anybody to sit down with me; the specialists and the ones I have spoken to cannot see why there cannot be a radiation unit in Corner Brook so the people from Western Newfoundland and Labrador do not have to go to St. John's, to travel.

I heard the minister just then. I am sure the minister is concerned about the seniors, there is no doubt; but a lot of the people who use these types of facilities are seniors. Now from Corner Brook, Port aux Basques, Stephenville, down to Burgeo, Ramea they have to find a way to St. John's.

We have the aging population, Mr. Chair, so we need to try to supply the services for the people who are most vulnerable, who will need these services. They are seniors. That is why we need to put the services closer. When you have a catch basin of 145,000, 140,000 in Western Newfoundland and Labrador, it deserves a PET scanner. It deserves a radiation unit. It definitely deserves it, Mr. Chair. I will get it in later about some of the misgivings of the hospital, but here I am again pleading with the government to look at these services for Western Newfoundland before it is too late.

We have another couple of years, by the government's own admission, to go ahead before we get the planning done of it, before we get the engineering and start. Before it is too late, this is what I would ask the government. Sit down and explain why we cannot have – forget this, we did not have any calls about it; forget this oh we cannot have it because of population. That is all just thrown out the window. That has no bearing. Explain why it cannot be put in Corner Brook. Explain to the people why there cannot be a radiation unit.

I can get on, and there is no doubt I can speak about the hospital and talk about how long it has been going on, Mr. Chair. I have notes here, notes upon notes about all the information that was said and re-said and information that was given out, another minister contradicting the other minister, I could do that. I am pleading with the government here today to do an evaluation.

Just do not stand up and say because we are in Opposition – myself and the Member for Humber Valley, the Member for St. Barbe, the Member for Torngat – because we are Opposition we are bad people and that everything we ask, or everything we request is not right. Give it a second light, give it a second look. That is all I ask. I can assure you, and I can assure you when I speak to the specialists in Corner Brook, they are asking the same questions as I am. It can be done.

MS SULLIVAN: (Inaudible).

MR. JOYCE: I hear the minister over there saying they never asked me. Minister, the last time you had a meeting out in Corner Brook you had the municipal police so people could not get into your meeting. So do not go saying you did not ask me, because they cannot get in. Mr. Chair, they cannot get in.

Phone Dr. Bob Cook and ask him. Do you want a specialist, Mr. Chair, who says yes, we should have one? Yes we can do it, yes the need is there.

Mr. Chair, with that I will sit down and have my time –

MS SULLIVAN: A point of order.

CHAIR: On a point of order, the hon. the Minister of Health and Community Services.

MS SULLIVAN: Mr. Chair, the meeting that was held in Corner Brook was held specifically for municipal governments. It was open to anybody within municipal governments who wanted to come. I have also been in the hospital

and I have spoken with many of the medical professionals in the hospital.

CHAIR: There is no point of order.

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. JOYCE: I know the minister, when it hurts – she has a habit of doing that. I will be back. You will not keep me quiet, I say to the minister.

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Finance and Attorney General.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chair, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to take part in this debate on Supplementary Supply.

It is interesting, when I left and went back to Corner Brook last week we were debating Bill 8 on Supplementary Supply and we are back here today now, it is also Supplementary Supply but it is a different bill. This particular bill is to come up with money to pay for the by-election that took place in Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

What happened is that when the funds were needed for the by-election, this of House of Assembly was not sitting and therefore the government had to get what is called a special warrant. The Minister of Justice at the time made the correct application to Cabinet and to sub-committees of Cabinet to seek the funding. The funding, of course, was granted. We had the by-election and the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair was elected.

Of course, now the House of Commons is back in session, and even though it is not required under the Financial Administration Act, what we have done, following the principle that public money should not be spent by the executive of government unless they are ultimately approved by the people's representative in the House of Assembly. We are now here today with Supplementary Supply Bill 8 seeking the

ratification of what the executive of government has done, what the Crown has done in terms of the expenditure of public money. So I am delighted to have an opportunity to stand in this debate and say a few words.

Mr. Chair, the first thing I want to say, I want to mention the Remembrance Day ceremony that I attended back in Corner Brook on Monday; on Monday, Remembrance Day. I have been attending these ceremonies for a long time, and that is because my father was a D-Day veteran. My father, as a young officer cadet, landed on the beaches of Normandy as a member of the New Brunswick North Shore Regiment.

He was not supposed to be there. He was an officer cadet. He was supposed to have been sent back to London for officer training, but he went with the Regiment. He was told to go to a holding unit in London. He said, no, I would rather go with the Regiment. He went and landed on D-Day. He was with the Regiment in Europe.

Then his orders caught up with him. He was flown back to London and he went to Officer Training school, but the best part of the story was that he attended a wedding in London. He met a young woman there who was working at the Canadian Military Headquarters, and the two of them came back. They stopped off in Cape Breton, where I understand a very handsome son was born. Then they had the good sense to move on to the City of Corner Brook where they had a wonderful life.

My father joined the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. He later became the CO in Corner Brook and later became the Commanding Officer of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Obviously, as a child, I would go to these Remembrance Day ceremonies with him over and over again. As a matter of fact, I thought the ceremony could not take place without him. I watched how the number of people who went to those events seemed to get smaller and smaller and smaller. Now we see the resurgence, and it was just wonderful to see.

The Leader of the Opposition was there representing the Opposition. Our Member of Parliament was there representing the Government of Canada. I was there representing the government. The Member for Humber West was there as well. It was just such a wonderful event. When you hear that poem *In Flanders Fields* read every year, it still makes you well up.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) as well.

MR. MARSHALL: Yes, I said the Leader of the Opposition was there as well. I said that.

It was certainly a great day, seeing those kids there and watching them paying attention and learning about the horrors of war. I wonder what they are thinking when they hear that famous poem?

“We are the dead. Short days ago we lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow.”

It was just wonderful. It is great to be back here now to see what they fought for, to see this democracy that we can speak to in this House and have debates with members opposite. I love to debate with the member about Corner Brook because both of us want to see, and I know everyone in this House wants to see Corner Brook and the West Coast grow and prosper. I think the only difference is in terms of timing.

There are lots of things we want to have, and that applies to everyone right across the Island and Labrador. You work on them one at a time. I think of schools, for example. When I first entered public life, the Herdman Collegiate was the big issue. That is the school everybody wanted and it finally was done. That became the one high school in Corner Brook.

The next step is to find a junior high school. It goes through the process and the decision was made that they would redevelop Regina High School into the new junior high school. Now that work is continuing. There has been some great – I just drove up there last weekend and saw the work that is being done there, the

extension to the building, the paving that is done in the area next to the church.

We also have a list for more things we need done. We know money was put in the Budget last year to do the planning for G.C. Rowe. When G.C. Rowe is developed, when the new junior high school opens up, the students from Presentation and G.C. Rowe will move into Regina, which is the new junior high school. Then Rowe will be available to be the new K-6 school for the eastern section of the city, and there will be more money to invest in J.J. Curling.

Then there is a need for a new school; C.C. Loughlin needs to be replaced as a new school. So when you say you want a PET scanner and we want radiation, yes, we do. I support the call for that, but we have to do things in order. We have to do things one at a time. So we have the high school, we have the junior school, and next we will work on the K-12. We will do it one at a time.

The other thing is the Grenfell College. Grenfell College is there. We have an Arts and Administration Building, \$27 million that has been looked for, for a long period of time. Then we have a residence; there is a great need for a residence. Now there is a residence there, 200 units and \$22 million.

The next thing will be the opening of the new environmental labs. In the Arts and Administration Building, there were labs for undergraduate, and we are going to for the first time have research labs at Grenfell College. These things take time. You do not get them all at once. You work on them one at a time.

For Grenfell College, what do we want next? Well, there is a call for a nursing building, for a place for the nurses. It will probably be bigger than that. It will probably be more of a science, not just nurses, but a nurses building is the next thing on the list.

Roadwork: I am not going to go into the roadwork. There is lots of roadwork that is

taking place in the Corner Brook area. We have all seen that.

The port: Look at the work down at the port that needs to be done. The Corner Brook Port Corporation always has ideas. Jackie Chow and the Board of Directors there always have ideas. They are looking for funds to infill the port. They are looking for money to fix up the Lafarge building. These are also objectives that will help with the economic development in the City of Corner Brook.

Now, in terms of the long-term care facility, we have a new long-term facility. We have four protective care units as well, but our population is aging very quickly. Our population, unfortunately, is declining and it is aging. As a result of that, the next stage is a new hospital, but in the design or in the planning for the new hospital, they said: You need more long-term care beds.

So the first thing that is going to happen with the new campus in Corner Brook, it is not going to be one building. You are going to start off with a long-term care building and I think a logistics building. They will be the first two built. Then the next thing will be the acute care centre and the hostel. There are going to be four buildings, but there is lots more room up there. It is a big site. I know the Leader of the Opposition has seen it, but there is a big site.

Then the next project, someone could come to government and say: Well, it is a radiation unit, or it is a PET scanner; it might be a brain centre. God knows what it is. We obviously want what is needed and what is required for the future development of the demographics in Western Newfoundland. So that could be the next project.

Right now we are focused on getting the additional long-term care unit built, the new long-term care unit up at the hospital. We will continue with all these projects; we will work at them. If Dr. Cook and other doctors feel that is their priority – I know in dealing with the hospital, they have a lot of priorities. The problem is you have to take them and you have

to say what are your major priorities and you have to focus on those first.

We will get to them all over time. We will do them one at a time, and we will do them properly.

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

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I take pleasure as well in getting up and talking to this piece of legislation, Bill 9, dealing with the financing of the Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair by-election. I have to say I had the opportunity to go up and work on that by-election as well. I think that pretty much we have seen all Members of the House of Assembly up there at one time or another, at least a few anyway.

It was a great experience to meet the people of the district, travel to and fro in the district, and talking to people on their issues. Some of the issues that people have in Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair are pretty much the same sometimes as the people on the Island part of the Province. We deal with the ferry and the transportation issues. We all deal with roads. Some people, of course, were asking me about the price of fuel up there. We still deal with those issues on the part of those people every day.

Mr. Chair, at the same time I would like to wish the member all the best in her venture up there in the next couple of years as she represents her people up there. They are a strong people. She has some big issues up there.

The biggest one that I felt up there, besides the simple fact of the transportation issues, were probably first and foremost the *Apollo* has to go. Some of the coastal boats that they are using up there, obviously government recognizes the fact that they have to go. They are old. It seems like around the coast here in Newfoundland and Labrador we have the oldest boats now I think amongst anybody's fleet. The average age I think somewhere over the forties, between forty and fifty years old, which is absolutely

ridiculous. If the ferry replacement strategy had worked in the first place, we probably would not be talking about the boats today. That is the simple fact of the matter.

To hear government announce new boats yesterday – or at least one new boat anyway – for \$51 million was nice to hear. Unfortunate as it was, it had to be built outside the Province, according to what government says, but it was also a lost opportunity, Mr. Chair. It was a lost opportunity for the possibilities of a long-term workforce in the shipbuilding industry here in the Province. We know that we have other smaller yards around that possibly could have been doing other work.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

CHAIR: Order, please!

MR. MURPHY: I would say to the member that serves the Department of Transportation and Works that it would certainly be nice to be looking at the rest of those RFPs that came in. We know that it was a \$51 million bid, but we would like to see the other RFPs, too, to see what other opportunities were missed.

We could have gotten boats a little bit cheaper. We might have got the same kind of value for a little bit less money; we do not know. The chance is I do know if the minister will go ahead and allow us to have a look at the rest of the RFPs, make them available to the public so that we can have a look at them ourselves and see exactly what was offered by these other RFPs. There you go.

At the same time as that, what did we lose –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. MURPHY: What was that?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Chair, if he thinks that I am questioning his integrity, he would be grossly mistaken. I do not question anybody's integrity when it comes to that. I am asking him

if he would let us see the RFPs as a mere simple fact of the evidence of what they actually went through when it came to the selection process. I think that would only be fair, considering that the taxpayer is the one who is going to be footing the bill when it comes to the ferries.

So, Mr. Chair, what did we lose when it came to this? In my mind, there were a couple of things. The work is obviously not going to be done at home. So we lost a chance to have an anchor, if you will, in the shipbuilding industry here in the Province. We lost the possibility here of having an eligible workforce that would be staying right there on the Burin Peninsula, and at the same time we would have been able to keep people here.

We had the opportunity, as well, to possibly get into other aspects of work, for example, for the offshore. Rather than having a transient workforce, the workforce would have been able to come here to Newfoundland and Labrador. It would have been an opportunity here for growth. So that is all I say about that.

The simple fact is now that we know the one boat has been tendered out, I guess, in this particular case, will be built by a shipyard outside the Province, we have an opportunity as well here for the other six boats that government has put out the request for the drawings for.

Again, Mr. Chair, I have to ask a couple of questions with regard to the engineering, for example, that was said to be done for the new boat yesterday in sitting down and asking myself questions about it after.

Knud Hansen was the company that was enlisted to design the ferries that were going to be working on the South Coast of the Province and, at the same time, they had the contract for the new ferry announced for the Fogo run. When you sit down and you design a boat, I think that the engineering would already have been done or at least the space made available, the engineering part of it. That part of the engineering would be done, except for the power plant, for example, the type of engines that it would use, that sort of thing.

To me there is a little bit of a delay here – six months; they are saying that there is still some engineering work that has to be done. I think that the government can probably step up this work a little bit so that instead of having these boats delivered in September 2015, perhaps they can bring it in a little bit sooner than that because obviously it would be nice to have the new boats on there, for example, to serve the tourism industry in 2015 – in other words, before that summer.

I would ask government if they would be able to step up the work when it comes to that, and I think that most of the engineering work may be done, but again it is just a thought that came about.

Again, we had the simple fact that people have been looking for new ferry boats in this Province for a long, long time. We can go back to the Auditor General's report of 2000 when they talked about the age of the ferries that were there at present and what the Auditor General of the day thought about the ferry replacement strategy and where it had gone.

The Auditor General, at that particular point, remember, had said that there were no boats that should be servicing in the Newfoundland and Labrador ferry fleet for anything more than twenty to twenty-five years. Since 2003 - the boats that are right now in the present fleet are anywhere between forty and fifty years old. So we are actually running these boats now, as far as I am concerned, on borrowed time.

I think when you point back to what happened with the *Beaumont Hamel* and the accident down there, I think that was just an accident that was waiting to happen and it had to happen simply because of the age of the boat. When you go through the report, Mr. Chair, the report itself is pretty explanatory when it talks about what had happened there, the type of situation that government found itself in, even right down to the captain, for example, who found themselves in a situation when they came to the realization that the servicing was not happening. I think that government got overrun with the

servicing of the older boats and I think that was probably part of what had happened to it.

We had things like the voyage data recorders, for example, were not working on the *Beaumont Hamel*. We had other things that were wrong. For example, they were more pressed to be answerable to a PR campaign more so than they were to the safety of the vessel itself.

We had issues, for example, when it came to worker fatigue on the boats, too. The crews are absolutely overworked and at the same time trying to keep these boats on the go because they had to answer the call. We did not have a swing vessel. We were overloaded. So hopefully this sort of thing is not going to happen again. Hopefully Transport Canada is not going to have to answer the call again as well.

Finally, Mr. Chair, when it comes to this whole issue of paying for the by-election, again, I would just like to wish the member all the best. She has a lot of fine constituents up there. We met a lot of people when we were up there. I want to wish her all the best in her work. Hopefully government will address some of the concerns of the people up there. I had a great time up there in the district and at the same time we met a lot of people, of course. It was just great getting to know another area of the Province we did not have the opportunity to get to know before.

With that, Mr. Chair, I conclude my remarks. Thank you very much.

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Lake Melville.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RUSSELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It is certainly a pleasure to get up in the House today and speak to Bill 9 here. I am going to bring it back to Labrador a little more, but I would just like to make a comment to our member across the way from St. John's East. Of course, the government wants nothing more than to see vessels built here in the Province, but the

fact remains that the RFP process was a fair, open, and transparent one.

Unfortunately for that eighty-metre vessel in question, we just did not see any bids come in from Newfoundland. So that is unfortunate, but of course we have to be fiscally responsible, do what is best for the people, and make sure we get the vessel we need at the best price we possibly can.

With that, Mr. Chair, like I said before, it is an honour and a privilege to be in this House again. I am proud to get up here and say a few words. If I may, I would like to start by saying a few words about my activities, if you will, within the district over the last weekend.

I took off from Goose Bay, Mr. Chair, I went across our beautiful Trans-Labrador Highway, and I have to say, I did not need to put her in four-wheel drive. I had a little bit of snow coming down, but it was a beautiful drive, a little bit of sun peeking out over the hills here and there, but it was smooth. It was beautiful sailing. Of course, we still have a few kilometres left to do, one little patch. I have to say, reduce your speed and enjoy the drive. I had a great time.

The reason I did go across that road was to go visit the great people of Churchill Falls, who are most welcoming to me, great supporters of mine. We had an absolutely wonderful evening where I got to spend a bit of time with the firefighters at the firemen's ball, Mr. Chair, if you will.

We had a couple of presentations there. I would just like to say to the firefighters Tom Lake and Martin Drachler, twenty years of great service, I was happy to be part of the presentation of those medals; as well as a good friend of mine and a fellow who shows me some wonderful hospitality, Mr. Frank Noonan who received a thirty-year service award, Mr. Chair. That indeed was a pleasure to be there; we had a great evening. Again, I had a wonderful, smooth drive right back to Goose Bay, my hometown, through the district.

It speaks to the investment of this government in Labrador, Mr. Chair. Years and years ago they would say we would have never seen that paved; we are just about done now in terms of heading from Goose Bay out to Lab West and, of course, we are going to see that – I just have to say this one thing, Mr. Chair. When I was on that small section of the road that was unpaved, it occurred to me while I was driving there was a point in time when the entire process was that, but it shows progress, it shows where we are headed. It shows what we are going to do from going to Goose Bay to Lab West and now what we are going to do when we go south and end up getting down to Southern Labrador to the District of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

Moving on, we have had some great debate, especially around this bill here in the House, where people are getting up and they are talking about their districts. They are saying a few things about what is going on in Labrador. Specifically, I wanted to just go back a couple of days ago to Hansard and talk about some statements from the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair.

We have a responsibility in this House to get and to be factual when we talk. To quote Hansard, Mr. Chair, the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair talked about all the calls she was getting from the Innu people who are trying to get into Muskrat Falls and they are not getting jobs. She has the facts, we have the stats, and she can produce them. Well, I invite her to do just that.

She talks about the fact that the people in her district and her district as a whole are not receiving any benefits from Muskrat Falls. When, in fact, Labradorians and Labrador-based businesses are in line to receive up \$450 million of direct benefits from the project; and, as a whole, this project is going to generate \$1.9 billion for the Province, for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I can stand here and say without hesitation that the benefits are there; the jobs are there. We are just getting started. If you want to talk about employment, she talked about scenarios: How are the people in her district going to be able to

tolerate people coming back to the district, after the project, and saying how are we going to pay this \$50 an hour? That is a sign of prosperity. People are going over to Muskrat Falls. They are making a great wage.

If I had a district that had less than 100 people requiring Income Support, I would be pretty proud of that fact. I am just saying reach out to those contractors, reach out to Nalcor, reach out to people, meet them halfway and we will get people in there who are looking for that work right now. We are just starting the construction part of this project. We have only just begun, I will say to the hon. member across the way.

The next quote I would like to say is about something she made reference to in Muskrat Falls, was that we have learned from government that we have promised away – this is right from Hansard, Mr. Chair – we have promised away all of our export power. That is not the case at all. We are going to sell what we are not using.

We still have the ability, Mr. Chair, to bring back that 40 per cent of the power that we need, that we are not going to be using here on the Island portion of the Province for those mining operations. We are talking about IOC's expansion, Alderon's Kami Project, Tata Steel, LabMag. We have a forecast of between \$10 billion and \$15 billion right now. That is the outlook for Labrador and the mining investment there. So, I think to say that it is all dried up is a little inaccurate, Mr. Chair.

We also heard the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair get up here and talk about, okay, we are going to be giving away power to Nova Scotian ratepayers at four cents a kilowatt hour, and we are going to be expecting our own people to pay upwards of fifteen. Well, we have to be accurate. We have to speak to the facts when we are talking to the people out there in TV land and the people of the Province.

When she talks about giving away power at four cents a kilowatt hour to the ratepayers in Nova Scotia, well that just happens to be what we are probably going to be able to get for the power

when we sell it into Nova Scotia. That is a market rate. What they turn around and distribute that to the ratepayers at is another question all together. The fact that it was said in this House, the fact that it is in Hansard is indeed inaccurate, Mr. Chair, and can lead to misleading the people to believe that Muskrat Falls is not the great project that it is. So, I thought I would bring that up.

She talked about jobs and how our people are not getting those jobs. I will quote from Hansard again, Mr. Chair, the hon. Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair. Any jobs that are created, which I might add, the greatest majority of them are definitely outside of Labrador; yet, Mr. Chair, if you recall in the same debate that this was taken from, I stood up and said: approximately 76 per cent. So, 1,152 out of the 1,519 jobs, from our August numbers, were residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. The vast majority of jobs are going outside, according to the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, yet here we are with nearly 80 per cent of the active jobs belonging to residents of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Again, I only have to reiterate my main point of me getting up here today, Mr. Chair, which is to say be accurate when you are in representation of a district. Be accurate when you are talking about the benefits of this project to all of the people who are out there listening and all the people who are going to be reading the Hansard afterwards.

My next point, if you will – and I see I am running out of time. My next point would be about environmental concerns. We can understand that. We certainly care about that on this side of the House. She talked about the diesel generators on the North and South Coast of Labrador. That is something that in time we are going to deal with, it is as simple as that. Right now, we are looking at putting Muskrat Falls online as a means of displacing 1 million or so tons of pollutants into our atmosphere that comes out of Holyrood.

You have to be accurate in what you are talking about. You cannot jump on an environmental

bandwagon if you will, if you are not willing to talk about millions of tons of pollutants that are going to be taken out of the air by moving to clean, green hydro energy, Mr. Chair. It is just something in terms of being responsible.

I say to the member from across the way for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, Labradorians are indeed a strong people, and I thank the Member for St. John's East for saying that. I can appreciate the fire because I am a fiercely proud Labradorian as well, born and raised there. What I say is, I appreciate the fire when you get up and you start wanting to fight for your people, you want to represent them and put your best foot forward. You want the people at home to know too, that you are here for them and that their concerns are being brought forward to not only this Legislature but our government. I appreciate that.

Within that fierceness that we Labradorians have, we have to be responsible. As elected officials we have a responsibility to be accurate and state the facts. It is a matter of saying you want to convey the messaging that you are hearing in your district, but you also want to have to bring back the messaging from government which says there are real benefits of the Muskrat Falls Project, Mr. Chair. There are real jobs being created. We are just getting started.

This is a great project for this Province. We have to start saying you have to be accurate and you have to have some pride, I say to the member from across the way, in what we are doing in terms of a Province and what this government is doing for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. It is as simple as that.

With that, I would like to say thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. I enjoyed standing up and talking a little bit about the district, and talking about the great project that is the Lower Churchill Project and Muskrat Falls.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KIRBY: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

I cannot speak to the fierceness of the people of Labrador, but I have to say that having visited Labrador a number of times, it is a beautiful place. Much unlike the Island portion of the Province, in Labrador wherever I have gone I have always gotten the impression that, boy, everything is a lot bigger here. The sky seems bigger, the ponds and the lakes seem bigger, the land seems bigger, and a lot of things are bigger.

I would like to also say, Mr. Chair, I have found the people in Labrador to be very kind and generous people. I think that is how oftentimes people manage to survive in very difficult and challenging circumstances. Certainly, Labrador is a pretty rugged place and its original inhabitants had a lot of challenges.

MR. S. COLLINS: (Inaudible).

MR. KIRBY: Yes, I am reading out of my notebook, I say to the Member for Terra Nova.

MR. S. COLLINS: (Inaudible).

MR. KIRBY: Well, you will have to make that judgment, I say, of its quality when I am done.

I want to make reference, Mr. Chair, to a question I put on the Order Paper yesterday regarding the future of the Come By Chance oil refinery. It has been something that has been in the news recently. I know the hon. Member for Bellevue district is certainly concerned about that.

A lot of communities on the isthmus region of the Avalon Peninsula are impacted by the fortunes of the Come By Chance oil refinery. Many of us who represent districts from St. John's all the way out to, I would say Clarenville have constituents who are in some way either working at or know somebody who is working at the Come By Chance oil refinery or are commuting back and forth.

We have seen plants of various sorts close down in too many instances in our history. We have had a large number of fish plants close over the past ten or so years, and I will not name them all. Of course, we also know we have had two mills close, one in Stephenville and one in Grand Falls-Windsor, and it causes great upheaval. When plants, mills, and industry shut down, workers suffer, their families suffer, our communities suffer, and the Province as a whole certainly suffers.

One of the immediate things that happen is that people will relocate for work. Some go on the turnaround and they go back and forth to Alberta, Saskatchewan, places in the North of Canada, or outside of the country even. Some people go out all together, and many of them do not come back. Their talents, their skills and everything they have to offer Newfoundland and Labrador is lost to us, lost to our workforce, lost to our economy; and, in many cases, these people are highly skilled in their professions, trades and occupations and are not easily replaced, so it is a big blow that we take.

Families often move away with their children; they take their kids with them. The nature of communities that are left behind are such that oftentimes young families, families with young children, choose not to relocate to those communities because, of course, they have lost, in many cases, their major industry.

I am going into some detail here because I think we do not always consider the implications of closures of plants or mills, or refineries or industry on our communities. When people move away and they take their children with them, the implications are fewer children, so fewer children in our communities and lower school enrolments as a result. There are fewer children potentially in schools and, of course, with fewer children there is a lower need for teachers and there are fewer teaching jobs.

I know for fact, Mr. Chair, I know for certain there are quite a number of young teachers, licensed teachers, coming out of our university here and they are looking for work. Many of them are eager to move wherever they have to;

but if the population of the community goes down, the number of children goes down, and the number of teaching jobs goes down, their opportunities are lessened.

Of course, there is fewer school staff as a result, fewer jobs for educational professionals of a variety of sorts, fewer bus drivers, fewer custodians, fewer student assistants, I guess less of a need for maintenance staff and fewer administrative staff and people who do all manner of things at schools.

As, I guess, the population in schools dwindles there is an increase in the possibility that schools will close. Certainly, last year we saw a move to close some schools in the Eastern School District, and some did close. That is certainly the result of changing environmental conditions in our communities and changes in school population.

Of course, as school populations become smaller and smaller we also have the possibility of children being bused over greater distances to get to school. Just take the case of Swift Current in the district of the Member for Bellevue. In his constituency alone, there was quite an outcry about busing children a long distance to school. It causes other problems.

Then communities that lose industry are hit in a variety of other ways. For example, we have fewer people to volunteer for fire departments to keep our communities safe, fewer people to rely on to take on important leadership roles in communities, like the challenge of running for office for a municipal government or for local service districts. We need that. This is lessened when there are fewer people around and people to serve in other roles like putting themselves forward to organize recreation, coaching sports, or giving freely of their time in a variety of other ways.

With fewer people in rural communities and small communities, there are fewer small businesses. Small businesses, as we all know, are the backbone of our economy that leads to fewer services and fewer amenities. It is a vicious cycle because that does not attract

people to our communities. It is a downward cycle. It puts downward pressure on community populations and community infrastructure, whether that is social infrastructure, or economic infrastructure, or what have you.

Who is often left behind? Our seniors, the people who built Newfoundland and Labrador, paved our roads, built our schools, helped raise our children after they raised up their own, built this Province and built our communities.

With fewer people in our communities it means seniors have fewer family members around and fewer neighbours around to rely on for many things, from shovelling snow to helping out with housework, or home repairs, or just having a friendly face to check in from time and again to see if you are doing okay. That contributes to an environment where seniors are forced to leave their homes, homes that they built and homes that they paid for themselves. They are forced to leave earlier than they want and earlier than they should have to.

That adds pressure to our existing long-term care facilities and I will call them retirement living homes for seniors. It adds pressure to that community and social and health infrastructure in the Province as well. It creates a host of new problems.

It is important to consider all of the long-term impacts, is my point, when plants, mills, and industries close. We have to do everything that is reasonable that we can, every Member of the House of Assembly, to head that off because we want to build on our existing industries. We want to go in the other direction, to build industry, to build community, to build Newfoundland and Labrador, and to build rural Newfoundland and Labrador, Labrador, Avalon, urban, et cetera. That is what we have to do. That is the challenge in front of us.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR (Cross): The Chair recognizes the Member for Terra Nova.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. S. COLLINS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As someone said earlier, it is always nice to rise in this House and be able to speak to a lot of the great work that is going on in the Province and in my district as well; but I want to touch on a few things while I have an opportunity today.

In particular, I want to throw out congratulations to two colleagues of mine, who yesterday had huge announcements. The member for Fogo, Twillingate, Moreton's Harbour – I am not sure of the –

AN HON. MEMBER: The Isles of Notre Dame.

MR. S. COLLINS: The Isles of Notre Dame, as well as the Member for Conception Bay East – Bell Island; absolutely fantastic announcements.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. S. COLLINS: They can obviously speak better to those, but me myself I had a similar announcement a couple of years back when the Town of St. Brendan's, the Island of St. Brendan's, had their ferry service announcement, a brand new ferry, the *Grace Sparkes*, a beautiful \$27.5 million vessel. It absolutely changed the way of life on the island. It is easy for us to talk, those who live on the mainland – by mainland, I mean mainland of the Island – about ferry services and all of that good stuff, but the people of island, those are the folks you need to talk to and hear how it changes their everyday life.

I know when we were down in St. Brendan's, the then Minister of Transportation and Works, myself and him went down for the celebration, it was a fantastic day and I remember how proud the mayor was that day, saying this changes everything. We have gone through years of neglect, years where we only could wish we would have a new vessel, and now we finally have it.

So now I look at my colleagues in the House who have that same opportunity coming to them and I know it is just going to be just so well

received. I have seen every day in the House how these folks have fought for that service. I will talk a little bit more in particular of my colleague for Conception Bay East – Bell Island because I have had many chats with him and I know how passionate he is about Bell Island and the residents there and having the residents on the home – and he has fought for that for quite some time, as has the member for Fogo as well.

So it is great to see. It was a great announcement by government. It is a commitment in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, the very ruralist parts of Newfoundland and Labrador, I would argue. These are the highways these people depend on, so we, as the government, the onus is on us to make sure those linkages are provided and we are doing just that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. S. COLLINS: So it is a great day. It is a very great day for two members. It is a great day for all members in this Province and it is a great day for everyone in the Province, certainly.

I had a chat with someone on a telephone call yesterday and it was kind of ironic. I said it would be nice to bring this to the House to let other folks know. I am sure my colleagues have had similar chats. I was speaking to a gentleman yesterday from the district. I will not give the name or the town he is from. He is sixty-seven years old and he called me. Actually, he had questions on a passport application. He said: How do I go about this?

Anyway, through the jigs and reels we began talking, and it was quite interesting, his story, Mr. Chair. This is a man who is sixty-seven years old, he had a truck driver's licence all his life, and he has worked summer work, getting work where he could, and providing for his family. He always had a difficulty making ends meet. It was only a couple of years ago I sat down in his kitchen and we had a chat. He said: You know, Sandy, boy, I think I am going to have to leave and go to the mainland because I cannot seem to get the work that I need. It was

only a short time after that the gentleman secured work at Long Harbour.

Just to let you know how our decisions, how these business deals, and how these megaprojects change people's lives, and it is not just people's lives who are living in Long Harbour and that area; it is right across the Province and in Labrador as well. This gentleman said: Last year, I made over \$100,000, the most money I have ever made in my life. He said: There are things I have never been able to do with my wife, and we have been married now for thirty-five years; I was never able to provide her a honeymoon gift or even go on a honeymoon. He said: We are filling out our passports today and it is the first time in my life I am going to have a passport; we have never travelled outside the country because we have never had the means to do it.

He said: Since I have gotten this job and since this has opened up so many opportunities, I am able to do that; I am able to provide gifts to my grandkids, something I have never been able to do before; I have been able to pay off my vehicle. I was thinking these are the real-life examples of how these megaprojects, how this work, and how high wages are changing the landscape right across the Province.

It was only a couple of years ago having a job of \$100,000-plus was something that was reserved maybe for general practitioners, people in law, or whatever the case may be. More and more people in the trades, and I have neighbours home who are making huge amounts of money, are being able to provide for their families. They are being able to do all the things they want to do, and it is great that they are able to do that right here in Newfoundland and Labrador. Whether they have to commute for an hour or whether they have to move next door to where the megaprojects are going, there are so many people who are able to avail of it, and it is fantastic. It is changing our communities.

I know the member from across the way and a couple of members in particular have stood up and talked about how terrible this is. This is wonderful. It is prosperity. This is what makes

Newfoundland and Labrador such a wonderful place. There are so many opportunities here. There are so many things on the horizon.

This is not a flash in the bucket, and that is the other thing I am so proud of. I remember first when Hibernia came on stream there were a number of people who got jobs on Hibernia. You were on Hibernia and made the hugest kind of money, and then you were laid off. The project was done and then there was a lull. We have not seen that. We have seen it managed correctly so one after another after another, and I think we are going to see that well into the future.

It is great to be able to hear those real stories because we can stand up here all day saying how things are awful or how things are great, whatever the case may be, but when you hear those real-life stories about how it is affecting people's lives, a sixty-seven year old man who had struggles all of his life and now he is finally being able to achieve something. He is so very proud of it and it is great to hear. I could stand up and tell you a number of cases and examples of that, Mr. Chair, but it is great to hear.

I want to talk specifically now to my district for the last four minutes. Tomorrow in the Town of Glovertown it is a huge day. It is a joyous day. A couple of years ago, I guess it was two Budgets ago, there was a new health centre announced for Glovertown. Tomorrow we are having the official opening of that centre.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. S. COLLINS: I believe it is a \$2.3 million facility. It is absolutely beautiful. It replaces an older building; actually, it was an old school before it was the clinic. We had issues with mould in there and there was a bunch of issues with it. When government recognized that, when we saw it, there was a commitment put in place and, like I said, two years later we have a brand new facility opening tomorrow, \$2.3 million, 5,000 square feet, and a state-of-the-art building. It is somewhere where doctors, nurses, and patients can go. You can feel good about walking into the doors; it is not a rundown

clinic. It is a beautiful building and, like I said, state of the art. It is what people deserve and what they expect.

Again, it speaks volumes to this government and how they provide for rural Newfoundland and Labrador. We can talk about PET scanners, we can talk about investments here in St. John's, and that is all very good because of course much of what we invest in the Northeast Avalon benefits most people right across this Province; but it is what we are doing in rural communities. You do not have to look any further than Glovertown to see that investment.

I am looking forward. The minister is going to be out there tomorrow. We are going to be joined by councillors. We are going to be joined by the committee that helped to actually get that clinic on the go. There was a committee put in place probably three years ago, an action committee, and we are all going to gather tomorrow. It is going to be a fantastic day and it is celebrating something in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

I always love to get up and talk about my hometown, my district, and the twenty communities or so that surround it, but it is disheartening when you hear members across the way get up continually and talk about how bad things are in their districts. It makes me wonder. I called out a member last week on just that point.

As members, we stand here and we represent our people. I stand here very proud, I can guarantee you. I only have to listen to my colleague from Lake Melville and you can hear the pride when he stands up and talks about his district, his community, and the level of investment. I fail to understand how anybody can get up in this House and not have that same level of pride. There is so much good happening in Newfoundland and Labrador, so do not kid yourself and do not try to sell it to the public that it is not because you can go to any district in this great Province, all forty-eight, and you can find great things happening on the ground. You can find great things happening with people. To say

anything otherwise I think is foolhardy and it is not right, Mr. Chair.

As I said, it was great to be able to stand here today and talk about some great things that are going on in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, whether you are talking about the ferry service in Fogo, whether you are talking about the ferry service in St. Brendan's, whether you are talking about a new clinic, or whether you are talking about the sixty-seven-year-old gentleman who is finally being able to find his way in life and provide for his family in a manner that he always wanted to. There are great things happening. I appreciate anybody getting up and talking, but let's try to be factual and let's certainly try to keep rhetoric to a minimal level because there are great things happening here.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. S. COLLINS: I hear the member across the way from Burgeo – La Poile. I hope he gets to his feet today and talks about the huge contract that was recently awarded in his district because I know it was a huge announcement. It is going to lead to many jobs.

I look forward to hearing those details because, Mr. Chair, it is great to hear. You have stuff happening, right at the very end of the Province, you have stuff happening here on the Northeast Avalon, and you have great things happening in Labrador.

With that, Mr. Chair, I will take my seat, but thank you for the opportunity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the hon. the Member for Burgeo – La Poile.

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

I am happy to stand here and speak to Bill 9. It is certainly good to hear my friend from the great District of Terra Nova get up. It is always good for a chuckle, especially when he gets towards the end of it and talks about rhetoric and

whatnot because, again, it brings a smile to my face.

I will recognize the fact that we do have great news in my district, but I would ask that the member not confuse my pride in my district and this Province with the fact that there are realistic issues facing people in this Province that it is our job to bring up and address. We have good things going on, but there are issues in this Province. They need to be addressed and it is my job to address them. I am going to bring it up every single time I get an opportunity.

We do have good things going on in my district, as there are in many districts.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. A. PARSONS: Again, thank God for a lot of the private industries that are going to start working, hopefully, with the people in my district. I look forward to a positive relationship with government if we need help. I hope they will be ready to deliver on that when asked.

I am going to move on to something that is certainly near and dear to my heart, and something I spoke about earlier today in Question Period. That is the issue of diabetes in this Province. I had the opportunity today on World Diabetes Day to ask two questions in this House. I notice in New Brunswick actually today it was recognized in the Legislature; they recognized World Diabetes Day. It was not recognized in our Legislature today, which was unfortunate. I know a proclamation was brought.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. A. PARSONS: The Minister of Health says she recognized it, but it was only after I asked the question in the first place.

What I want to do is talk about the issue of diabetes in this Province. Quite simply, it is an epidemic that we are facing right now. It is a serious issue. I hope nobody thinks that I am saying the government side is not taking it serious. I acknowledge that you are taking it

seriously. When you look at some of the statistics and some of the facts here, it is staggering. I want to get them out; I want to get them on the record.

We talk about the fact that we do have a huge health budget in this Province. Nobody doubts – obviously, you cannot doubt the rising expenditures and health costs that this government has invested in health care. That is not my issue. The problem is when you talk to many members in the health care system they recognize that we are soon at that ceiling. How do we continue to sustain that investment? It is going to be hard.

We just came off a very difficult Budget, and to maintain that level of investment when we have declining revenues or anything else – what we may need to do is look at some of the things that are going on. I just want to talk about diabetes for a second.

We have the highest prevalence of diabetes in Canada. We have the highest right here. It is not a record we should be happy about or proud about; 9.3 per cent of our population, 47,000 people are affected by it. It is expected to increase to just about 15 per cent by 2020. We are going to be just under one-fifth of our population affected by this.

I am just going to go through some facts here and I have to look at it to make sure I get it accurate. If anybody wants to have my information after, I would be happy to share. About 25 per cent of people with diabetes will die from a heart-related event. About 25 per cent of our population is pre-diabetic, the highest rate in Canada.

By 2020, it is expected that 32 per cent of our population will have diabetes or pre-diabetes. Why do I bring that up? I bring that up because we have to start looking at the cost.

Unfortunately, today I had a question – I only got a quick question in, I did not get to put the preamble in. Complications from diabetes account for 80 per cent of the \$255 million in diabetes costs every year. That is a staggering, staggering number.

One of the things I want to bring up is that the minister, in her response, and I will note - actually, I will try to come back. I have so much here that I am trying to stay on track. The minister stood up and spoke about the increase in dialysis. Do you know what? There has been an increase in dialysis.

I know through the work of members of our community that we have dialysis, but if you actually speak to people involved, that is not where we need to be. Dialysis is when you are doing a bad job of treating it, a bad job of preventing it, and a bad job of learning about it, of exercising wellness. We do a good job of sick care; we are not doing a good job of keeping people out of hospitals.

We need to do more with wellness; we need to do more with education. Which is why I asked the question today, why would we let go people when we talk about health promotion and wellness in our Province? Why would we get rid of those people when those people are working to educate our population to make sure we do not go down that road where the diabetes sets in, we get the health-related complications like heart attack, and they end up in our hospitals?

I will give you one example, just about costs. I had a gentleman in my district, a very good friend of mine. He was not feeling well one day, got sick, could not hold his food down, and spent the entire next day sick. He ended up in hospital. I was told he had a heart attack, a very serious one. Obviously, shocking, shocking news.

I can say this because he is a good friend of mine, and I think it is a cautionary story for all of us. He finds out when he is there that he is diabetic; then he finds out. He spends the entire week - and this is a person in his forties, in fairly good health, very active, has a job, a labour-type job. It is not a sedentary-type job like me. This is a fellow who works hard every day, physical labour, as opposed to sitting here in the chair and standing in the House.

AN HON. MEMBER: He works every day, you say?

MR. A. PARSONS: Yes, he actually works every day, as opposed to some members.

Anyway, he ends up in hospital for a week. He ends up getting airlifted to St. John's, spends time down here, all from a heart attack that was caused by diabetes. If he had known he was diabetic, if he had been treated for it, we would have avoided that cost. Now, that is just one isolated episode. What if we expand that? The cost on our system is humungous.

What we need to do is we need to do more to educate people. We need to do more to inform people. It has been known, and you look at the different studies, the fact is we do have some unhealthy eating habits in this Province. It has been there, we all know that. We have high obesity levels in this Province. We need to do more to address that.

We cannot keep talking about setting up diabetes centres and dialysis and what the investment was if it is not solving the problem. We need to solve the problem by getting back to the root, which is identifying it and informing people, and educating people and letting them work towards staving off this or avoiding it all together, not making these decisions that lead to them ending up in a hospital because they have diabetes that caused a heart attack.

Now, I have a nice chart here, Mr. Chair. A very nice chart, colour coded. When you look at this chart - I am going to show it to the camera, so the camera can see it. When you look at this chart it is all different provinces and it talks about diabetes. It talks about prevalence, increase, the total cost, et cetera.

The bad news is that red means you are in the bottom three. The good news is that green means you are in the top. You look at Newfoundland and Labrador, we are in the bottom three of most of it when it comes to prevalence, prevalence increase, and pre-diabetes prevalence, but do you know what? We are in green. Do you know where we are in

green? We are in green in total cost increase. We are in green when it comes to the amount of money we are spending, but obviously not getting absolutely any results whatsoever.

We need to change up the game plan. We need to change what we are doing. I know the members on the opposite side are not disagreeing with me. I think everybody knows this is a serious issue.

I will come back to something else. It is like *Groundhog Day* sometimes. I asked questions in December, 2012 of the minister, talking about the insulin pump program. I talked about the fact that when people hit the age of twenty-five, they are scared, they are worried, because a lot of them cannot get coverage. What are they going to do?

They have had this pump system, which is miraculous, which is amazing for their lifestyle and quality of life. I know the government has done good things to invest in this. I acknowledge it, I applaud it, but to cut it off at twenty-five means some people have to go back to a substandard way of living after being used to this system that is saving money and saving lives.

I asked about, why are we going to deny people the same standard? Again, it came down to the money we are investing in glucose strip testing. Actually, I have to look at the second page here. The second page of the question was, I asked about: When are you going to cover this off? It came back and said it is on the top of our radar – it is on the top of our radar.

Fast-forward to November, 2013. I stand in this House today and my second question, where I only got a quick question in. I asked: Is the Province going to lift the age restriction and fund insulin pumps for people of all ages with type 1 diabetes? The answer I received was: We have invested \$225 million in dialysis. So, A, no, they are not going to do it, and no, they have not really looked at it in a year; and, B, we are talking about dialysis. Again, it is not where we need to be. We need to go back to that.

Unfortunately, my time is up. I am sure somebody is going to have a say. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this important issue.

Thank you.

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the hon. the Member for Mount Pearl South.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Certainly it is a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to speak once again in the House of Assembly. Mr. Chair, I just want to start off by saying that as my colleague here from Terra Nova has said, there are an awful lot of positive things happening here in Newfoundland and Labrador, without a doubt. Sometimes when you listen to the members across the way it does not give that impression.

Now, I am going to say, in fairness, the Opposition has a role to play; they have an important role to play. There is no doubt when I hear a member stand up and he points out or she points out what he or she may see as a gap in the system, whether that be a gap in health care, whether that be a gap in education, whether that be a gap in housing, I appreciate that. I think we all realize, Mr. Chair, that as a government we have a large budget to manage, but in managing that budget it is no different than managing a budget for your own home. There is so much money coming in and there is so much expenses going out. There are choices that have to be made.

As a government it is our role, quite frankly, to take those revenues that are coming in and make the decisions as to where those monies are going to be expended to the benefit of the people, because it is the people's money.

In doing that we have to recognize that as a government we have many responsibilities. We have responsibilities for health care. We have responsibilities for education. We have responsibilities for housing. We have responsibilities to municipalities. We have

responsibilities for roads and infrastructure. We have responsibilities for post-secondary. We have responsibilities for tourism. We have to make sure that we have money to invest in business and innovation and so on, so we can grow our economy.

We have to be mindful of the fact that if we do not have competitive tax regimes, we are not going to have businesses coming to the Province to invest. We are not going to have businesses that are going to expand. We have to be mindful of the fact that the people who we serve can only afford a certain level of taxation. We have to be mindful of all those things.

Again, while I do appreciate the Opposition and the role they have to play to point out deficiencies, where they see them, I think it is also important to say that it is very, very easy to sit over on the other side of the House and simply point out all the things that government are doing wrong, to point out all the choices that government are making, and say you should have chosen this instead of that. You should put more money here, or you should put more money there, and so on. It is very easy to sit back and just simply criticize when you do not have to make those choices and you are not responsible for those choices.

I have to say in fairness to the member who was just up, the Member for Burgeo – La Poile, that most of the time when he gets up – and I listen quite intently to him when he does – he has points to make and he is doing his job. I appreciate that, I really do, but sometimes - there are many times - when you see people over there and they are putting a spin on things and they are actually putting out information that is not factual.

I can speak to the fact that the Third Party, by way of example, I cannot remember a time that I have stood in this House of Assembly, or I have sat in the House of Assembly, listened to a Ministerial Statement and it was a positive Ministerial Statement – and in credit to the Official Opposition, many times if it is a good thing, they will say this is a good announcement and we support it; sometimes they might

criticize a certain part of it; sometimes they might play a little bit of politics.

I look at the Member for St. John's Centre. I have never seen her stand up not once on a Ministerial Statement – she will always start off with this is good but, then comes the big but, and then she goes on this big tirade against everything we are doing wrong. Then, she will come out with her big wish list of all the money we do not have to spend on everything.

It is important for the public when they are watching the House of Assembly to bear that in mind. It is not all doom and gloom. There actually are a lot of good things happening here in Newfoundland and Labrador. There really, truly, are.

I would also say to the Opposition, to all of the Opposition Parties, because I never saw this either from any of them, quite frankly: It is easy to stand up and poke holes in everything no matter what it is; anybody can do it, can sit down and criticize, find something wrong with everything and say I would have done it this way. You tell me – which I do not see from the Opposition – tell the people of Newfoundland and Labrador what you would do differently. We do not see that. If you want to be an alternative to the government, be an alternative. Tell us what you would do differently.

I listened to the questioning on Muskrat Falls, and the commentary on Muskrat Falls, and it is the same old questions over and over again. They get answered over and over again, and we are criticized over and over again; yet, not at one point can anybody on the other side stand up and tell us what they would do differently.

The only time I heard an alternate solution at all, the only alternate solution, did come from the NDP, in fairness

AN HON. MEMBER: Former.

MR. LANE: – or former member, but nonetheless came from the NDP at the time, and their solution was to burn shrimp shells at Holyrood to replace Muskrat Falls. That was the

only alternative, and I am not just saying that in jest. It actually happened; it is in Hansard.

I am not trying to make light of it; at least it was an alternative. It might not have been a good alternative. Some people might have thought it was way out in left field, and I emphasize left field. Mr. Chair, at least it was some alternative. Other than that, I have heard no alternative from across the other side, none whatsoever.

AN HON. MEMBER: Wood pellets.

MR. LANE: I think he mentioned wood pellets, too. Thank you.

Mr. Chair, I think it is important to point that out. There are a lot of positive things happening in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Member for Terra Nova highlighted a number of things that are happening positive in his district. Everybody on all sides of this House, if they truly wanted to be honest with themselves and the people in terms of what is going on around them, I think everybody could stand up and they could point out a lot of positive things that are happening in their district. They cannot deny it. The member over there for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair – and she is new and welcome, good to see you. It is all good.

AN HON. MEMBER: What a member.

MR. LANE: What a member, he says. That will be yet to be determined, but I am sure she is. Even in her district I believe we just built a brand new school, didn't we, or we are building one?

AN HON. MEMBER: Two.

MR. LANE: Two, Charlottetown and some other place. We have seen all the roadwork that has been done there. Throughout all parts of Newfoundland and Labrador – and I will emphasize Newfoundland and Labrador, one Province. It is very important to point out we are all one Province.

Throughout any district in this Province, nobody can deny that over the last number of years there

has been tremendous investment in all those districts. Whether it be water and sewer, whether it be roadwork, whether it be health care, whether it be education, whatever it might be there are all kinds of investments that have taken place. Nobody can honestly stand up and deny that.

Can anybody say you could have done more? I have this, but I need that. You cured this issue, but I have another issue. Can everybody say that every single road in Newfoundland and Labrador, every one is in perfect condition? Of course, they cannot because we live in the real world. We try to operate from the real world on this side of the House that we only have so much money coming in. We have to prioritize our spending. We have to distribute it throughout the Province. We cannot do everything at the one time.

AN HON. MEMBER: Muskrat Falls.

MR. LANE: The member, I think, just said Muskrat Falls. Yes, absolutely, that is a priority for this Province. One of the other things we have to do as a government, we have to be concerned about our future, and that is what Muskrat Falls is about. Muskrat Falls is about the future, and that is important, too.

Anyway, Mr. Chair, unfortunately I am running out of time. I could stay here for about an hour talking about all the good things. I hope I am going to get an opportunity to do it again, but for now I will take my seat.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes the Member for The Straits – White Bay North.

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the opportunity to speak to Bill 9.

I will echo the sentiment of the Member for Mount Pearl South, that certainly in my district I have seen some very positive investments being made by this government when it comes to a

new school in St. Anthony and a Polar Centre. I have seen the former Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador do the right thing and have the Englee fish plant order issued so that we could remediate that environmental hazard. That has been a great thing for that community, to see that piece of infrastructure that became a safety hazard removed.

We are seeing a health centre ready to open as well in the Straits region, at the Strait of Belle Isle Health Centre. Good things are happening in rural communities, absolutely, but not everything is rosy. You could see that sometimes in the District of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair. I spent some time there in the by-election. I knocked on a number of doors and spoke to people, but one thing I did see in the Labrador Straits portion of that district was a very strong, independent business community.

Having independent business and having a strong business community is vital to growing a rural economy. That is one thing we really need to press for. In my district, we have seen with some things in investment, when we look at our main industry of the fishery, of forestry, we have seen how small business has been impacted quite significantly in the Roddickton, Bide Arm area.

Government made an announcement quite some time ago, I believe it was in 2008, that there would be a pellet plant, a sawmill, and a kiln; an integrated model for the Roddickton area that would sustain the forest industry on the Great Northern Peninsula, that would sustain hundreds of jobs, that would be good for the entire region. Since that time, the economy has faced challenges. We have seen a sawmill that has been rebuilt, we have seen a kiln. We have seen a pellet plant that has been established, but it is not functional.

At this point, we have seen the business itself being stalled, but it has opportunity. It has opportunity to really sustain the industry and the region of the Great Northern Peninsula there in the Roddickton area, because without a forest industry, without it and with the slowdown, we see the impact it has had on the region as a

whole. You have fewer employees; you have less people earning money. It has the trickle down impact.

Like my fellow Member for St. John's North, he talked about the impact of a closure. We have seen businesses close in Roddickton and we have seen a lot of families have to go away. We have seen an increase in people needing hours to qualify for Employment Insurance in that region, and that is very challenging.

I would like to correct the record on this matter that was brought forward to the House by the Leader of the Official Opposition when it comes to this HST piece, because I stood on the Public Accounts Committee and that matter was discussed and questioned about the HST rebate of this \$1 million. Now the Forest Industry Diversification Program, which was a one-time program, had funds available to it. In the program itself, the guidelines did not say that when funds were being remitted back to a company it had to exclude HST.

Now with the Auditor General, and the good work the Auditor General does, and looking at compliance and best practices, stated that HST should not be something you are remitting because there is an opportunity through the CRA to get those funds back. What the Auditor General did, through the Department of Natural Resources, Forestry and Agrifoods Agency, they made a request to the company.

The company then supplied well in excess of over \$1 million of extra expenditures showing they had still spent the money and would have been reimbursed. There is no extra double billing or an extra million dollars because no matter what was being expended, the company would have had the opportunity to remit and get back their HST. So, ultimately, there is no double billing.

Could we look at best practices? Based on this and what the Auditor General said, maybe in future programs, like Growing Forward 2 and if there is another forestry program, that HST would be looked at as being exempt. That we will not in the future as a government provide

that HST, but this company has well spent the money and invested it into business, and there are challenges.

There are challenges for all people on the Great Northern Peninsula that stem from this and what it means to the economy. Is there a solution? Sure there is. There is an opportunity to look at pellets and look at shipping them, whether it is in a local or an international market. Wood pellets are in demand.

I think it was very innovative of the Premier and the former Member for The Straits – White Bay North to look at making such an investment because this is a great opportunity when it comes to looking at it. I do believe we may end up seeing other pellet plants established with our vast timbre and fibre resources in Newfoundland and Labrador that create long-term sustainable forestry jobs.

We could be looking at other things when it comes to cogeneration, as I said in the past, combined heat and power. I know Corner Brook Pulp and Paper and Kruger have looked at alternatives. They are studying research and ways to find efficiency. There are mechanisms in which we can use our natural resources.

Shrimp shells are not best used for burning when it comes to creating heat, but they can be used in biomass to create energy to fuel small greenhouses or the proteins from them as we have seen in a government announcement. There is \$100,000 today going out to a company where they are going to be looking at getting value added from the shrimp shells themselves.

We have to be looking at our natural resources. We have to get best value for them. We cannot just throw them at the dump when they could be invested and create something. We have to make sure that in Newfoundland and Labrador, in a Province that has rich natural resources, that we are not just giving things away and that we are looking at ensuring we can create employment at home, that we can sustain our rural economies.

If not, these rural economies will not be able to survive because they do need an economy. We cannot survive just on a commuter-based economy. That is primarily where we are headed if we do not look at creating industry, if we do not look at the overall services that are needed in communities. If we let some of the challenges and obstacles get in the way of saying we can do this, then I think this government really is in the wrong business if they are going to let a community, a town that has been thriving and built on the lumbering industry, like Roddickton, Bide Arm and region, just die because it is not willing and unable to find a solution and work with the stakeholders.

This needs to be solved. It has gone on long enough. There are solutions. There is a mechanism of which we can really ensure that the Great Northern Peninsula is at a point where it is available to be able to better utilize its own resources. I think this government has a willingness and an interest, as it has stated. The department officials when we were in the Public Accounts stated that it is our goal. They believe in having a fully functional pellet plant operation. The forest industry is one that is integrated. If we do not have a fully integrated industry, then we cannot seek other opportunities that can come from them.

It is the same thing if we look at the fishery. If we keep doing things the same way all the time and we are not willing to get into new industries or get into other developments of how we use the resource, like using shrimp shells, to actually create a value-added product, then we are not moving forward as an economy; we are not being the innovators. The Premier herself had noted today that we are doing an innovation campaign; we are promoting the innovative businesses that we have in Newfoundland and Labrador.

We have to allow businesses to be innovative, and we have to grow. We have to have that research capacity; it has to be incubated in rural economies. We have an immense opportunity for the Arctic when it comes to looking at the ports that exist in St. Anthony, the international shipping. We really have potential in my district

on the Great Northern Peninsula to truly be successful.

It is the will of government; they have the choice, the decision to make. If they wanted to move forward and be successful, I am certainly there to support that initiative. I only hope that for the people who live there that we are going to see an industry that is going to be sustained. Right now it is currently not, and places are at great risk of where the future goes for that region of the Great Northern Peninsula East.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just listening to the Member for The Straits – White Bay North, he sort of sounds like a Progressive Conservative; I know he is sitting as an Independent. There are some true words in what he is saying for sure. He is optimistic. He is talking about opportunities. He is talking about some challenges in his district, but, Mr. Chair, certainly he is talking the language that I like to hear in this House of Assembly.

Mr. Chair, there are a couple of reasons I am on my feet here now for the next nine minutes or so. I would like to talk a little bit about an exciting thing that is happening in my district – something that we have waited for, for a very long time. Before I get into that, I will just give a little preamble around it.

Budget 2013: A Sound Plan, A Secure Future – almost \$102 million was allocated for new and ongoing school infrastructure projects. My District of St. John's West received some of the monies, and after many years of waiting for development of our West End High School, we have now arrived to a place where construction has started; people in the district are very excited. It is certainly a good news story for parents, for families, for teachers.

For the last ten years in the District of St. John's West – and other districts as well, I believe there are students and people from St. John's Centre as well, St. John's South, certainly Kilbride, and my District of St. John's West were being bused into the centre of the city into a couple of high schools that have outlived their usefulness, Mr. Chair.

The plans have been in the works for many years for this high school. We wanted to make sure we did it right. We took our time, we planned it, and we planned it well. Now we have a state-of-the-art piece of infrastructure that is going to be constructed on the site of Topsail Road right across from the Village Mall.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, we are very excited about it. There is good news happening there.

There were consultations that happened prior to that, Mr. Chair. The former Eastern School District presented a plan to government to address issues of aging infrastructure. That was all part of it. That was the result; the new high school in the west end was decided at that point.

The school is designed for about 860 students, Mr. Chair. It will have more than thirty classrooms, two challenging needs suites, four science labs, two music suites, two art rooms, two applied economic rooms, a large gym with hardwood floors, a fitness centre, a multi-purpose room, lunchroom, commercial kitchen, learning resource centre, and an infant daycare for children of students and more. It is going to be a state-of-the-art school with all the amenities. It carries forward for the next thirty to forty years.

The site preparation and services work was completed by Weir's Construction at a tune of about \$4 million. Recently, Marco Services of St. John's was awarded the \$37.8 million contract to actually build the school. The groundbreaking ceremony happened just in September, Mr. Chair. I was there for that and very excited to be there.

Making sure this project went ahead and went ahead on time, there were a lot of people involved. Certainly the former member for the district, Sheila Osborne, I would like to mention her name. She played a key role in that, Mr. Chair, as well as many other people in the community within school districts, school associations, parents, and teachers. I am very pleased to see this moving forward. We are hoping, Mr. Chair, that this will be open in late 2014, early 2015 and that is the plan right now.

Mr. Chair, as you are aware I have just recently been appointed Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRUMMELL: I am delighted to be sitting in Cabinet and delighted to be here today talking in my new role as Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador. I am getting heckling from both sides of the House here now, Mr. Chair, which is always exciting.

I just want to deliver a few messages about what is going on in Service Newfoundland and Labrador. When I came from working with Advanced Education and Skills as Parliamentary Secretary, I had a wonderful experience there for a full year. I learned a lot about how government operates and works. I understand how departments work internally and their structures, and I did know a lot about Service Newfoundland and Labrador, I have to be honest with you, Mr. Chair.

Certainly, the learning curve for the last four weeks, moving forward, I have certainly learned a lot and getting a better understanding of what the public servants do in our department and the good work they provide to the people of this Province.

The department provides services to protect the public in occupational health and safety of employees in Newfoundland and Labrador. There are many facets to that, Mr. Chair, which I will not get into detail right now. We also safeguard consumer interests; provide a wide array of services to the general public.

The department was founded on the concept of consolidating as much as possible with licensing, permitting, inspection and regulation within government, and providing a single window of access for the public in these areas. We are basically trying to create a one-stop shopping experience, cutting through red tape, to make it more accessible for businesses, for citizens of the Province. We have done a very good job over the last number of years of consolidating these services, making it easier and accessible for people to get access to these services.

The department provides a service delivery to the public through a network of regional offices and other channels, such as teleservice and e-government.

Mr. Chair, as well my responsibilities lie with OCIO, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, a very large department, about 400 people there. The government procurement agency, which does all of the purchasing of the goods and services required by government entities, there are a number of employees who work there but we are responsible for millions and billions, literally in the billions of dollars range of purchases.

Also, the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission comes under my jurisdiction as well and my responsibilities, Mr. Chair.

One of the areas that I would like to just focus on, something exciting that has happened this year, and I think the Member for Terra Nova probably experienced it this year, being a new father, and one of the things that our department is certainly proud of. It is a new service that our department provides and it is called Bundled Birth Services.

Mr. Chair, when I had three children when we had to go looking for accreditations for our kids and certificates, we had to go through numerous processes to get the forms filled out and get MCP cards filled out and your birth certificates. Right now, Mr. Chair, the Bundled Birth Services bundles together for new parents all the

programs and benefits which are entitled to the new born children under one roof, under one form.

The package is given out to new parents while they are still at the hospital. When I spoke to the Member for Terra Nova, he said he knew very little about it because his wife handled that piece of the business, and usually that happens in these circumstances, Mr. Chair, but I know that certainly partners are involved in all aspects of that.

It includes a revised registration form, along with an information pamphlet and what is included in the kit. The revised registration form will give parents the option to register for MCP and Social Insurance Numbers, as well as provincial and federal child benefits, thereby reducing red tape and unnecessary duplication of forms. When you are having a new addition to the family, when you are in the hospital and you are trying to get yourselves organized, this simplifies the process. It is just another way that government has identified and addressed needs of our population.

So the process is, again, simplified and stress free. Once the form is completed, new parents can drop it off at their local government service centre or mail it in a prepaid envelope included in the package. This form is effective as of January 1, 2013. So, Mr. Chair, we are continuing to strive to make sure the public are getting access to services on a timely basis, and we are going to continue to change the way we do business in order to address the way life is changing today for everybody, certainly in the new technological age.

Just another thing here, Mr. Chair, I would like to address in the last minute I have. Service NL is pleased to offer Newfoundlanders and Labradorians a new and convenient online application service for birth, marriage, or death certificates. Customers can apply and pay for these certificates without having to visit one of our offices or pay for an application in the mail. Again, it is easily accessible on our Web site. It saves waste on paper, and people are guided step by step through an online process. It is very

easy, very friendly, and very easy to use for everybody involved. It accepts all kinds of different payment systems, and again, another good program that we are putting out there.

One here, Mr. Chair, I would like to talk about is certainly the seniors discount program. My father, who is eighty-three years old, who is driving, he is very healthy, he still hunts, and he still fishes. In our Budget this year we have made a decision to provide seniors aged sixty-five and over with a 35 per cent reduction on drivers' licences, vehicle registration fees, as well as other fees.

MR. MCGRATH: Permits.

MR. CRUMMELL: Permits as well, Mr. Chair.

So this is just a little bit of a taste of what our department does. I will be certainly getting into it more in the coming days. I look forward to standing on my feet in the House and talking about the good work that our people do in our department, providing services and programs to the people of the Province.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MS ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It was very interesting to hear the Member for Humber East speak about his grandfather and his father. This week has been very interesting, and last weekend, because there were so many activities at many of our Legions across the Province, activities where we stopped, we remembered, and we honoured our veterans.

This year also is the sixtieth anniversary of the Korean War veterans. My father actually served in Korea. The story I find interesting is that in 1949, when my father was sixteen years old, he was living in downtown St. John's, and it was just him and his mom. They had very, very little. They were quite challenged financially.

Well, he was sixteen years old in 1949 when Canada decided to join Newfoundland. He said he was seventeen and he was a group of the first Newfoundland men to join the Canadian Armed Forces as a Canadian.

When I was at the Legion in my district, Mr. Chair, one of the veterans came up to me and he had heard that story. He said: What was your father's number? I said: My father's number was SN1007, which meant he was the seventh man from Newfoundland and Labrador to actually join the Canadian Army after, again, Canada joined Newfoundland. I found that very interesting because I did not know that his number in fact indicated the number he was in terms of the men who had actually joined the Canadian Army at that time, because they were all men at that time.

I was very interested in hearing some of the members across the floor saying we have to deal with reality – we have to deal with reality. I would like to say, Mr. Chair, that in fact when I look at the people in my District of St. John's Centre and when I have met people all across the Province, I think people are dealing in reality. Some of the people are dealing with the harsh reality and the challenges they face in their lives. It is an interesting picture particularly when you see that we are in such an incredible time of prosperity.

So I would like to talk a little bit about that, Mr. Chair, and I would like to link it, in fact, to the Population Growth Strategy. One of the members again today said in the House, and I believe it was the Member for Humber East, that our challenge is we have an aging population and a declining population growth. There has been some very interesting research that has been done in the past ten years about what attracts people to communities. What attracts migrant workers? What attracts families to communities? What are the things they value most?

They value social programs. When I use the term social program, Mr. Chair, I use that in a very broad sense. Our social programs include transportation. They include our infrastructure.

They include policing. They include government. They include the educational system. They include things like our health care system and child care. Those are the things that I think we need to be looking at in terms of a population growth strategy. What we need to look at is how do we, A, encourage people to have more babies; B, how do we encourage people to move here; and C, how do we encourage people to stay?

What I have been hearing from a lot of young working families here in the Province is that they cannot afford to have babies. Maybe they will have one child and they say they cannot afford another child. It is not because of the cost of baby food; it is not because of the cost of diapers. It is because of the great cost of child care, and it is because of the great cost of housing. We all know that. We all know that in our own families. We all know that in our own communities because we see young working families struggling.

Yes, maybe they are buying a new house, but then if they have a child who is under school age, it means they are paying anywhere from \$800 to \$1,000 a month for child care. For most young working families when they have their mortgage, probably a student loan, and then child care costs, it is not sustainable. They are not able to sustain that all.

What we see in conjunction with that is a rising number of people who are living on credit cards. Young working families are working really hard, they have their education, and they did all the right things. There is a study that came out just recently this past month that said across Canada there is a problem as well. On the average for every \$1 that a Canadian earns, they are in fact spending \$1.46. That is not sustainable. That is not tenable.

We hear about the young working families who live here who feel they cannot afford to have more than one child. Then we hear about the young working families who are from Newfoundland and Labrador and who may be away working who say they cannot afford to come back home. They want to come back

home, but they cannot afford to come back home because of the exorbitant cost of housing and because of the exorbitant cost of child care.

I would think that in this time of prosperity when members across the House here talk about you have to deal in reality, well, this is the reality of the situation of many young working families. This is what they are dealing with.

I would like to say that the government, in fact, is not dealing with the reality. They are not dealing with the reality of people's lives in terms of what young working families need for child care. Let's look at the reality of a young working family now who has a child in kindergarten, half a day per day. If it is a single parent family or if there is two parents in the family, that means that somebody has to somehow scramble, A, to get that child to school for their half day in the first place; then, secondly, they have to find child care for a half day for that child; and they have to get that child from school to the place of child care.

That is the reality. Those are the realities that our people are living with, and those are the realities that this government has to work with. These are the realities that we are all struggling with, that many young working families are struggling with.

A Population Growth Strategy that ignores the realities of young working families is destined to fail. Any public Population Growth Strategy that is not dealing with this very serious issue of housing, the very serious and costly issue of child care, is not a Population Growth Strategy that is based in reality. Our programs have to be based in reality. Our programs should be responding to the real issues of the lives of our young working families.

Aside from the issue of child care and half-day kindergarten, we have the issue of many families trying to take care of their aging parents. That is a problem as well. How many people do we know of who are concerned about how can they work and how can they also take care of their aging families?

This government has made a few promises, and they have made a few promises that were based in reality but they are not real promises because they have not happened. They have made promises about looking at a home ownership assistance program. That would be an incredibly positive and effective pillar in a Population Growth Strategy, helping young families establish themselves by helping them buy their first home. It is not money that you give away. There are ways to help families so that they can buy homes. They are still paying for them, but it is possible for them so that they can start to build up family equity and family wealth.

Then there was a promise of a paid family caregiver program. That was a real promise, but we have not seen it. I do not know if we are going to see it. It was promised over a half a year ago that it was going to start, and here we are almost near the end of the fiscal year and we have not seen hide nor hair of it. Where is the reality of that? We know that has to be seeded in a complete home care program that is publicly funded and seeded in our health care services as part of our health care program – publicly funded and administered, if it was going to be working, because that way it protects the senior and it protects the home care worker.

Mr. Chair, again I challenge this government to make policy and to make their promises real based on the realities of the lives of our young working families.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR (Littlejohn): The hon. the Member for Humber West.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GRANTER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to my colleagues for the applause, to my left. I have always said that Newfoundland and Labrador, as we all know, is a wonderful place to live. It is a wonderful place to raise our families. It has always been true, Mr. Chair. Newfoundland and Labrador has always been a

wonderful place to live, to raise our families, whether it is in good times or in bad times, Mr. Chair. Like the gentleman I spoke to last week in Corner Brook who returned to Newfoundland after forty years, to a better place, to a place of great opportunity and great prospects, Mr. Chair.

The most important part of that change, that change in circumstance that we have seen in the last ten years, in the dynamics of Newfoundland and Labrador, took place over the last ten years and it took place because of principled decision making.

Mr. Chair, I, like many, follow the markets on a regular basis. I cannot say I follow them on a daily basis, but on a regular basis I do follow them. You need to look at the oil markets and the markets in minerals across the world and see what is happening in places like China and India, because our economy in Newfoundland and Labrador is tied and linked intrinsically to the work that is taking place in these countries, Mr. Chair.

There is no disputing the fact that we are doing better because our rich natural resources are driving the economy, but without the courage of our Premier to negotiate our contracts over the last number of years on firm, principled decisions, we would not be where we are today.

What do we have today? We have a booming economy. We have the lowest post-secondary tuition rates in the country, Mr. Chair. We are leading the country in wait times in a number of areas, in five areas at least. We have built and rebuilt age-old infrastructure like schools, hospitals, highways and byways, sewer systems and water treatment facilities.

I stood in this House on a number of occasions talking about the contributions and investments that this government made in Corner Brook, in Humber West and Humber East in the region of the Province, Mr. Chair – hundreds and hundreds of millions that have been invested in our region of the Province because of our natural resources and the decisions that we have made down through the last ten or so years.

There is no question, Mr. Chair, nobody is going to argue that the rise of oil prices have had a significant impact on the economy of Newfoundland and Labrador. There is more to Newfoundland and Labrador than oil and minerals. I, like many others, travelled across this Province numerous times. There is no greater opportunity for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, there is no greater opportunity for individuals, for small businesses, companies, entrepreneurs, and people with ideas, than there is right now in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The research and development work that is taking place here in Newfoundland and Labrador is second to none. An example, the research and work of the Research and Development Corporation is building and delivering a sustainable economic engine for the people of this Province. I have to agree with the Member for The Straits – White Bay North when he stands up and talks about the importance of research and development. He and I will agree on that. Support for research and development, Mr. Chair, I believe is absolutely critical, absolutely critical, as we move our economy forward – not only for this year, but in the many years to come.

We are attracting to Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Chair, some of the brightest minds in research from around the world. More importantly to that, we are keeping some of our own very brightest minds, the individuals who have gone to school, who have studied in Newfoundland and Labrador, who are staying right here in Newfoundland and Labrador and performing the research and development that is necessary for future development in the Province.

Mr. Chair, hundreds of research projects have been approved in this Province, with millions of dollars invested; but the caveat is that by investing our money, the people's money, into research and development in Newfoundland and Labrador, it has leveraged hundreds of millions of dollars from external sources. Monies have been leveraged from industry within the Province. Monies have been leveraged from industry from outside of the Province. Indeed,

yes, monies have been leveraged from the federal government as well, Mr. Chair.

We have seen monies invested in oil and gas research. We have seen monies invested in mining and mineral research, ocean technology, amongst others, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, we need not look any further than Norway to see how important research and development is for any nation. I want to connect the research and development in Norway twenty-five, thirty, or forty years ago to where it is we are in Newfoundland today. When the people of Norway, for example, began to develop their offshore oil reserves back in the late 1950s, the 1960s, and the 1970s, the expertise did not exist in Norway at the time. The expertise existed in places like the United States, and Norway brought the expertise from the United States to develop their oil reserves in Norway.

Only a few years in, Mr. Chair, Norway and the Norwegian government realized they could do the research and development at home, and that is what they did. They developed the research and their technologies at home in Norway. They created a knowledge base and a skill base in their country. What happened? They developed it at home and then they exported that knowledge base around the world.

When Newfoundland became a part of the new oil frontier, the research that the Norwegians had developed based on their own research and development, based on the fact they were developing their own oil fields, they exported their knowledge base. Where did they export it to? Places like Newfoundland and Labrador, and they exported it all around the world. When we look at the history of the development of offshore oil in this Province, we know how important the Norwegians have played with regard to that development.

My point, Mr. Chair, is that we are only scratching the surface of the research potential in our own offshore and in the offshore of Labrador. We are only in our infancy in our potential in ocean technology research but, boy,

have we come a long way. Investments in research and development in this place will sustain us for decades to come.

We are starting to create a kind of expertise here in this place that we can use. More importantly, when the world comes calling, just as when the world came calling to the Norwegians, our people, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, will be able to export that knowledge base. Not only use it here at home, Mr. Chair, but export it to other places throughout the world.

I have about two-and-a-half minutes left. This morning, we all had the opportunity to join the Premier in the launch of the Innovation Lives Here campaign, which highlights the innovation and expertise of companies right here in Newfoundland and Labrador, doing work and exporting their expertise and products to other parts of Canada, but indeed, as we saw this morning and as the people of the Province will see in the commercials over the next little while, exporting that research, development, and technologies all around the world.

I want to take a minute or two to just highlight a couple of those companies. Provincial Aerospace, an aerospace and defence company, for example, Mr. Chair, with a focus on mission systems design and integration, aircraft modification, surveillance operations, logistics, and in-service support. Having flown Maritime surveillance aircraft for over thirty-five years, Provincial Aerospace has evolved into a world leader in intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and Maritime patrol aircraft operations and systems not only here in Newfoundland but for countries of the world and militaries around the world.

Mr. Chair, it is important to remember that these companies do not just exist in the capital region of the Province. A good example is a company based in Port au Port and established in 2011. Magine is fully engaged in the passion of designing, developing, and delivering lasting quality snowboards. We were told this morning that these snowboards are marketed here in the Province, also marketed in the Maritimes and

now out West in Alberta. They have lofty dreams to be marketing these snowboards in North America, and indeed in other opportunities around the world.

I was totally impressed this morning when a gentleman from SubC Imaging out of Clarenville – a dynamic knowledge-based company providing leading-edge imaging solutions for underwater applications. SubC's product portfolio includes a comprehensive range of underwater video cameras, designed and developed right here in Newfoundland and Labrador, digital still cameras, lighting and media management solutions. SubC Imaging also specializes in systems for remotely operated vehicles, autonomous underwater vehicles and stand-alone installations.

Mr. Chair, my point in the last few minutes is simply this; we have huge opportunities in research and development here in the Province. We are tapping into those huge opportunities. The opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador companies and young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are only going to get great as we proceed.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. EDMUNDS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills would say, I am proud to stand in my place today and talk about Bill 9. I think it was money well spent. I am not sure if that side agrees with me or not.

I would like to take this time to welcome the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair to our caucus. I can remember just a couple of days ago when the Member for Terra Nova was going to make her squirm in her chair. This young lady grew up with seven rowdy fishermen who turned aviators, Mr. Chair. She is not easily intimidated, let me tell you.

I would like to talk a little bit about facts and ferries, Mr. Chair. I heard a number of comments about facts. Sometimes facts are what you take at face value. When facts make it to the backbench up there, Mr. Chair, I can rest assured they are somewhat distorted, let me tell you.

Once you get facts that are passed over three or four times, especially when they get to the Member for Terra Nova, the Member for Mount Pearl South, the Member for Lake Melville, I am sure they are somewhat distorted. My colleague, the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair gets her facts on the ground. What facts are presented, as they are presented from your researcher, Mr. Chair, it probably leaves something to be desired.

Mr. Chair, I was glad to hear the Member for Terra Nova talk about the experience of having a new ferry. I am excited for the ferries that are going to Fogo Island and the ferries that are going to Bell Island. As part of this Province we do take pride in equipment that is being upgraded and replaced, but I made the point and my colleague has made the point, that there are other areas in this Province that have needs for ferries. Over the last two days we have kept the pressure on the Minister of Transportation and Works, and we will surely continue to do that.

Mr. Chair, I heard the member opposite talk about doom and gloom coming from this side. Rest assured, when credit is due credit is given, Mr. Chair. In my district, in my own hometown there is an arena being built and I thank the government for their part in that. It is a blessing for a government to take part in three-way funding agreements because you get the glory for presenting a facility and you supply one-third or one-half of the cost. It is a win-win, Mr. Chair. Personally, I appreciate all the funding that comes through and I appreciate the facility.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Chair, the previous Minister of Municipal Affairs made a number of announcements. When I went back home to my district, in my community, I was actually looking for three arenas. When I went to the other communities I was looking for three or

four multi-purpose centres, but he did assure me that you have to make an announcement at least seven times. It is something we learn every day, Mr. Chair.

I do have a good relationship with the new Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services. We are working on solving some problems in one of my communities in my district. I give the minister credit for his efforts in that.

Mr. Chair, the Nunatsiavut Government, in a press release today, said that the government is dragging its heels on new ferries for Labrador. You want to talk about facts. Well, I will give you a fact from that side. The minister some time ago said that an RFP for a new vessel for Northern Labrador would be issued by the end of October. Now, if I am not mistaken, today is November 14. Facts can get twisted, they can get construed, and they are off the mark.

Mr. Chair, I have to give credit to the current minister. He did acknowledge the concern and certainly we are all waiting, impatiently I may add, for an announcement for an RFP and certainly we look forward to hearing that.

I would like to talk about some more facts with the current system, Mr. Chair. Here is a fact: four fires on-board the *Northern Ranger* this summer – four fires on-board. I tell the members across the way in the back that is a fact. I cannot count the number of times the *Northern Ranger* broke down, not this year and not last year.

Mr. Chair, do you know what else? There was no alternative plan for service to the people who the *Northern Ranger* served. Right off the bat, the people waited twenty-one days for a decision on alternative service and the *Northern Ranger* could not make it. Twenty-one days, and the member for Fogo Island, I think they had a helicopter within twenty-four hours. I hear the minister talking about fairness; well, in situations like this is when I question fairness.

Mr. Chair, I had a phone call a couple of days ago from two people in my district who received brand-new \$16,000 snowmobiles that cost

another \$600 because they were shipped up the road to Goose Bay. They could not get onboard in Cartwright. Eight inches of saltwater ice over that new \$16,000 snowmobile. Is that acceptable? I ask the members across: Is that acceptable? Would it be acceptable anywhere else in this Province and maintain talking about fairness?

Mr. Chair, the waiting list for passengers on the *Northern Ranger* at peak point in the summer is sixty to seventy waiting to get onboard, and that is when she is working and running properly, which is day to day. We have had frozen foods show up in non-freezer containers and we have had perishables show up in refrigerated containers. I have gone up to the vessels at 4:00 o'clock in the morning in a blizzard and unloaded my freight. Talk about fairness. I wonder, is that fairness? I tell the members across the way in the back row, those are facts and I will back them up if I have to because I was there.

So, Mr. Chair, when you talk about doom and gloom, bringing facts to you is sharing information. It is not doom and gloom, but it is a reality, a reality that members who have not come up and experienced it would take a step back when they do. I hear the Member for Terra Nova talking about the doom and gloom. I would invite the Member for Terra Nova to come up and help me at 4:00 o'clock in the morning in a blizzard unload freight. You want to talk about facts as they are presented to you. Here are the facts as they are told from the source.

In the meantime, I do not have the time to talk about the other issues that impact us, but I would like to close by saying that, again, I welcome the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair on-board, and certainly looking forward to the weekend and the next by-election, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Works.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MCGRATH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, I am glad to be able to stand up today. This is my third portfolio in the last two years, and if there is one thing I have had in the last two years it has been an education. I just listened to the Member for Torngat Mountains. I agree with some of the stuff he has said, but one of the points he did not make is that a lot of the elements that he is dealing with, whether they are right or they are wrong, are part of where you are. I am not saying they are right or wrong, but what I am saying is that this government has addressed them.

I am going to go back before I ever sat in this House of Assembly, and I remember when the Member for Harbour Main was the Minister of Transportation, and sitting in his boardroom and discussing those very issues with him, and there have been some improvements made. I have listened for the last couple of days about the ferry system and whether it is fair or fact that some have been approved and some are still waiting on RFPs, but we have made improvements.

Earlier today during Question Period, the Member for Torngat Mountains asked me: Will I provide him with the conditions and issues in the RFP? I am not going to provide him with those because that would not make a lot of sense, to pass out what the conditions are in an RFP. I did tell you that it is a very complex piece of material that we are working on.

He talked about the press release that was sent out today from the Nunatsiavut Government. Early this morning while we were in a Cabinet meeting, I had to excuse myself from a Cabinet meeting to make a call to President Leo, who is President of the Nunatsiavut Government. I am very pleased to say that I have a very strong communication with the Nunatsiavut Government and I intend on continuing that relationship.

As I do, if there is one thing I did before I went into provincial politics, I prepared myself to all of Labrador, not just in Labrador West. I prepared myself in all communities of Labrador

so that I was aware of the issues in Labrador especially because I knew I was going to be running provincially. If I was going to be fortunate enough to sit with the Progressive Conservative government, I wanted to be aware of the issues for all of Labrador.

The Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, I am sure she can take care of herself. I have sat on boards with her and I know how feisty she can be when she sits on a board. That is not a bad thing. I had a conversation with the member and I told her first when she sat in the House, I think it was probably the second day she sat in the House, that I believe in communication, I believe in partnerships, and I believe in working together. I think I work fairly well with most of the members in Opposition, but it is up to them if a partnership works.

I advised the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair of the same thing and that I was more than willing to work with her. I certainly am and I hope we will build a strong relationship together. If I am going to get a press release and a news release every time you do not get your own way – and I come from a family of eleven, so I know what it is like not to get your own way and I know what it is like to say you might as well go sulk because you are not getting it and that is all that is to it. I am not going to be able to give you everything you want.

I will use an example. A good example is that –

MS DEMPSTER: A point of order.

CHAIR: A point of order.

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

MS DEMPSTER: Mr. Chair, the people of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair elected me to bring their issues to the floor of the House of Assembly and I will continue to do that.

CHAIR: There is no point of order.

The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Works.

MR. MCGRATH: As I was saying, Mr. Chair, before I went into the portfolio of Transportation and Works, I was working with the former MHA for Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair, and thus I worked with the present Member for Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair and I advocated to the former Minister of Transportation and Works to try and get some work done between Red Bay and Lodge Bay, because the road was in really bad shape. The former Minister of Transportation and Works agreed he would get a crusher up there for me, which he did. Then shortly after, within the matter of days after he had the crusher up there, I found myself sitting in his chair as the Minister of Transportation and Works.

One of my first priorities as the Minister of Transportation and Works, I probably should have taken the crusher back, but one of my first priorities was to get crushed stone on that section of highway, and I did it. That stone was put on, and lo and behold, I get a call or cc’d on an e-mail that was sent to one of my directors in Labrador from the Member for Cartwright – L’Anse au Clair complaining that traffic was too slow on that section of highway because of so much construction. You cannot have it all.

If you want to get it done – yes, people probably had to wait half an hour at times but you cannot have it both ways. I am certainly willing to work with them, but it has to work both ways. It has to go both ways.

I am watching the clock because I do not want to go over time, but I am just going to give you a couple of examples of how this government has taken care of both of those districts in Labrador because I have heard too many times in the last couple of days of separation between Newfoundland and Labrador. To me, it is one Province. I will always advocate that it is one.

I am going to give you a couple of examples of how this government has taken care of the North Coast of Labrador, and certainly the South Coast and The Straits. For example, when we had the Northern Strategic Plan – and we still use that Northern Strategic Plan today as a guideline. We increased the subsidy for your hydro up there, your diesel energy, \$200,000. Your

subsidy was increased. A lot of people do not realize that the North Coast has a subsidy, and it is a subsidy that saves anywhere between \$45 and \$55 a month to our residents on the coast.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

CHAIR: Order, please!

MR. MCGRATH: In 2009, we put \$500,000 to have an alternate energy study there on the South Coast and the North Coast.

AN HON. MEMBER: It was your study.

MR. MCGRATH: Yes, it was our study but it was for their benefit.

In 2007, \$5.2 million was put into Torngat Mountains for a K-12 new school up there. On March 8, 2010 – and I love this one – the Labrador Aboriginal Training program. In partnership with the federal government also, we put \$30 million into a program. The whole purpose of the program was to educate the Aboriginal people so they could get the skilled jobs that are available today in Labrador. That was in 2010. We are now in negotiations for a second agreement there that we are hoping to have up and going.

I do not know how many of you have been in L’Anse-au-Loup. They have a beautiful, brand new school in L’Anse-au-Loup K-12; a beautiful, brand new school. Do you know what? That cost us \$15 million. Port Hope Simpson, another \$10.3 million into a school for K-12. I can go on and on and on for quite a bit of time yet.

I realize I am running out of time. I wanted to be heard, especially to the people who are listening on TV. They have heard over the last couple of days that we separate Labrador. Do I believe in Labrador? Yes, I believe in Labrador, and this government believes in Labrador. When I get the opportunity to stand up again, I will talk about some more of the good things that we have done in your districts.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIR: Is it the pleasure of the Committee to adopt the motion?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

CLERK: Clause 1.

CHAIR: Shall clause 1 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, clause 1 carried.

CLERK: The schedule.

CHAIR: Shall the schedule carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, schedule carried.

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

CHAIR: Shall the enacting clause carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, enacting clause carried.

CLERK: WHEREAS it appears that the sums mentioned are required to defray certain additional expenses of the Public Service of Newfoundland and Labrador for the financial year ending March 31, 2014, and for other purposes relating to the public service.

CHAIR: Shall the preamble carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, preamble carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Additional Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending March 31, 2014 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service No. 2.

CHAIR: Shall the title carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, title carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the bill carried without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

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

CHAIR: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader.

MS SHEA: Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee rise and report that they have adopted without amendment a certain resolution and recommend that a bill be introduced to give effect to the same.

CHAIR: The motion is that the Committee rise and report that they have adopted without amendment a certain resolution and recommend that a bill be introduced to give effect to the same.

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Wiseman): Order, please!

The hon. the Member for the District of Port de Grave.

MR. LITTLEJOHN: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply have considered the matters to them referred, and have directed me to report that they have adopted without amendment a certain resolution and recommend that a bill be introduced to give effect to the same.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair of Committee of Supply reports that the Committee have

considered the matters to them referred, and have directed him to report that the Committee have adopted a certain resolution, and recommend that a bill be introduced to give effect to the same, and ask leave to sit again.

When shall the report be received?

MS SHEA: Now, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Now.

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

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

MS SHEA: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services, that the resolution be now read a first time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

CLERK: "That it is expedient to introduce a measure to provide for the granting to Her Majesty for defraying certain additional expenses of the public service for the financial year ending March 31, 2014, the sum of \$147,200."

On motion, resolution read a first time.

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

MS SHEA: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Child, Youth and Family

Services, that the resolution be now read a second time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

CLERK: "That it is expedient to introduce a measure to provide for the granting to Her Majesty for defraying certain additional expenses of the public service for the financial year ending March 31, 2014, the sum of \$147,200.

On motion, resolution read a second time.

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

MS SHEA: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services, for leave to introduce the Supplementary Supply Bill, Bill 9, and I further move that the said bill be now read the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it moved and seconded that the hon. the Minister of Finance shall have leave to introduce a bill, Bill 9, the Supplementary Supply bill, and that the said bill be now read a first time.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. the Minister of Finance shall have leave to introduce the Supplementary Supply bill, 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 Finance and President of Treasury Board to introduce a bill, "An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Additional Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Ending March 31, 2014 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service No. 2", carried. (Bill 9)

CLERK: A bill, An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Additional Of The Public Service For The Financial Ending March 31, 2014 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service No. 2. (Bill 9)

On motion, Bill 9 read a first time.

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

MS SHEA: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services, that the Supplementary Supply bill be now read the second time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Additional Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Ending March 31, 2014 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service No. 2. (Bill 9)

On motion, Bill 9 read a second time.

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

MS SHEA: Mr. Speaker, I moved, seconded by the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services, that the Supplementary Supply bill be now read the third time.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

CLERK: A bill, An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Additional Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Ending March 31, 2014 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service No. 2. (Bill 9)

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

On motion, a bill "An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Additional Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Ending March 31, 2014 And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service No 2", read a third, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill 9)

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

MS SHEA: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services, that the House do now adjourn.

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

This House now stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

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