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Speaker: Honourable Ross Wiseman, MHA

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(Night Sitting)

The House resumed sitting at 7:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Verge): Order, please!

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services, that debate on Motion 1, the Budget Speech, be now adjourned.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that the debate on the Budget Speech be adjourned.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I call from the Order Paper, Order 10. I move, seconded by the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, as per Standing Order 11, that the House not adjourn at 10:00 o'clock this evening, Monday, June 2, 2014

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that this House not adjourn at 10:00 tonight.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Carried.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time I call from the Order Paper, Motion 1, that the House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government, the Budget Speech.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CROSS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is great to stand here again. Before I get to start my conversation with the residents of Bonavista North, the rest of the Province, and those assembled here in the Chamber, I guess I will do a little recap of how I have gotten the opportunity to speak so far and what that covered. Then, we will lead into what I would like to say tonight on the main Budget motion.

In Interim Supply, which is way back now, it seems like an awful long time ago, we spoke when we needed to have access to finances on an interim basis prior to the Budget. Then, we led into the Budget itself, which was delivered. The Budget had many, many good news stories for this Province for this year. The first speaker after the Budget was the Leader of the Opposition. He got up and, of course, in traditional fashion he moved a non-confidence motion. After that came a second motion, an amendment to the non-confidence motion which gives everybody a chance to speak multiple times.

In speaking to the non-confidence motion, I gave my pie lesson, I guess. I talked about our commitment to infrastructure and how much money we have been spending over the last decade on many of the infrastructure projects. Some of the numbers would blow you away, Mr. Speaker, when we talk that we have spent in excess \$5 billion – \$5.3 billion, in fact – on infrastructure projects in the last decade.

Most of these projects are things were very, very sorely needed, Mr. Speaker. Our roads, although they are not perfect right now, they have improved quite a bit in the last decade. This has been very, very much progress made.

Also, in Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs I know the towns in the District of Bonavista North went for many years with no projects for water and sewer and other street paving and whatever, but in the last five, six or seven years we have seen the monies increases again and the projects increase again. In fact, I

have talked to people and bumped into people and they say: We are actually still doing projects now? We did not get them all finished before? People saw that there was no activity and they just assumed that everybody had all the services. Nothing could be further from the truth, Mr. Speaker, when in the 1990s we ran into some difficulties and projects were on hold.

We also talked about spending in Health and Community Services, new hospitals, new clinics, improved aspects with regard to dialysis and other programs that we are implementing, more chemo drugs –

AN HON. MEMBER: Springdale hospital.

MR. CROSS: The Springdale hospital, Mr. Speaker, as the member quite easily reminds me of.

In Education, as well, we have seen many, many, many schools being built. In fact, I think it is thirteen new schools that have gone through complete construction and into the tens of others that have had major renovations and facelifts, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that our students have the best possible facility in which to learn these days.

Other projects that have gone into other aspects of program, but in that main non-confidence motion I talked mainly about infrastructure, especially infrastructure in Advanced Education and Skills, as well, Mr. Speaker.

We have also invested very wisely in the programming through all of these aspects as well in the last few years, and that gives us the ability to boast with some of the best things that we have ever been able to boast about in the educational system in our post-secondary system, Mr. Speaker. We can boast that we have the lowest tuition rates for any public schools in our country. We can boast that we are in the process of converting from student loans, which we reduced the interest rates on, but now we are not only just taking away the interest rates on the student loans, we are going to convert them in the next couple of years to up-front grants for our students.

Again, in these areas we have come major, major distances to support our students and

support everyone else. The next time I got up to speak, got on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I spoke about the Concurrence Motion and explained how the different departments connected to the Resource Committee Estimates worked and tried to explain some of that to the people in the conversation I have been carrying on with these people.

Now, I guess we are down to the main event. We are getting ready to rumble because we are back to the main event of the Budget. After we had one of our first speeches in last week's setting, the Member for Bair Verte – Springdale, I sort of thought that was the main event. I sort of thought that after he sat down, what are you going to do to repeat or what are you going to do that was extra? Again, he brings out his passion in a much different way than many others of us do, Mr. Speaker. We may not be as charismatic or flamboyant in our delivery, but we still have the passion inside. We still have that desire inside that we want to have Newfoundland and Labrador to be the best that it can be. I firmly believe that it is true for forty-eight members in this House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CROSS: We all have different opinions on how to get there.

Now we are here, so let's talk about the fire in the belly. Let's talk about the conversations that you do have with your ordinary citizens, your John Q. Newfoundlander and Labradorian. What does he look for in the Budget? What does John Q. Public look for in the Budget? Well, every person we speak to, it depends. It depends on the point of view. It depends on what that person does for a living. It depends on how old that person is. It depends on their experience with health care. It depends on if they just came off a road that has a few bumps on it. The different people you speak to all have different points of view and all at different times that you talk to them. There are all kinds of other reactions that come out and some of these reactions are more specific than others, Mr. Speaker.

I spoke about the lowest tuition rates that are going to continue from this Budget. Housing for students: In the last two years, we have really

increased on the number of housing units that are available in our residences for our post-secondary students. Grants to replace loans: Obviously this year, if you spoke to a student, you would have a very favourable outlook on this Budget. We are still into the LMAPD program, Mr. Speaker, and that is the Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities.

Again, students, no matter what deficits – we look at, as my grandfather would say, what sort of problems they have or what sickness they have, but it is an infliction, it can be physical, it can be mental; but again, how do we support such that the most vulnerable, these students, have a chance to succeed as well, Mr. Speaker.

It depends on if you talk to someone who is an apprentice or if they are a journeyman, if they have trouble finding a job or if they have just gotten one. All of these aspects make them have a different viewpoint on the Budget, Mr. Speaker. It depends on whether you are on Income Support and if you are on Income Support, you know some of the poverty reduction strategies that have been implemented in the last few years. You also know that this year we did a 5 per cent increase flat across the board for all recipients and rental subsidies still continue, Mr. Speaker.

Since 2006 we have injected over \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker. I will say it again. We have injected over \$1 billion into our economy in poverty reduction to go straight towards programs that would leave extra dollars in the pockets of people who are less fortunate; the best taxation strategies.

Also, if you are a senior, Mr. Speaker, you would have a different opinion on this Budget. Seniors' Benefits this year are at an all-time high. In 2014 we moved it up about \$50 or \$60, but when you look at that in the run of a year and you multiply it by twelve months, Mr. Speaker, it means these people who are in that income bracket, that amount of money is so welcomed into their pocketbooks.

Also, through our taxation strategies, we eliminated the tax for someone who has less than \$18,500 in income, Mr. Speaker, to pay no taxes. We have increased that. For families it is almost \$32,000 now; below that you pay no

taxes. Again, that is a very, very good thing for seniors because they fit into most of these categories if they do not have a private pension.

Funding for long-term care; we also have programs for reductions for driver's license, vehicle registration and other fees that go through this, Mr. Speaker, and it enables seniors to have that little extra. Is it perfect every day? No, absolutely not. Do you or I in this House have a perfect day every day? Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker; days vary.

Again, the whole idea of who I talk to, if I have a conversation with my friends in TV land or here in the House, we all have a different opinion. We are individuals, I guess is what I am trying to say, and every individual has the right to have their own opinion.

We get involved in this process, to run for election, to offer yourself, to put yourself out there, and I am sure – as I referred to a few moments ago - we do this because all of us, all forty-eight members of this House, get involved because we want to witness that Newfoundland and Labrador could become a first-class Province. We want it to be the best that it can be. We want our citizens to have the best day every day that they can have.

This government has been united, it has been vigilant to raise the economic profile of this Province from how lowly and poorly it was, the poorest cousin in Confederation some decade or so ago, to now we are almost the envy of most of the country in areas out abroad and beyond. Some of the programs we have been able to bring in we can stand very proud that we have been a part of this, and this Budget is going to help us continue that legacy.

Mr. Speaker, you do not have to take my word for it because if I stand true to my fashion, what I am telling you is that my opinion is one opinion in this whole conglomerate we call this House. It is one opinion of every Newfoundlander and Labradorian in this Province. I really want to take a few minutes and talk about a couple of aspects of this that are factual.

Lots of times we use the words: Now, that's a fact. Meaning it is true, but that is not

necessarily the case. A fact is something that can be easily proven true or false, but because it is based on fact, and if it is true, then it is a fact – just like we put the emphasis on it. Therefore, the things I am going to bring out in the next few minutes are going to be facts, Mr. Speaker.

They are not going to be my opinion. They are not going to be the Member for Bonavista North's opinion. It is going to be a fact based on impartial evidence, and the impartial evidence should be able to back up what I want to say. It will not have a blue lens. It will not have a red lens. It will not have an orange lens. Let's look at it in a clear lens with impartial views.

One such group could be the Conference Board of Canada, Mr. Speaker. We have heard them being quoted before. I have the quote here. One of the impartial entities the Chief Economist, the Senior Vice-President stated when he was talking about Newfoundland in the middle of all of the things that are being said by many other people who seem not to disagree with him, but based on his facts, and it is a fact that he said this. "Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland and Labrador are 'A+' economies – they rank higher than any advanced country..." or province.

What did he say? He said: Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland and Labrador are A+ economies and they rank higher than any other advanced country or province in the world. So you can take his word and go further with it, Mr. Speaker. He does not have the blue lens or the red lens or the orange lens, as I referred to.

Air Canada; we listened to the news tonight on NTV in our little break that we had a few moments ago. What did Air Canada say about Newfoundland and Labrador? On NTV News tonight they stated they are starting a year-round, three times a week, direct flight to England. The reason they are doing it, they are stating, is because of the hot economy in Newfoundland and Labrador and the strides with which we have come in the last while.

About eight years ago or so we lost the flight because our performance at that point had come through a period, I guess, based on fact of ten or twelve years – we came through a period when it was not that promising here in Newfoundland and Labrador. It was just starting to get the

glimmer of light, but Air Canada probably saw it on the evidence over the few years. What they did notice was that the promise was not there, so they cancelled the flight. We just did not have the business.

Now the economy is so hot, what does it do? It enables Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who are working here or their home base might be from Europe, to be able to get that flight and hop back when they need to; or for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who are experiencing some extra income, their residual income has gone up and they want to spend some to enjoy life. They can now hop a flight to England and Europe and be able to get there rather quickly and straight.

What else does it tell us, Mr. Speaker? It tells us that with direct flights like that we can also have business coming back into our Province. The people travelling to Newfoundland and Labrador can bring some of their good ideas. Again, this is statistical information, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to look at the booklet that we get with the Budget each year. There are a few parts of this booklet that has – again, these highlights or these comments are statistical in nature. They are not my opinion. They are based on the evidence that is gathered. When we look at some of the comments that might come out of this booklet, *The Economy 2014*, we look back at 2013 and two or three of the highlights just to emphasize. Again, I will try to paraphrase these so I can do them rather quickly.

Investment increased by 31.4 per cent to a record of \$12.3 billion driven by major development in 2013. It is high performance, Mr. Speaker, and it is a statistical piece of information based on the policies and the delivery of this government in the last eight to ten years.

The number of new cars sold back in 2013 was 35,000, an increase of 5.5 per cent from the year before. Now, I am not sure what the statistic would be for this year. It was a highlight, it was still very strong. It is still strong this year.

Consumer prices rose in 2013 by 1.7 per cent. Unemployment declined by 1.1 per cent to 11.4, which is the lowest rate since 1973. That is the year before I graduated from school, Mr.

Speaker. The unemployment rate is the lowest since this old fellow got out of school. That is a great statistic to be able to back. Again, it is a statistic. It is factual information. It is not my opinion, Mr. Speaker, it is factual information.

The population of the Province on July 1, 2013 was 526,702. It is virtually unchanged from one year earlier. After so many years where we were so devastated and so many people moving out of here, the population is eventually stabilizing and has increased a little bit or remaining stable in the last few years.

Now, that is 2013. If we are going to look at this and do this right – and I am going to run out of time all too fast, so I may have to speed up how much talking I am doing to get it all in. You can generate, I think, that I am excited about some of this.

The real value of exports is expected to be virtually unchanged as declines in nickel and fish offset gains in oil and iron ore. What is that telling us, Mr. Speaker? That, as one year goes into the next if one part of our economy just falls down a little bit, there is another part that can pick it up. We can work that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Unless it is oil.

MR. CROSS: We can still do that with oil for a while, but oil is eventually going to run out. I agree with the hon. member who making the comment from over there.

Retail sales tax still expected to increase by 3.6 per cent, but what I really want to do is go to the back of this book, Mr. Speaker. I have about two minutes left. I had planned about fifteen minutes on this if I could, but I have to squeeze it in now.

At the back of this book the statistical indicators, in the form of graphs – and, as a math teacher, I would be always telling my students there are many things you can read from a graph. If I study these twelve graphs as they appear in the back of this book, I will notice that there is a period in the last thirty years where there was a lot of stagnation for a decade or so, in the 1990s up to 2000 and a little beyond. There are other places where it looks like there is a peak. I thought there was a lot of something good going

on but from 1989 to 1997, the peak was because unemployment went home.

So, it was the opposite. You would expect to see a graph and you would expect that when you are looking at these, you would intentionally look at them for something that is good, you look at all of the lowest – if I combine, I will pick one here on housing starts, Mr. Speaker, and I will just pick this graph for a second until I get into my summation. Housing starts had a big dip. If I look at this statistic, it goes from 1983 to 2013 and in this period, if I look at 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2001, I wonder who was in power during that time where that was the seven lowest years in housing starts in the last thirty years?

There has to be some connection to that, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. CROSS: They are probably a little lower, but not as low as what these statistics were.

One more piece of statistical information. I talk about this as a fact, Mr. Speaker, one more fact, and I have thirty or forty seconds. This statement is a fact. By saying it, it was probably an opinion at the time, but it is a fact that it was said. What was said here was true. We certainly do not need to sit here and take lessons from the Liberal Party on how to run a Province, Mr. Speaker. I can guarantee you that. He put a guarantee on it as well. I think we know where that statement came from.

I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, we all have opinions, but we have to really let the facts speak for themselves. This Budget has a great many facts to back it up, that we stand to improve our Province, and we need to pass this Budget.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace.

MR. SLADE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It certainly gives me a pleasure to speak to Budget 2014. Mr. Speaker, what I want to emphasize on a little here is the plight of the senior citizens and people wanting new housing and one thing and another.

It is not surprising that most seniors want to live in their own homes. That is pretty well common play. Helping to do that is critical for their health and their well-being, provided the right supports are there. While there are some programs out there, they do not go far enough. Accessibility and the home care modification programs – there are many ways to adapt a house to make it more accessible, from installing grab bars in a bathroom to building wheelchair ramps and installing stair lifts.

People who hope to get funding from Newfoundland and Labrador Housing's Home Modification Program to make their homes more accessible first must be seen by an occupational therapist. The trouble is that many areas of the Province have no OT, only a visiting one, although Newfoundland and Labrador Housing says that they will consider advice from other medical professionals. Mr. Speaker, they are not clear on which professionals they will take recommendations from.

The program is not flexible enough for rural and remote regions of our Province. If you do not need a major renovation to your home, there are six central low-cost changes which every senior should make: put the lights in the bedroom, a night light in halls and bathrooms, kitchens too if you like a midnight snack or whatever; get a large numbered telephone; use higher wattage light bulbs, trade in those sixty watts for 100; get rid of all throw rugs; use non-skid bathroom strips; and replace your faucet knobs with levers and so on and so forth.

The home repair program with Newfoundland and Labrador Housing in March 2013, they had 992 people on a waiting list. Progress has been made on the wait-list over the years, but the demand exceeds the supply considerably.

Now, Mr. Speaker, another place we need to go is on the Home Heating Rebate, Department of Finance. Our Home Heating Rebate provides a maximum of \$250 per year per household and \$500 in Central Labrador. Mr. Speaker, I think

one thing I would like to point out and it is very important for all members of this House, both sides of the House, to understand and recognize is that seniors have a very, very difficult time, first of all, even trying to heat their homes. I think this government can be doing so much more with that.

Mr. Speaker, while this help is only a drop in the bucket, the fear now with Muskrat Falls and its cost could be borne by the taxpayers – still, we do not know. Like I just said, we have seniors out there and they certainly would like to be able to stay at home, if it is at all possible.

Mr. Speaker, seniors walking around our malls to stay warm; I have seen that. I have seen that in the mall in Carbonear. You go there at 10:00 in the morning and the seniors are there. You go there at 12:00 o'clock and they are still there. They spend a good portion of their day there. Of course, Mr. Speaker, if you are a senior who lives alone, it is pretty tough to make it on that one income.

Not surprisingly, seniors who live alone face the most hardships. They lack living companions, a partner to help them through the challenges seniors face. Women tend to outlive men, so many of these seniors living alone are widowed women. Of course, if you have two incomes coming into the one house of senior citizens, certainly you can understand and feel the pain and difficulty of one trying to pay light bills, groceries, oil bills, telephone bills and so on and so forth, Mr. Speaker. I will tell you, at the end of their cheque there is not too much left over, I can guarantee you that.

Mr. Speaker, when we consider these people's children, many of them who have moved away for jobs elsewhere, many of those seniors have very little family support to help them get through. We had a seniors' advocate at our health care roundtable last summer who talked about how home care workers should be trained in how to cook meals that seniors appreciate. This is a part of helping seniors remain comfortable in their own homes, Mr. Speaker.

“Health literacy is the ability to access, understand, evaluate and communicate information as a way to promote, maintain and improve health in a variety of settings across the

life-course". Figures show 60 per cent of adults and 88 per cent of seniors in Canada are not health literate.

People who are not health literate have difficulty using the everyday health information that is routinely available in health care facilities, grocery stores, retail outlets, and schools in their communities. Adhering to prescription medications, for example, can help decrease hospital admissions, savings which can be redirected into housing programs for seniors.

Mr. Speaker, that is just a little that I can speak here on the seniors. I do know one thing and I can safely say that as a member of this House, and I am sure all members in this House will agree with me, that we have to take care of our senior citizens much, much better than we have in the past. I understand that government has certain programs out there and they are trying to do whatever they can do at this point in time, but we have to take care of our seniors, I say to the members in this House, because they are the people who brought us here. These are the people who worked hard and paid taxes all their lifetime and now it is time for us to take care of them, Mr. Speaker. I make no bones about that.

I would now like to go into certain issues that are still going on in my district. I spoke to some of the ministers as it pertained to some of the issues going on in my district, and I would just like to reiterate them. I am going to start in Victoria. Victoria is a growing community. I think they had somewhere in the vicinity of sixty, maybe seventy, home starts last year. It is a very vibrant community, a community that is growing, bringing a lot of new families in to the community, young families. In order for us as a government to put some stock into communities and look after communities, we need to address certain issues in this House. Mr. Speaker, this does not only go for one town, this goes for all towns in my district, and certainly every district across this Province because it is important to understand what is taking place here.

Mr. Speaker, in order for government to move forward and to be out there and be seen as leaders of the Province and see our communities grow, that is what we need to do. We need to make sure that that happens. I will just go into one little part of that, that I could never

understand, and that was the Limits of Service Agreements. What that does is that actually restricts towns. They will not get any government funding if they go to put a new road in or try to increase the size of their community because government will come back and say that is outside the Limits of Service Agreement.

So we are kind of restricting our towns to actually what they can do and how they can grow and prosper as communities. This is the situation that is taking place in Victoria, Carbonear, and like I said, all parts of the district.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to speak a little bit now about Freshwater. I spoke about it the last time I stood. There is beach area down there. There used to be a beach road going across it up until two years ago and, of course, they have a sea down there and the beach came in and covered over the road and so on and so forth.

It is not just having the road back there for the sake of having it there. The road serves a purpose. The purpose that the road serves is it enables anybody, if a fire should take place down there, that they can actually move from one side of that community to the other and actually get out. This is a concern that we have. It is a fire safety concern.

Also, Mr. Speaker, there is pond there across the road from that beach area, which is now infilling. As I said to this hon. House the last time, if I were to take the backhoe and go into Freshwater and start filling up that pond, I am sure that the Department of Environment would be out there to stop me. There is very little work on this road and it can be fixed. It can be repaired. We should do it for the safety of the people in Freshwater, Mr. Speaker. Safety is the big issue.

Bristol's Hope has an identical problem to that, the same problem, the same situation. It is a heavy wooded area. The beach area is now covered over after two years of neglect – and I will say neglect. If a fire should take place there, I certainly would not want to be sitting in this House knowing that I knew it and I did not bring it forward to the members opposite and to this whole House. I would not want to take that on my shoulders. I am here and I am going to

speak for the people in Bristol's Hope also, Mr. Speaker. It is just absolutely unbelievable and, again, with very little work on this, it can be reinstated so that the people can live in that community and feel safe in the community.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure each and every one of us who sits around these tables are all doing it for the safety of our communities, the safety of the people in our communities. Again, I just have to bring that issue up. I would like for the Minister of Transportation to take a very serious look at it and, certainly, I would do whatever I can to cooperate with the minister to help see that happen for the safety of the people in both of those communities, both Bristol's Hope and Freshwater.

Mr. Speaker, Connors Valley, some time ago, we had a request that came from the Minister of Transportation: Pick out three roads in your district that you think that needs work. I did that, Mr. Speaker. I picked out three of the most serious roads in our district: Bristol's Hope, down there on the north side of Bristol's Hope, happened to be one of them; another one was Connors Valley. It is in a deplorable state, an absolutely deplorable state; I cannot believe it. It has been like it for the last two to three years. I am really surprised actually that government has not had more complaints about it, and probably they have, that I am unaware of anyway; but the road needs to be resurfaced and you are not talking about a big area, but it certainly needs to be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, the Thicket Road in Harbour Grace, just up above Harbour Grace, there is a section of road there it seems like they came from Island Cove and they came out there so far and they just left off there. There is not a lot left there, just to resurface, and the road then would be in half decent shape and probably stand another ten or fifteen years. I do not know, Mr. Speaker; I just like to bring it forward.

Two years ago government was supposed to have Harvey Street in Harbour Grace completed. From what I can understand, there is no funding in the Budget this year for Harvey Street in Harbour Grace. Now, Mr. Speaker, if any member across the way would like to drive down over Harvey Street and come back in this House and tell me that it is not fit to drive over, I

would certainly have to challenge them. It is an absolutely terrible section of road. It was supposed to be completed by government two years ago. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing in the Budget for it this year whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to stand up in this House and criticize people for the sake of criticizing them. I am not going to go at it. I would like to say to the Minister of Municipal Affairs over there, I would like to say this to the minister; I would like to thank the minister here tonight for finally giving the people in Harbour Grace that stadium. I thank the minister for that here tonight. I would certainly thank the minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SLADE: The people in Harbour Grace thank you very much, Mr. Minister. I thank you, too. It is important. It is near and dear to the people in Harbour Grace. It is near and dear to the overall district. It is also very important to those children, so I thank the minister for that. Like I said, if they do something good I will not criticize; if they do something bad, Mr. Speaker, I certainly will.

Mr. Speaker, in Bryants Cove it does not take very much to do some shouldering. We need some shouldering done in Bryants Cove, but the biggest problem in Bryants Cove right now – again, I will go back to the minister. I talked about it the last time I stood up. We certainly appreciate the waterline getting sunk in the ground instead of it being up on top of the ground. Last winter it actually froze, but it is getting put down in the ground and I thank the Department of Municipal Affairs for that.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, the Point Road – here is the story on it. The Town of Bryants Cove applied for funding for the Point Road this year. Mr. Speaker, if the Point Road is not done this year the bus drivers will refuse to go out over that section of road to pick up school children. They will refuse to go out over it.

Mr. Speaker, I hear the members opposite talking about the great things the Province and the government have done for the district. Now, when I stand on this floor and I have to say that the bus will not go out over the road any more to

pick up the school children, Mr. Speaker, that does not sound like it is very good to me. It certainly does not.

I know you cannot do it all, and you cannot do it all at the one time, but I will tell you what, that needs attention. I do not know what I have to do here to bring it forward any more than I am bringing it forward here now, but, Mr. Speaker, I would like for the minister to give that some due consideration.

Mr. Speaker, it is too bad the Minister of Transportation is not here tonight, probably we could get an answer or something. Anyway, I want to talk about the line painting.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I remind the member it is not parliamentary to refer to the presence of other members in the House.

The hon. the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace to continue.

MR. SLADE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I do apologize, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about the line painting that took place last year. Now, having said that, Mr. Speaker, the minister did explain that they had a fatality on the Outer Ring Road, I believe it was. I understood that part of it, but I would just like to say that line painting needs to take place.

There by the TC Square, prior to the lights going in there it was worse. Now there are no lines on it. There were no lines on it last year. It is treacherous. You have to understand something, a lot of people come into Carbonear to do their grocery shopping and do their business. Carbonear is the hub of the bay when it comes to business.

Mr. Speaker, all town roads, or all roads that are under the Department of Transportation in my district – not all of them but most of them – need some desperate, desperate repairs. I would like to work with the ministers across the way to

make sure things happen for the district and these roads get repaired. We take the dangers away from people living in communities cut off by beach areas, that very little work can be done on it to address the concerns of people in those two communities.

Mr. Speaker, I am just standing up and speaking for my district. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me the time here tonight.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Exploits.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FORSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to have a few words on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace wanting to talk about his district, like all the members in this House. We certainly want to represent our districts well, but we also represent the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. What happens for my constituents that this government brings in helps everyone's constituents.

It is amazing that he would get up and find some faults with what is going on with roads in his district. He did commend the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and so he should; however, he forgot to mention that there was also a new school in his district, a long-term care investment in his district, and the adult addictions centre. Now, in the meantime, that probably could be – the reason he did not mention it is probably it is a waste because apparently we are being accused of being wasteful when we invest in this type of infrastructure and needs for our Province and for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I did want to touch on Innovation and Business, however, the member sort of threw me off a little bit and I had to go back to some of the things he mentioned, especially about seniors. Seniors are near and dear to me, and everybody in this House I am sure, right across the Province. Even though a lot of the supports they

get – like their Old Age Security is a federal thing. This Province invests as well, and this government invests as well, Mr. Speaker.

I would just like to run through a couple of facts. I know I have said them before; I want to say them again. I hate to rush this kind of thing because it needs to get out there and needs to be understood because some members in the Opposition just want to get up there and say this is a waste. I would like for them to approach these people and tell them that it is a waste of money what we are doing here.

Budget 2014 includes approximately \$170 million for the Poverty Reduction Strategy to support provincial government's long-term care. Mr. Speaker, I remind the members opposite, they will have their chance. They can get up and speak, and they can give me my turn to speak as well. When we are talking they seem to have more of a squawk about them than when they actually get up to speak.

With the reduction and alleviation of poverty this brings our total investment to reduce poverty to \$1 billion since 2006 – Mr. Speaker, \$1 billion. As referenced in the Department of Finance's announcement in Budget 2014, it includes an increase for the Seniors' Benefit. Seniors, Mr. Speaker, are near and dear to me as a member of this government, and I am sure all the members on this side. The maximum payment seniors will receive in October of this year will now be the highest ever, from \$971 to \$1,036. So, \$971 in 2013; this year, it be \$1,036. We have been listening, Mr. Speaker. We came from the lowest in our poverty reduction to the second best in the country, and this is why: Effective in 2014 taxation year, the low-income tax reduction income threshold will be increased, eliminating provincial income tax for individuals with net income up to \$18,547.

Mr. Speaker, sticking with supports for seniors and low-income people, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing and the provincial government will again partner with the Government of Canada to extend the investment in the affordable housing agreement for an unprecedented five years. The \$68 million agreement also extends the Provincial Home Repair Program and assists 2,100 households

with low incomes to repair their homes, Mr. Speaker.

The Home Repair Program has been a great initiative. In my district, I see it every day, and I am sure all the members on this side see it and I am sure the members opposite see it as well, and probably in their own minds they will realize that it is not a waste. Twelve million dollars over three years to extend the Residential Energy Efficiency Program to assist up to 1,000 low-income homeowners per year with energy retrofits that will significantly improve affordability by reducing their heating costs.

I have heard it said many times by people in the district who have availed of it. They said that is one of the best programs that we have ever introduced. I believe I said it before, Mr. Speaker, that one of the technicians who goes around doing the efficiency test said that it was the best program that he has ever seen.

This is what we are doing for low income and seniors, Mr. Speaker. One million dollars to increase the Rent Supplement Program, bringing the current \$8 million annual allocation to \$9 million; that, I do not think, is a waste. That is a very good investment.

As the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills said this afternoon: Is there more to be done? Of course there is, Mr. Speaker. We always want to do more; we strive for more. That is why we are here, that is why this government is listening, and that is why this government is investing in the areas that we need to.

Before I go to some of the business and innovation initiatives, I would just like to touch on the supports for persons with disabilities. Budget 2014 will include \$12.6 million to advance inclusion and support employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. The expected signing of a new four-year labour market agreement for persons with disabilities will see \$12 million annual investment from the provincial government, supported by federal government investment of \$4.6 million. This program assists individuals with disabilities to acquire the skills, experience, and necessary supports to successfully prepare for and enter or remain in the workforce.

I think that these are the kind of investments that we should be doing. Because of the economy in this Province, because of the investments that we have made in innovation and in small business right across the Province, our government is making investments of over \$1 billion to diversify local economies in 2014, with a continued commitment to strengthen and build the business climate in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I just want to make these couple of statements because there are some examples there, if I get the time, I would like to be able to touch on. The provincial government will establish two Venture Capital Funds to provide support and expand opportunities for innovative start-up businesses. This is part of the provincial government's overall investment of \$210 million to support economic development initiatives. There is \$72 million for tax credits and incentives for business, and approximately \$45.5 million to support business development and stimulate growth.

We have the experience and knowledge to invest in these businesses. We have seen Newfoundland and Labrador businesses skyrocket, Mr. Speaker, to optimal successes – incentives and strategies that our government has made possible.

I say this because there are a couple of examples that I just want to use because of the investments and we are diversifying, and this is where I am trying to get to as well, and we need to – as was said earlier, the oil and gas will run out at some time, but right now we are able to take that money and invest it. Provincial Aerospace, for argument's sake, is a world leader in maritime surveillance as an aerospace and defence company, Mr. Speaker. Just some of the examples: Magine Snowboards in Port au Port; SubC Imaging, Clarenville; C & W is a fabrication company employing almost seventy people in Bay Bulls.

These are just some of the businesses that our government believes in. These are businesses that we have been proud to invest in because it does foster growth and employment in all regions across sectors of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, I have mentioned Dynamic Air Shelters just before that. I do not know if you would call it ironic or not, but the Leader of the Opposition was down visiting the Burin Peninsula apparently and I believe he did state that it highlights what you can do in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, and that the company's success was something to be proud of, along with the other industries on the Burin Peninsula such as OCI and Kiewit. These are the things that we are investing in. He did not go down there and say this was a bad investment. As a matter of fact, the Mayor of Grand Bank has commended the Progressive Conservative government for its continued support in rural Newfoundland. I was down in that area myself a couple of months ago, and the investments from IBRD were made in that area, in Grand Bank and Fortune. These are rural areas and this is where we are making the investment.

It is a funny thing – and I will just make this statement before I get into some more of my examples of how we are diversifying. What I thought was a little bit troubling, when the Leader of the Opposition was arriving on the Burin Peninsula, it is a funny thing that he did not proclaim to all the people down there that they were the last, the lowest, and the worst. I do not think that while he was there, he made that statement to them. That is sort of sad that they would even think that.

Mr. Speaker, it is a funny thing that a leader who wants to form a government would go out and say that about these investments and these people. It is a funny thing that they can do that sort of thing.

This was mentioned earlier, I think, by my colleague and just a couple of facts: real Gross Domestic Product, a growth of 0.5 per cent in 2013; a stable unemployment rate at 11.4 per cent, the lowest since 1973; retail sales growth of 3.6 per cent; capital investment growth of 2.4 per cent. Mr. Speaker, this is a government that is investing in business and industry, and this is a Province that is showing true growth.

In my former career, I was involved in manufacturing and got to learn a lot about the different types of manufacturing, what is out there in major manufacturing, and small- and

medium-sized business. Just as a fact, Mr. Speaker, in 2012, 450 manufacturing firms generated 11,300 person years of employment in this Province. That is nothing to sneeze at. In 2013, employment in manufacturing sectors increased by a 1,700 workforce.

We know, of course, the paper manufacturing in Corner Brook and petroleum refinery is large; however, there are many, many small and medium-sized industries in manufacturing in this Province, Mr. Speaker.

I like to go back to the District of Exploits, my own district, every now and then, we see it out our way because of the economy and I am told because of the economy that these companies are expanding. We have a company; it is sort of unique. Hi-Point Industries won the export award a couple of years ago. They do containment booms for oil spills and peat moss, which they ship in seven or eight different countries, Mr. Speaker. This is a manufacturing company that employs twenty-five people in the District of Exploits.

Mr. Speaker, in a small community –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. FORSEY: – and I was just reminded by the Minister of IBRD and the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor – Buchans that one of the persons working there is her son, and has been there awhile, I say. That company is doing very well.

In Point Leamington, a small community in my district, about 700 people, they have a glove factory there that exports – again, they export. Any company that exports, you are bringing back new money into the Province. They have been able to expand this year because they said the economy has been great. They have doubled their size, Mr. Speaker. Can you imagine a small community of 700 now has a workforce of 100 people working in a small manufacturing firm in a small community on the Northeast Coast in the District of Exploits?

AN HON. MEMBER: It is amazing.

MR. FORSEY: It is, and it is all because of the investments in the economy by this government,

the growth and doing the right thing and watching the economy grow.

Before I leave the District of Exploits, I will just touch on another one. These are not duplications, Mr. Speaker. These are unique industries. Newfoundland Styro, they have done the same thing. They have put on extra shifts. They have gone from maybe around twenty-five or thirty employees to over fifty employees. They have done very well and they are doing it in Newfoundland and Labrador. As a matter of fact, they are doing it in the District of Exploits in the community of Bishop's Falls.

These are stories that do not get out there very often and they need to.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. FORSEY: I am glad that the members on the opposite side seem to think that most of this stuff is funny. They always seem to come up with a joke out of some of this stuff and get a good laugh. Probably, one of these days, they will go out and represent these people in the right manner.

Mr. Speaker, Newfoundland and Labrador forest industry employs 5,500 people through direct and indirect jobs, valued at \$250 million. The newsprint industry produces 250,000 tons of newsprint annually. In the sawmill industry, the sawmill industry produces 80 million board feet annually.

When I was reading up on some of this stuff and I knew that they were doing very, very well – out in Central Newfoundland, we have a lot of small contractors and saw millers and woods contractors. Then I started reading up on some of the actual productions and this is just amazing that they are producing 80 million board feet annually. Approximately 90 per cent is sold to local markets, Mr. Speaker.

Of course, each sector works together to manage a sustainable forest industry, and they have to do that. They work together because some of the logs that are cut, some of it is for firewood, some is for sawlogs, for lumber, and some is for wood chips. They work very well together, the industry, so they can maintain a sustainable industry.

Out our way, Mr. Speaker, we have been very cognizant of what is going on in the industry, especially in the commercial woodcutting and also in the domestic end of it too, Mr. Speaker. As a government – and just a couple of years ago actually, I was involved with a committee where we looked at some of the policies that were probably restricting domestic woodcutters from being able to go out there and harvest the bit of wood that they needed for fuel and so on. As a part of a committee, this government was interested enough to form a committee, get out there, and relax some of the policies so as that the domestic woodcutters could go out there and harvest the wood without too much trouble.

Mr. Speaker, my time is growing short. I was hoping to touch on some of the investments in health care, but I will finish with this. There is not enough time to talk about all that this government has done. When the Opposition and especially the Leader of the Opposition gets up and he wants to streamline health care, to me, that sounds a bit scary when you streamline.

AN HON. MEMBER: Centralized.

MR. FORSEY: Centralized, thank you – and centralize health care. I am wondering what he plans on doing, whether he is going to cut the spending or increase taxes, Mr. Speaker. It has to be one or the other.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Wiseman): Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The hon. the Leader of the Third Party.

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

Here we are with the main motion on the Budget and getting sort of our last chance to speak to the Budget and to the concerns that we have. I find it interesting, and I do not always talk about this, but every time I hear the word it really gets to me and that is when I hear government talking about investments. They invest in health care, they invest in housing, and they invest in roads.

What I would like to point out to the government is that they have a particular job, we all have a job, and we have all been elected. We have been elected to be decision makers, to put in place programs that people need to have a good society. The government continues to use the word investment as a way to try to impress people. Between the dollar signs and the word investment, I think they hope that people are going to think differently about their expenditures.

Yes, when we spend money on the people of the Province, it is an investment, but not an investment in the sense that money comes back. It is invested in the people, there is no doubt about that, but government needs to acknowledge that it is doing its job. It is doing its job when it is maintaining the infrastructure. It is doing its job when it is making sure that we have schools that are in good repair and that we have resources for children in our schools. That it is doing its job when we have health care everywhere in the Province. That it is doing its job when it is planning the resources of this Province well. That is what their job is, Mr. Speaker, and they seem to forget that. They seem to want to just keep overwhelming people with their language.

When we look at the Budget and we see a Budget of billions of dollars, and when we hear the government talking about what they are doing with those billions of dollars, they use the language in a way trying to, as I said, overwhelm people. The thing is people know what life is all about. People know what they are dealing with.

One of the things this government continues to fail to do is to show us a plan that has a vision. They just think that if they keep spending the money and saying how much they are spending that people will not notice that they do not have plans, and they do not have plans, Mr. Speaker. That is the main problem.

I decided that for tonight I would look at my own district, and look at some of the realities in my own district. My district, which is in St. John's as we all know, Signal Hill – Quidi Vidi, and in a part of the city that is a very beautiful place to live. In a city that right now is doing very well because the City of St. John's, the

economy of St. John's is really benefiting from the oil and gas developments; there is no doubt about that. Some of the highest earners in the Province are living here.

The way of life in St. John's is certainly really great for an awful lot of people; there is no doubt about that. You go out Kenmount Road and we see the dealerships for cars that ten years ago did not even exist in Newfoundland. You would not have seen some of those cars, or if you saw it you saw one because a dealer brought the car in for somebody who could afford it. Now we have dealerships for Jaguar, now we have dealerships for BMW. That is how many cars are being sold.

In my district I can look around and yes, there are people who are driving the luxury cars that you did not see on the streets of St. John's years ago. There are a number of people in my district who are people who earn good salaries, I know that. Whole sections of my district, for example, down on Gower Street, you have whole blocks where the houses are owned by the oil companies. When I go campaigning, in one house after another there are people who are in working for oil companies and being maintained in these houses where people who lived ordinary lives in the city used to live ten years ago.

I know the money that is in my district, but I know more than that, Mr. Speaker. I also know the reality of the lives of many people who do not even see the life of these other people that I am talking about, and vice versa. I am talking about the many, many constituents in my district who call my office on a regular basis, especially with regard to housing. I sat down with my constituency assistant and did an analysis of what the biggest need is in my district. What is the largest number of phone calls that we get in my constituency office? It is housing; yet, this government insists on blindfolding us when it comes to housing.

Let's look at our social housing. Let's look at Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation. The corporation is a body of the government. It is a corporation that belongs to the government. Their money comes from the government. They have to do their planning based on the budget they are given, on the amount of money, the revenues they are given.

They can do up their budget, they can figure out what they are going to do with the money, but they do not have any say over the revenues they get.

Mr. Speaker, in 2013-2014 the budget for Newfoundland and Labrador Housing was \$46,792,600. In this year's budget it is \$41,494,600; \$5.2 million less than last year's budget. Yet, you go around St. John's in general, and my district in particular, and you will see the units belonging to NLHC that are closed up and are waiting to be repaired; or, you see the places that should be closed up because they are in such disrepair. I know NLHC is really trying to repair the units that need to be repaired, but they have to do their plan according to government's budget.

I have to ask, three years ago, did they know that in this year's budget they would have millions and millions of dollars less to spend? I bet they did not, because this government does not know from year to year what they are going to be putting in there. How can Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, for example, do its planning when they have a government that does not do the long-term planning?

Yes, people are coming to my office looking for assistance because they need a new place to live, for example, where the units are now in such disrepair that mould is a major issue, cold air coming in in the winter, and snow coming in under doors. Newfoundland and Labrador Housing has a plan in place, they are trying to do the repairs, but this year there is \$5.2 million less.

Mr. Speaker, government wants us to look only at the positive things they are doing. That is fine. I do not deny any of the positive things they are doing, but what I do have a real problem with is the lack of planning. I would have loved it if ten years ago they had sat down and said: By the year 2014, we are going to have all the units under Newfoundland and Labrador Housing refurbished. We are going to make sure that the funding is there to have it happen that way.

I heard it said here in the House today, the tenders are put out and there is a problem getting tenders responded to, that we do have enough

people to even build. Well, why are we not putting that into our plan with regard to training? Why are we not getting more young people trained, more people who are skilled workers who can be part of the building and the repair of units?

This is what I mean by planning, where you do not plan in silos but where you put your plan together, looking at all aspects together. So training is not over here in one corner and housing over here in another, but looking at: How could we get more people trained as skilled workers so that we have the workforce to be able to deal with the needs we have with regard to building houses? This is the kind of thing that really frustrates me, Mr. Speaker.

Then you get programs, things they put in place, convincing themselves that they are working fine. So let's look at AES, and look at that department. We know what has happened in that department. We know how many cuts have taken place. We know how human resources have been cut back in that department, but government thinks the phone system that they have makes up for that and everything is working great. Yet, has any one of them across the way – maybe they have, but they will not talk about it. Have they done what some of us have done and what some of our constituency assistants have done, and actually called into the line, left the line open to see how long you will wait to get the phone answered? It has been up to three and four hours waiting to have a phone answered.

That is the reality of the system at AES, and that is not the fault of the workers. That is because a system has been put in place without adequate resources. I am not against using the phone systems, but you still have to have human beings, you have to have enough lines. You have to have enough lines in place so that the demand is being met.

These are two of the highest calls that we get in my constituency office is calls around housing and calls around AES. We get other calls too, but these are two of the highest. When you get people saying they know they are eligible for going on Income Support and they wait days – they are told the cheque is coming and then they wait days and days for their first cheque. They

do not have any resources, and emergency money runs out really quickly. These are the kinds of phone calls we get. Then the constituency assistants have to call and say: Can't you get this hurried up? The person has nothing. You have told the person they are eligible, you have to get the cheque out to them.

This to me is a sign of our not having enough resources and not having enough people to do the work that needs to be done; yet, government has completely ignored it. Somebody is going to get up after me and they are going to try to undo everything that I am saying, but the reality is the phone calls that we get are real. The people who speak to us are real. The people I bump into on the street when I am in my district are real. This is a reality, yet they will not recognize it.

Slum landlords are a big issue here in St. John's, and I have it in my district as well. We need legislation to get at this. I do not know if people realize that we do have slum landlords and we do not have the legislation that is needed for people to get their rights recognized when they are in housing that is basically slum landlords.

The sad part, Mr. Speaker, and this is the part that is really unethical actually, is that sometimes people who have their housing subsidized by NLHC – they are not in an NLHC unit, they are being subsidized – are in housing units, are in rental units that basically are slum apartments. They are living in conditions that they should not be living in; conditions with mould, conditions with vermin and rodents, yet they have no power. They have absolutely no power as individuals.

You have people, for example, who are getting support from AES and – this is in the private accommodations – their rent is \$900 a month and they are on Income Support, and some of them are not on Income Support. Some of them are working but low income, and they are being subsidized in those private accommodations where the private landlord is not keeping up with the codes that should be paid attention to, yet the person who is renting does not have another place to go.

I had a phone call the other night from an older man who had to leave where he was living,

which was actually not a bad place at all but the person who owned it wanted to redo the apartment and have a relative live in it, so this man was trying to find a place. With the help of the Seniors Resource Centre, after two weeks he finally found a place. When I called him the other night to ask him how he was doing and he described where he is living, it was awful but he said: What can I do? I have no other place to live. This is where I have to live. Like I said, we do not have legislation to deal with the private accommodations that people are actually being paid for by the government to be living there.

It is the same way with individuals who are living in boarding houses. We all know, and unfortunately maybe everybody does not know, the conditions of some boarding houses and the lack of legislation to get at those conditions. This is the kind of thing government needs to be looking at. It needs to be looking at legislation that protects people, but they do not have a plan. There is much more to life than the money aspect. The money, yes, we need the money, but what is their plan? What is the legislation? How do they back up the programs that supposedly they have in place?

We cannot stand in this House and not think about people's lives. That is what we have to do. We cannot be mocked and jeered for talking about people's lives because that is who we are responsible for is people, and everything else has to do with people. Whether it is the infrastructure of roads or the infrastructure of the buildings that are part of our programs, the bottom line is what is the impact on people?

Last week I brought up the issue of the Adult Dental Program. That is another area where we are getting a lot of phone calls from people who need their dental work but who are not getting their dental work. Even though they are eligible, they have been told they are eligible, yet we have their letters of eligibility along with their applications for funding sitting for months inside of the department – sitting for months. How does this happen? Is it because there are not enough people doing the paperwork? Is it because there are not enough people doing the administration? Why do we not have enough people?

I do not believe in having people hired just for the sake of hiring people; however, if we cannot deliver our programs in a timely way, if we cannot make sure that people are getting their first cheque from AES in a timely fashion, if we cannot make sure that people who have been approved for adult dental work can get their work done, and that they are waiting for months and months – one of the people I referred to, I do not know if I referred to it in the House or not, but a gentleman with no teeth at all, waiting for his dentures for months, absolute months. That is only one case of hundreds.

As a matter of fact, I think the figure that I had last week, which is the accurate figure, there are well over 1,000 of these – well over 1,000 people waiting. What is the matter with this government? They do not recognize that what they did in cutting back on people is not a better system if people are not being taken care of. The same thing is true, we could go through – I do not have time, I only have just over a minute left.

I look at health care and we look at what is happening, especially here in St. John's in the emergency room in both hospitals. I do not know which is worse when it comes to this. Once again, it is because of the way in which things are structured, the way in which things are planned. It is not the individuals who are doing the work. The individuals who are doing the work are wonderful.

It is only recently, I know somebody who went into Hoyles Escasoni having been in the hospital for three months waiting for a bed. This woman is so happy. She cannot get over how beautiful – is the word she uses – the staff are at Hoyles Escasoni. The staff who are doing the work are wonderful people, but they are working under difficult circumstances. They care about people. They want to deliver programs, but they get frustrated because of the system that they are trying to work in. So whether it is working with NLHC or working at the hospital or working in the school system, no matter where it is, our public service sector workers get frustrated because things work against them doing the work that they know needs to be done.

So, Mr. Speaker, I leave these thoughts. I will have an opportunity before we are finished here

in this House to speak more about concerns that I have.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Innovation, Business and Rural Development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, once again it is always good to be able to get up and speak to the people of the Province and talk to them about what it is that we are doing as government. I have heard several people in the House today say government cannot get up and just talk about all the good that they do. We have never said that that is what we wanted to do. In fact, many, many times we have acknowledged that there is still more to do. I know in Question Period, particularly when I was involved in health care, there were many times when I was able to say yes, we have this much done, we have spent \$3 billion, but we always knew and know that there is more to do, Mr. Speaker.

So when I hear those accusations, I find them really difficult to listen to, Mr. Speaker. Because if we ever get to a stage in our lives when everything within our lives is perfect, then I do not think we are going to be right here in this spot. I expect we are going to be somewhere different. At least I certainly hope we are going to be somewhere different when we can say that are lives are absolutely perfect.

Mr. Speaker, that is not who we are and that is not what we talk about here. We talk about the realism of what has been accomplished, where we have come from and where we are, while acknowledging that we will never ever get to a point where all will be perfect. That is fair game. We talk about growth, but we talk about the rate of growth.

I heard one of the members just before our supper break, and he talked about things that were happening in the Province. He talked about the fact that perhaps Nova Scotia would be surpassing us next year, according to one

report, in terms of overall expenditure on major projects.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what I would say to that is that we have come so far from where we were in 2003 to where we are right now in 2014. I am happy to see that Nova Scotia is moving along as well and that New Brunswick is moving along and that PEI is moving along. When we talk about regions right here in Newfoundland and Labrador, we understand that when one region grows then the whole of that area grows. When we talk about the Atlantic Provinces, Mr. Speaker, we know that when one region grows it benefits all of Atlantic Canada.

We are not about saying we need to be better, we want to do better, and that is it. It is about understanding the realism of what is going, Mr. Speaker. We can lay out project after project that is showing huge success, we can talk about other things that we know are coming in the future, and at that time I expect that they will be saying that Newfoundland and Labrador has the lead again. I have no doubt about that. We have the lead right now. Is it possible that Nova Scotia might have a little bit of a lead next year? Yes, it is. Are we going to be back there in a year's time? Absolutely, we are, but that is good for all of us, and we need to understand it from that perspective.

I also heard, Mr. Speaker, the previous speaker when she was referring to the fact that she does not like to hear what we have invested and she does not like to hear anything other than what is the plan. Well, if there is no plan in place, tell me how things like this are happening. Tell me how in ocean technology, for example, we are seeing huge, huge numbers of people invest in this Province and seeing a future here. Tell me how we are creating 17,500 jobs in tourism if there is no plan. Tell me how we have created more than 1,000 jobs in aquaculture and spent \$200 million if there is no plan. Tell me how we have created 5,500 jobs in forestry and spent \$250 million if there is no plan. That is where she goes every time: there is no plan, there is no plan, and there is no plan. This just does not happen, Mr. Speaker. All of a sudden these industries do not just get better. This happens because there is good planning, because there is vision, because we believe in the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. We do not think

we are the lowest. We do not think we are worst. We believe in our people, we see what they can do. We support those people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: Mr. Speaker, when we talk about Muskrat Falls and we see 1,500 jobs this year alone, does she think there is no plan in place? Again, that it just happened that 1,500 people found employment? When we talk about advanced technology – listen to this: advanced technology in Newfoundland and Labrador, \$1.6 billion industry right here today in this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: One hundred and sixty-five companies, almost 4,000 jobs, did it just happen? Did someday somebody just wake up and say oh, I think today we will go out and we will make sure that advanced technology works and all of a sudden we are going to have \$1.6 billion worth of investment happening in the Province? No, Mr. Speaker; that comes from vision. That comes from believing in our people. That comes from having insight. That comes from putting together a good plan that sees this happen.

Mr. Speaker, think about that CETA deal that was just negotiated. I have to commend the lead negotiators for Newfoundland and Labrador out of IBRD because they are phenomenal.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: We talk about our civil service all the time; we have some of the best employees anywhere. I know from my time here – just a short period of time in IBRD now and a short period of time when I was there for seven or eight months before – that when I met with federal ministers around this file they said to me your negotiators are the ones we look to, your negotiators are the ones who are coming here with a plan and a vision, and the rest of the country is sponging from them and their ideas, Mr. Speaker.

We are talking about a plan here with CETA, hundreds of millions of dollars' worth, Mr. Speaker, that will see us now be able to sell into the European markets where there are 500

million consumers and where the GDP is \$17 trillion. I do not know how much money that is. I know that is an awful lot of money.

That benefits everybody in Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker. There will be so many opportunities here for us in terms of the fishery, in terms of oil and gas, and in terms of other products that we are able to get into those markets. It did not just happen though. It took this government and some of the initiatives that this government brought to the table to make much of that happen. I refer to my federal counterparts who told me that first-hand.

Let us not say that we do not know what we are doing over here on the other side. Let us acknowledge, as the people on the other side have said, that we need to talk about the good and the bad. Let us acknowledge that some very good planning has happened and that the results of that planning are seen everywhere in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, it does not surprise me one little bit that the Conference Board of Canada has been able to look at Newfoundland and Labrador and give us an A⁺ rating for real GDP growth in 2013. That does not surprise me, but again that did not just happen.

When I met with APEC – and I know the member opposite spoke about that just before supper. Well, I was there that morning as well. I spoke to many of the people there. Before we got there I had some conversation the evening before and that morning. They are blown away by what they see in terms of a vibrant economy here, Mr. Speaker.

I do not know why it is that the members on the other side want to tell our people that we do not have a vibrant economy. We can hardly walk anywhere in this city without seeing a crane somewhere, Mr. Speaker, without seeing evidence of all of that economic development happening here in this city, in this Province.

In rural Newfoundland, \$152 million has been invested by IBRD. Mr. Speaker, 71 per cent of that has been invested in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. We see that, we feel that. Do we have it all done? I recall earlier the Minister of

AES spoke this evening and he said, no, of course we do not.

Have we made strides? You bet we have made strides, Mr. Speaker. You bet that the growth rate, the rate that we have seen is so significant that people in other parts of this country are acknowledging it, that people in other parts of the world are acknowledging it, Mr. Speaker, and they want to come here.

Even though the Member for Quidi Vidi does not want to hear it, they want to invest here, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS SULLIVAN: They want to be part of this economy.

I know she said she does not like the word investment. She does not like us to talk about investments that we make, but, Mr. Speaker, some of those investments that we make attract inward investment here as well.

She talked about Venture Capital this afternoon and said: How is that going to attract business? Mr. Speaker, she does not understand Venture Capital. Venture Capital is about supporting what we have. It is about taking those pre-commercialized industries, businesses, and start-ups to the commercialization stage. It is about helping early and mid-stage investors, Mr. Speaker, particularly our younger companies and our younger entrepreneurs. It is about helping them to make it bigger and to be a better part of Newfoundland and Labrador in a way that they want to contribute.

That is what we are talking about. That is what we are committed to doing, Mr. Speaker. I am sorry, but we are going to continue that. We are going to continue to diversify this economy. We are going to continue to see places like autonomous ocean systems laboratories, the Centre for Marine Simulation at Marine Institute. We are going to continue to invest in them.

We are going to continue to invest in the aquaculture industry, in the forestry industry, and in the agrifoods industry, Mr. Speaker. I did not mention it; 6,500 jobs, that just did not

happen. It was sound investment of a \$500 million industry that saw those 6,500 jobs get created. Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue to do this.

Aerospace and defence, Mr. Speaker, who thought that in Newfoundland and Labrador we would be able to talk about this industry, an industry that employs an estimated 1,500 workers in ten to fifteen core A and D companies generating more than \$350 million in annual revenues; a 300 per cent growth rate since 2004. We need, as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, to be proud of that. We need to recognize that we have supported those industries, we have supported those entrepreneurs, and that in the aerospace and defence industry we are making differences.

Life sciences, Mr. Speaker, is another area that I had not envisioned being able to talk about ever when I was growing up, when I was choosing areas where I thought I might want to spend some of my career time. We invested \$29 million there to support research and excellence. What we are getting back is truly amazing in terms of innovative research, in terms of health providers in small companies being able to make inroads in new areas of life science and health care.

The RDC, Mr. Speaker, which is doing some tremendous work in this Province, has invested about \$7 million. If you go around this Province and see the inward investment that is coming to us as a result of some of the work that has been done by RDC, Mr. Speaker, we have much to be proud of. We do not ever want that taken away from us. We do not want to be told that we are any less than we are, because we do not need to be told that. We have every reason to be proud of our accomplishments.

The people of Newfoundland and Labrador are not to be defied by people hungry for power, who are willing and wanting to pull us down again, Mr. Speaker. We do not want that. We are not going to have that. We do not want to ever go back to the stage where we felt like poor second cousins. We do not want to go back to the point where we thought that we did not measure up, Mr. Speaker, because we measure up in every area. We absolutely measure up. In

fact, others are trying to measure up to us in many of those areas.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about other things that are happening in this Province, we talk about what is happening in AES where we are trying to work on encouraging job creation in this Province. We recognize that our workforce has grown by 40 per cent in just fifteen years, Mr. Speaker. Do we have it all done? No. Is everybody attached to the labour market? No, but as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians we do not need to say anymore that we have the highest unemployment rate. We need to be able to say the growth is steady. We are seeing improvement. Year over year we are seeing that improvement.

The number of people who are working these days, Mr. Speaker, is the highest we have ever had in Newfoundland and Labrador. The number of people in receipt of Income Support has decreased by 15,000 since 2003. So we are seeing more attachment to the labour market, Mr. Speaker.

That is in the goal. It is not all going to be realized overnight; it has not been. It has taken work and it has taken a plan, Mr. Speaker. There was a sound plan in place. There was a vision in place, and yes, we understand we have more work to do and we are happily going to continue doing that work, Mr. Speaker.

We talk about strong communities because that is what we want. We understand that when we have wealth we need to ensure that we invest that wealth right throughout this Province. We want strong communities in all parts of Newfoundland and Labrador. That is why, of the \$152 million spent in terms of monies in the IBRD portfolio, 71 per cent of it has gone to rural Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: How much?

MS SULLIVAN: Seventy-one per cent has gone there, Mr. Speaker.

We know, we understand. We want to ensure that rural Newfoundland and Labrador is reaping all of the benefits of what is happening here in the East Coast for the most part, but also from Labrador, from all areas of this Province. We

take it all and we make judgements that will see a difference for everyone, and we will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

We talk about, as well, stronger communities. I know we always want to talk about infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. Well, we are talking about – not million, as Joey would say – \$5.3 billion that has been invested in schools and hospitals since 2004. Now, can somebody say that does not make a difference, that we do not want to hear about those investments? It makes a difference, Mr. Speaker, because we feel better when we know that things around us are improving. It feels better because our psyche knows that things are getting better.

We know that we have 171 sound health care facilities in this Province – and members on the other side laugh because they want to do away with them, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MS SULLIVAN: They have said they want to streamline, but we know we will continue to have those health care facilities. We will continue to ensure that people are served as close to home as they possibly can be, Mr. Speaker. That is where we have always been and that is where we will continue to work forward.

Mr. Speaker, that is where our pride in who we are, as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, comes from because we recognize that together we are building a Province that we can be proud of. We are recognizing that together we listen, we understand, and we put together something that for every person in this Province is important. That is where we are, Mr. Speaker. That is where we want to stay.

We will continue to build that vibrant economy that the rest of the provinces in Canada are able to see. We will continue to build that, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to decrease taxes, as we have; \$600 million in savings to residents of Newfoundland and Labrador just this year.

In terms of personal income tax, we have the lowest in Atlantic Canada since 2006; \$2 billion back to the residents of this Province, Mr. Speaker. Small business corporate tax is

reduced to 3 per cent. Mr. Speaker, I can go on and on and on about what has been accomplished while recognizing that there is more to do. I know that the people of this Province are going to give us time to do more, because wherever I go that is what I hear.

In my own district I hear time and time again of all of the improvements, of how they feel so much better, of how there is a spring in their step that says we are on the way to improving and seeing a much better Newfoundland and Labrador than we ever thought we could imagine.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. EDMUNDS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is certainly an honour to rise again to speak to Budget 2014. The title itself leaves some room for question: Shared Prosperity. These are some things that I am going to talk about. Mr. Speaker, I listened to some pretty exciting presentations from across the way. I still think the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale has beaten the Minister of AES in terms of presentation. I do not know what he said, but it was certainly exciting.

I would like to talk about some of the comments that have come from the opposite side about where we have come and where we have been. Over the last ten years if you pick up any magazine that looks at oil royalties and how much they have increased in the last ten years, they are starting to drop off a little bit now, but look at the revenue just from oil royalties alone.

You talk about where we have been and where we are now, I think the reality, Mr. Speaker, is that this government should be saying where we could have been if we had managed the royalties in a much better fashion, instead of coming to the point after ten years, after that much revenue, having to borrow \$1 million to implement a Budget. I think that is pretty disgusting with what they had and what they did with it to the point where we are now.

I heard the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills talk about some of the investments they made. I will stand up here and I will welcome any investment. We all do; we all welcome investment. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I have heard the minister announce a new arena in Makkovik to the point where when I went back home I expected to see five arenas. Twice a year, they announce an arena for Makkovik, but in reality we are only getting one. We hope that sometime in the next two years that the arena will be completed and we look forward to that.

Look at the investment that is made by this Province, Mr. Speaker. I will use the example of the arena. Isn't it good to have tripartite funding? I think the Nunatsiavut Government has invested in the arena in Makkovik. The federal government has invested in the arena in Makkovik. We are talking about facilities that if you go into any community, any town, and there is an arena there.

Are we asking for something special when we ask for an arena? No, Mr. Speaker, we are asking for what everyone else has. I think that is a reality. We cannot give you a pat on the back because you went out of your way to do something special. Mr. Speaker, they went out of their way to give something that everyone else has. Are we that different that we have to be surprised when we get what everyone else in this Province has? I think we should get what everyone else is getting.

Mr. Speaker, you can pat yourself on the back, and I will certainly clap for what we get. I would just like to mention that we should not have to be asking for things that the rest of this Province takes in stride or accepts.

I hear the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale talk about the sun is shining and then, the next speaker, I hear the minister saying maybe it is not shining so bright. You get mixed messages, but it was certainly entertaining I have to say that to the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale.

Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of things I would like to talk about. I would like to talk about next month being seniors' month. I heard the minister speaking just before me talking about the great things they have done, and certainly any government would give itself a pat on the

back; but I am sure that every hon. member on that side of the House, on this side of the House, has gotten calls from seniors in their districts talking about the hardships that our seniors are facing.

It is good to see an increase in benefits to the seniors. It is a bit disappointing that it averages out to six cents a day – six cents a day – while we see the cost of living going up significantly more than that.

I would like to talk about the Paddon Home for a second, if I may, Mr. Speaker. I think government committed just over \$6 million – if you factor the cost of making a unit possible, it is about \$300,000 in Labrador as opposed to maybe \$260,000 in St. John's, in the metro area. That gives you about twenty beds. If you look at the region that the long-term care facility in Happy Valley-Goose Bay serves, a twenty-bed extension is going to be filled up before they are done. What we do have is a building there that government said they had installed a new fire sprinkler system. If they have not, then they should have if they said they did. So, I am going to assume that it is done. It has been sitting idle for four years. The electricity is on, the heat is on, but it has been sitting idle while we watch seniors in the hallway of the hospital. Not the long-term care facility portion of the home in Goose Bay, Mr. Speaker, but the hospital.

That hospital serves as a trauma unit for Northern Labrador, in some cases Southern Labrador, and in some cases Lab West. There was an incident last Monday with two medevacs from the North Coast. One of those medevacs had to go to a family member's home. It was a medical evacuation; they had to go to a family member's home because there was not any room.

If you had another facility that is available as it is, maybe this would not be happening. The need for facilities as we look at our aging population versus the growth rate in our Province, then there is always going to be a further demand for seniors' care. Here we are sitting on a building, Mr. Speaker, that could be used and it is not for four years. The people in Happy Valley-Goose Bay are wondering if this is going to turn into an office complex.

Mr. Speaker, this government cannot answer the question. We have asked it in the House; we have asked it in petitions. Do you know what the Paddon Home is being used for now? The Paddon Home in Happy Valley-Goose Bay is being used as a training exercise facility for the RCMP. There are far more better uses for the Paddon Home than a training facility for the RCMP.

Why not use it for what it was designed for? I fully realize that it may need some upgrades. I do not think it is to the tune of \$6.2 million. It is available, it is there, and the need for it has been proven over and over again. I have asked with petitions on the Paddon Home in past years. My hon. colleague for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair has asked about the Paddon Home. As a matter of fact just last week she asked questions about it, but we cannot seem to get an answer, Mr. Speaker – we cannot get an answer.

What I would like to talk about in the last time that I have, Mr. Speaker, is about Muskrat Falls. I would like to lead off with some of the comments that were made by government and by Nalcor officials prior to the start of this project. The first one I will talk about is that everyone is worried about the social impacts. Nalcor said that the social impacts because of the project in Muskrat Falls are going to be – and I quote – minimal, Mr. Speaker.

Let's look at the reality and the contradiction to the impacts. We have seniors or retired families who are leaving Happy Valley-Goose Bay because they cannot afford the cost. We have middle-income families who cannot pay their rent. Why? Because it went from \$800 to \$3,500. Now, I do not know if that is a minimal impact or not. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, one rental unit was \$3,500; \$4,000 if they were to do the cleaning for that apartment. Just to point that out to anyone who may want to question it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we are even seeing an impact in the cost of commodities in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. The social impacts are impacted to a point where families who are retired are being forced to move because they cannot compete, and that is not talking about those who are homeless. We have all heard the story about Newman's apartment building shutting down. I

commend the Minister Responsible for Housing for his quick intervention, I really do commend him for it, but we still have short-term solutions and more importantly we still have long-term solutions.

Those are just the social impacts. I talked about the environmental impacts before and I am going to talk about it again, because they are still relative and they are still there. There were a lot of concerns raised during the environmental assessment process. In following that, Mr. Speaker, Nalcor said – and I quote – there will be no environmental impacts downstream from the Muskrat Falls Project – no environmental impacts.

Well, Mr. Speaker, 470 kilometres away there was a project many years ago, the Upper Churchill Project, and as a result of that project the mercury levels in Lake Melville are gone up to 0.03 per cent. That is from a project that is almost 500 kilometres away. Now, Mr. Speaker, at 0.05 per cent parts per million of mercury in the food chain, then the people living in Lake Melville will have to consume fish products based on Health Canada regulations. It was the former Minister of Environment and Conservation, the Member for Harbour Main, who told us that. I asked what would happen if the mercury levels exceeded 0.05 per cent and that is what he told me in this House, that the Health Canada guidelines would kick in.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to stand up here and talk about the benefits for my district. Every member gets up and he talks about their district. How does the Muskrat Falls Project benefit my district? I realize that there are people from my district who actually got jobs, but there are a lot of people from my district, including the community of Natuashish, who are asking me how come they are not getting jobs now, Mr. Speaker. That is one of the benefits.

The other benefits are – I am sorry, Mr. Speaker; there are no other benefits. I would just like to point out one thing. I talked to the Minister of Municipal Affairs a couple years ago and I actually asked him outside of the House of Assembly process if the District of Torngat Mountains would get a raise in power rates because of Muskrat Falls. We had a long

conversation, Mr. Speaker, and at the end of the conversation he said no.

Being a government member, I was very confident in what he said. The next thing we hear, Mr. Speaker, is that Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro is going to PUB for a 25 per cent increase. So whatever faith I had is shaken, if not gone.

There is another issue, Mr. Speaker. We do have the potential of suffering environmental impacts. When you get down to the lower end of Lake Melville going out toward Groswater Bay, the water from Lake Melville channels through a little area called Carwala Run, and it goes sometimes at eighteen knots. Just on the outside of Carwala Run, there is a little community called Rigolet. It is one of the best places in the Province for salmon.

Now, I do not know what the impacts are of raised mercury levels going through a forest water tunnel, but I did check around and it seems that you get a compression of mercury levels as water moves fast.

Nalcor is not committed to monitoring the lake, and I think we can appreciate that the Nunatsiavut Government has taken it upon themselves to monitor the levels in Lake Melville. The reason they do that, Mr. Speaker – I have said it in this House and I will say it again – is because there are 15,000 fathoms of subsistent fishing gear that goes out into Lake Melville every summer. Fifteen thousand fathoms is enough to span the lake twice.

This is not a sport fishery, this is a food fishery. It is used by Inuit who live in Lake Melville, by members of NunatuKavut who live in Lake Melville, and by the Innu Nation community of Sheshatshiu that lives in Lake Melville. I do not want to be the one to say I told you so, but, Mr. Speaker, that is looming and it is going to be a controversial issue.

In the last bit of time I have, Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a little bit about the power rates in Labrador in general. I have heard the Premier and I have heard the member responsible for Labrador talk about when Muskrat Falls comes on-line and being connected to the provincial-wide power grid. I

know that residents of Labrador West and the residents of Lake Melville are experiencing not so high power rates. Actually, it is a bit of a benefit.

However, I wonder what will happen to these power rates once Lab West and Lake Melville connect to the provincial-wide grid. I can see it being a 200 per cent increase. I cannot see it going as high as 300 per cent, but that all depends on what the PUB brings to the table in terms of requests. I do know there are some really nice power rates being offered to Nova Scotia and down the Eastern Seaboard, some really attractive power rates.

I tried to check to see what the cost of construction was for the James Bay Project, Mr. Speaker, and I could not even get a number. I could not get a number in terms of cost overruns. All they said is it was very, very much higher than what they budgeted. The average budget for dam construction is in the area of an average cost overrun of 56 per cent.

AN HON. MEMBER: What?

MR. EDMUNDS: Fifty-six per cent is the average cost overrun for any dam. The lowest is 54 per cent; the highest is 108 per cent. That is the world dam construction report in 2000. I wonder what the cost is if it comes to the minimum, which I do not anticipate it will. I am thinking \$10.5 billion.

My question is: Who is going to pay the cost overruns? If it is 60 per cent you are looking at a \$12 billion project; twice the budget, or almost twice the budget. The question, I think I can answer it here. Cost overruns for the project are going to be paid by the people of this Province, the taxpayers of this Province.

We are going to give a real good deal to Nova Scotia. That is actually going to increase their power rates if they go on-line and get away from coal burning facilities, but in order for us to give it to them for that price we have to pay for the project ourselves. Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day – I have given my reasons.

I heard the Member for Lake Melville before stand up and ask me where I stood. Now, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Lake Melville and

every other member over there knows exactly where I stand.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is certainly an honour for me to rise in the House and speak to Budget 2014 again this evening, Mr. Speaker.

The last time I stood up and spoke I was a bit fiery. Tonight I think I am going to counter some of what the members opposite have been saying again. I have to tell you, listening to the members opposite is quite depressing. You would have to think: Boy, she is gone, she is gone. There is so much negativity. You have to wonder, what are they planning for this Province of Newfoundland and Labrador?

The Member for St. John's South, Mr. Speaker, got up this afternoon and started talking about: Oh my, it must be getting close to an election. The members opposite, all they talk about is how rosy things are. I said to myself, it must be getting close to an election because all the members opposite talk about is how negative things are. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, why are they doing that?

We were criticized by the Member for St. John's South today for raising the income threshold for Income Support. Can you believe it? Shameful! Absolutely shameful! Some of the most disadvantaged people in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and he was criticizing our move to increase their income and their contributions by 5 per cent. It is absolutely deplorable, Mr. Speaker. I was shocked. It certainly was not very left wing, I did not think, Mr. Speaker.

It also makes me wonder: Why is there such a theme of negativity? Well, they think they are going to fool people into believing things are bad, which people realize the realities of where

we were. As the Minister of Innovation and Business said earlier, things are not perfect. We are working towards always making them better, but we do not live in a perfect world and that is the reality of where things are.

What are they doing? Are they trying to change our psyche to make people ready so that if they ever did form government – which I do not think will be happening any time soon. Is it because they want to get people ready to justify why they are going to raise taxes, to justify why they are going to cut health care in rural Newfoundland and Labrador and just have centres of excellence and in rural communities close down our clinics?

Is that what they are trying to do, Mr. Speaker, build people up for the significant letdown type of left wing Liberal Administration comprised of members opposite would form? That is certainly not something I am worried about because I know that this Province of Newfoundland and Labrador is on a trend that is growing and we want to keep that trend in place. Most people in Newfoundland and Labrador can really see through it for what it actually is.

He also talked about lowering salaries. Can you imagine? He wants to lower the salaries of civil servants, who for years under a Liberal Administration in the 1990s were subject to a wage freeze. Is that what he is talking about bringing the people of Newfoundland and Labrador back to? Our civil servants received a 20 per cent wage increase, a well-deserved wage increase, Mr. Speaker. That is the kind of thing our government supports, and members opposite are talking about lowering salaries. I do not know, Mr. Speaker, what that is all about.

Talk about misrepresentation of the facts. There was an accusation made earlier by one of the members opposite that we are misrepresenting the fact. Let's talk about misrepresentation. Let's talk about the good things that are happening in our districts, Mr. Speaker, good things like a recent announcement for \$10 million in roadwork in the Coast of Bays; \$10 million is quite significant. What did the members opposite do? Oh, boy, did they ever try to misrepresent that. I have never heard such misrepresentation in my life. If we were allowed to say it, Mr. Speaker, I would say the

members opposite were lying, but that is not something we are allowed to say in this House.

So let's talk about how those facts were misrepresented. He gets up and asks a question to the Minister of Transportation and Works: How come only 20 per cent of the roads are going to be done? How inaccurate could that possibly be, Mr. Speaker? The best roads announcement that the District of Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune has ever received since Confederation, and he tried to make people feel angry about it. How shameful.

The reality is there are thirty-three kilometres announced for the Coast of Bays, Mr. Speaker. This year \$5 million of that roadwork will be paid for; next year \$5 million of that roadwork will be paid for. It will be entirely completed by next year, if not sooner, depending on how the contractor works.

To get up and mislead people by playing games and insinuating that only 20 per cent was going to be done when nothing could be further from the truth is absolutely shameful. It is certainly not the kind of leadership that I would ever vote for in this Province. I am confident in 2015 we are going to see that a lot of people realize what is being said and what is really happening across the way.

Let's talk about the roadwork and let me prove my point. In 1999, how much roadwork was invested in the Coast of Bays? It was \$123,000. In the year 2000, how much money was invested in the roadwork in the Coast of Bays? We wonder why we do not have a road fit to drive on. In the year 2000, it was \$410,000. In 2001, it was \$870,000. Then in 2002, oh my, it must have been an election year, \$1,047,000.

By 2003, the Williams Administration had come into being. Thank goodness, because today we have a Province that is much stronger because of it. The mass exodus of people outside the Province has been curbed and, in fact, 18,000 people have moved back. We are going to keep working at it until all 70,000 of them move back, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS PERRY: In 2003, the budget was \$848,000. In 2004, it was \$836,000 and so on. When I did the summary of the ten years prior to my taking office, a total of \$6,617,000 was spent in roadwork over ten years, Mr. Speaker.

What has happened since 2007? Our first investment was \$2.3 million for five kilometres that year. Those kilometres were directly in the community from St. Alban's Drugs to St. Joseph's Cove. It was a section of road not fit to drive on, far worse than any section of road we have in place even today.

Those investments continued. There was another investment of \$10 million, another investment of \$1.8 million, another investment of \$1.5 million, \$1.8 million, and this year, \$10 million. So, how much money has been invested in the seven years since I have been a member? It is \$20,431,600.20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS PERRY: That is the reality of the type of investment that our government is making in Newfoundland and Labrador and that is the realization our government has about the importance of rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

That leads me into talking about the negativity again a little bit. All I could think, all you hear from the members opposite is negative, negative, negative. They are trying to make people in the communities – they are trying to incite anger and have people going around saying negative things and trying to make Facebook an evil place. The negativity and what they are trying to do is absolutely incredible.

I have to stop and think, you consider what is going on in today's world, you think about the wars that are taking place today, you think about those 200 girls who are kidnapped, Mr. Speaker, and no one is able to retrieve them. All of this stuff happening in the world and they are jumping up and down about potholes and trying to make people angry about potholes when there is potholes everywhere in Newfoundland and Labrador, everywhere in Canada, and everywhere in North America. We have snow, we have freeze and thaw, and there will be potholes, Mr. Speaker.

Then, it makes me think about how, in heaven's name, are we going to be attracting good people to the arena of politics, people who have something to offer, people who want to give something back to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, people who have good lives and good careers? Why would they ever give that up to come into something like this where you have to listen to misrepresentation all of the time, negativity, and people who want things to be worse? Whereas, this side of the House want things to be better; that is what we are working towards in this Province.

Let's talk a little bit about some of those innovative things we are doing. Again, earlier this evening the Minister of Innovation spoke about our investments in aquaculture. It was in this House, Mr. Speaker, only a relatively short time ago that the Liberal member for St. Barbe called to have our aquaculture operations on the South Coast shut down. The Liberals called on our government to send those 1,000 rural people who have meaningful employment in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, they were calling to send them back to Alberta or to put them on the unemployment system because they wanted to shut her down.

I am going to look even right here. I saved this tweet because I was so upset and so disgusted. During the Liberal debate, August 22, 2013 James McLeod tweeted during the Liberal leadership convention: Dumaresque asked Jim Bennett how he would expand coastal aquaculture. The short answer: He would not; he would try to shut it down. There it is, Mr. Speaker, on Twitter.

It is shameful. You talk about wanting to rebuild rural Newfoundland and you want to shut down an entire region on the South Coast. It is absolutely deplorable, Mr. Speaker.

There is no question in my mind how the Liberals would run the fishery into the ground because we have all seen it before. As the population statistics show, starting in 1992 the mass exodus started to happen. We have been working very hard to restore the traditional fishery, and I have every confidence that our government is in the best position to do that and our government is the government that believes

in the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. People really do matter. We do not give it lip service, Mr. Speaker; we actually let the rubber hit the road and work hard and roll up our sleeves to make it happen.

I have to say, it was such a great weekend for me this weekend. I had the honour and privilege of having the incoming Premier, Mr. Frank Coleman, in my district. He sat down and had very engaging discussions, one on one, with people who work in the aquaculture sector and with people who work in the wild fishery. We had some very frank discussions.

We talked about the total allowable catch for halibut. We talked about tuna licences. We talked about specific solutions that can be put in place to make the incomes of rural fishers more attractive and to make the industry more attractive to young people, because it is a sustainable sector. We want to ensure that as young people look at their career options in Newfoundland and Labrador that they continue to consider the traditional fishery as a very lucrative opportunity and we are going to be there to support them all the way in that regard.

That leads me into talking a little bit now about Muskrat Falls. Before I do that, there is one more point I want to make. The PCs have a vision – and I am going to talk about that vision again in a little while from an economic point of view. We have a vision of a better place for Newfoundland and Labrador where people matter, where rural Newfoundland continues to be strong and vibrant, where our roads are better, where our health care is better. What is the Liberal strategy? Attack, smear, and try to discredit one's character, centralize services.

I have to say, I have really enjoyed my time in politics, and in particular the last six years have been wonderful. The last few months though, with the election and whatever is happening across the way in the negativity – I have to say, my mother, God love her, she has been passed away now for a few years, but I have always been interested in politics. Whenever I talked about politics she would shake her head and say: Tracey, my darling, do not go into politics; you do not want to go into politics; politics is very dirty. I never did really understand what she meant. I know now. I have it figured out now,

Mr. Speaker. I have seen some things that made even the hair on my head stand up in the last few months.

Let's talk about benefits and what our investments are doing for Newfoundland and Labrador, and what our long-term vision is achieving. Muskrat Falls is an excellent example and a case in point of how we are doing just that. We hear members opposite get up sometimes and talk about the oil money. What are you going to do? How are you investing the oil money so that we have a sustainable future?

What is Muskrat Falls if it is not an investment in a renewable resource that will sustain us for decades, if not centuries to come, into perpetuity, Mr. Speaker, a sustainable resource? That is what you call vision. That is what you call long-term thinking. That is where, in the context of the big picture, Muskrat Falls will generate sufficient revenue so that when the oil money dries up we will not have to worry about becoming a poor Province again. We will be very, very wealthy supplying power and being the mega powerhouse for all of North America.

In terms of the dollars that are earned, and when we had the Muskrat Falls debate here in the House there was a lot of pressure coming from members opposite talking about hydro bills and wanting us to make it mandatory that all profits made from Muskrat Falls be put into lowering our light bills. The reality is, Mr. Speaker, the profits may be so significant there may be money over and above that to invest in schools, in roads, and in whatever.

The choice, Mr. Speaker, of how to spend the revenue is left to future governments of the day. It is left to the people of the day. There is one thing I have every confidence in, that they will have a wonderful time spending it. We are going to see significant improvements come from Muskrat Falls forever and a day for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I, for one, feel very happy and positive about where we are as a place and as a people in Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker. We have never been doing so well. The negativity that comes from across the way is certainly not going to deter me and it is not going to deter many in this Province.

I listened not very long ago – as the Liberal momentum took a little step forward, business confidence in Newfoundland and Labrador took a little step backward. What is the correlation there, I wonder? People do not have confidence in a Liberal Administration, Mr. Speaker, to steer this ship where it needs to go.

People do not have to worry because this government, and our new leader, Mr. Frank Coleman, will be a fantastic leader. I think that maybe is why they got so excited about trying to discredit him, because they know he is a fantastic fellow. He is a gentleman. He is an intellect, and he, Mr. Speaker, will continue to lead Newfoundland and Labrador into wealth and prosperity for the next decade to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Littlejohn): The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is my privilege, of course, to stand here again tonight and speak about Budget 2014. Of course, over the last few hours in this House we have had significant debate on what has been really a sensitive issue for members opposite. I think, gathering from what we have been listening to tonight, they spent a lot of time reading a speech that I gave at the Delta when, in actual fact, some of the things they should have focused on was reading their own Budget documents because everything that I had mentioned at the Delta just a few days ago came from the Budget Speech.

As a matter of fact, I have some time tonight and I will spend a bit of time talking about this. I have a full hour tonight. This will be about the fourth or fifth hour giving me the opportunity to speak to Budget 2014, and I will go through this because I have some time.

One of the things that I will say is many people have gotten up tonight and they talked about facts. Do you know what? It reminded me of a comment that said: I am not worried about the

facts. That all they are trying to do is strengthen a story. That was told to me by a gentleman not that long ago.

We have listened to a few speakers here tonight, and I just want to basically address some of the comments made by the MHA for Bonavista North. When he stood up today he talked about the Conference Board of Canada, and he talked about the last rating that was given to the Province. The member is correct. The Conference Board of Canada, he quoted them correct.

There were some other surveys and some other reports that have come out from the Conference Board of Canada that the member did not mention. One that just recently came out said that by 2035 – as a matter of fact, this particular comment which was from the Conference Board of Canada was addressing our population, where they would see it going between now and 2025, is one that was very sensitive. As a matter of fact, it created quite a bit of a response from certain members in government. That Conference Board of Canada report says that the population in our Province by 2035 would actually go from where it is today of around 527,000 people to 482,000 people.

I say, Mr. Speaker, if you want to quote a report from the Conference Board of Canada, well then do the right thing and make reference to the other reports that are out there as well. As a matter of fact, in that report that the member opposite was talking about, the Conference Board of Canada also made mention of it. That there were risks in the fact that we did have a good rating, and the risk was this, that our economy is dependent on oil. Now we all know that, Mr. Speaker.

This government has made a lot of comments recently about the current state of the economy in our Province. Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? It is; things are pretty good in certain areas of our Province right now, especially in the Northeast Avalon. There is no question their economy is good, but there also have been a lot of comments made about planning and how you plan an economy in our Province. When you plan an economy, what you have to do is you have to look forward.

As the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair said – we were chatting about it just a few days ago - she said there is a reason why rear-view mirrors are smaller than windshields. When you are looking forward, when you are making a business plan, what you do is you have to predict or forecast or project where you see the economy in the future. Their own budget documents – I am going to get into this in a lot of detail in a few minutes, because I have some time, and I will use their very own documents. I will quote from the facts that the economists and the people who are working in this particular government, the numbers that they have put in place. These are the numbers I will use. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, what I will do is go back to the election in 2011 – in 2011, just three years ago – and take those same economic indicators that were listed by information that is provided by this current government. Then I will take the information that this government is putting out there where they see the Province to be in 2017. The forecast, that is what planners do.

If anyone was looking for a business loan for any particular initiative, any particular investment, they will ask: What are the indicators? Where is this business going? What is the future? Those are the indicators; that is what they look for. They do not go back in ten years and the history is good. They look at the management in place and say yes, you have a good management team in place. These are people we can invest in. What this government wants to do is go back to 2003. Part of what I will say tonight, I will take you back to 2003. We even compare what we had available to us as a Province in 2003 and why it was that way.

Let's talk about the price of oil in 2003. Let's talk about the mining sector in 2003. Let's talk about the vision that was put in place in 2003 that we are taking an opportunity of today. I can even go back as far as 1985 when it was not a Liberal government at all; it was a PC government. It was Brian Peckford who was the Premier of the day. It was John Crosbie who was a federal minister that people today – as a matter of fact he is in the news today. It was that Premier and that minister in Ottawa who had a vision at the time. In 1985 they put in place the Atlantic Accord which laid the

foundation and the framework for a lot of the benefits that we get today.

Mr. Speaker, I will give credit where credit is due. I will do that. Later on we saw the Hibernia Project, we saw Terra Nova, we saw White Rose, and we saw Vale. Let us look at the signatures on those deals. Let us see who actually signed those deals. We will go through tonight at great length on the amount of money that has come from each and every one of those deals. That is where the so-called investment has come from. That is the investment that has come from this current government that they have used.

Mr. Speaker, I have some time. I just spoke about the MHA for Bonavista North. I talked about the Conference Board of Canada. I talked about the report and the survey that was either deliberately or maybe just forgotten about, or maybe he just did not even read that report. The MHA for Bonavista North did not talk about where the Conference Board of Canada – the very report that he quoted about the current state of the economy in our Province. He did not say they were this same group that talked about the population in our Province.

Mr. Speaker, I will say this, it was the same member who stood in this House just a year ago at Budget time and gave a speech that is still available on YouTube that talked about how the people are spoiled. Last year when we had a Budget in 2013 when there were cuts made, the same MHA for Bonavista North stood in this House and talked about how the people in the Newfoundland and Labrador were spoiled, and that tough decisions had to be made, that people had to be laid off, that 1,100 people in this Province had to be laid off.

The MHA for Bonavista North stood in this House and defended that last year saying that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians were spoiled. That video is still on YouTube. I encourage people to go look at that video. That video is still there. It is still on YouTube.

Just after that, the Member for Exploits stood in his place and he actually read *The Telegram* report of the speech that I gave at the Delta Hotel. He had to read that speech because he was very familiar with it. At the same time, the

member was up and he talked about the great things that were happening in his district in Exploits. As a matter of fact, he mentioned a couple of things. One was a glove manufacturing company that was actually doing business, employing people in his district, and he gave credit for that, I have to say. What he did was take credit for that. He did not give credit where credit was due. The MHA knows who deserves the credit for that manufacturing plant. It was not this current government; it was the previous Administration.

I say to the minister, stand on your feet right now and call for a point of order. If I am wrong, stand on your feet. You have a right to stand on your feet and call a point of order. The Member for Exploits is now shouting at me. He will not do it. Clarify your statements.

MR. SPEAKER: I remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition to speak to the Chair, please.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The member has every right.

MR. FORSEY: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Exploits, on a point of order.

MR. FORSEY: I think he might have misinterpreted my words, Mr. Speaker. What I said was because of the economy is so robust that they have doubled their staff.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I understand sometimes members get carried away. They are so used to wanting to take credit for things that happened that they forget the history of it. That project in Point Leamington that the member opposite mentioned was not delivered by this particular government. Indeed it was not.

As a matter of fact he even talked about Newfoundland Styro, which is also in his district.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. BALL: A great individual. As a matter of fact, one of the past managers of that particular plant was a real good friend of mine. They have done a great job. They supply fantastic materials which are used in building supplies - you name it - across this Province, a great initiative.

Now, who did that? Whose responsibility was that? Where did that money come from? It was not this Administration. I hate to break the news, Mr. Speaker, but as long as the MHA for Exploits stands in his chair, that was not their responsibility. That was not. That did not come from them. Do you know what? They have done a great job and what I want to do is give credit where credit is due and for the great management, the great investment that has been made in that project employing Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and supplying a valuable service to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

One other thing I want to talk about – the MHA for Exploits also got up and, on a recent trip, what he was saying to the Burin Peninsula was about Dynamic Air Shelters. I have to say, Mr. Speaker, I have been to the Burin Peninsula quite a bit in the last year or so and I have done a tour of that plant as well. It is a success story, a very good story, I say.

The MHA for Exploits, what he wanted to do was pound my chest and say yes, we are responsible for that as well. Guess what, Mr. Speaker? We will give credit where credit is due.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Member for Grand Bank.

MR. BALL: That was not this particular government. It was not the Member for Grand Bank. It was not the member anywhere at all. As a matter of fact, as the Member for Grand Bank would clearly point out, that industry started many, many years ago. It has grown and so it should grow. That business has grown and it is now creating employment on the Burin Peninsula. It is a success story. It is not an initiative that was started by this government at

all. As a matter of fact, it was started by a previous Administration.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Member for Grand Bank chaired the board (inaudible).

MR. BALL: That is right; the Member for Grand Bank did chair the board. What is ironic, though, is that the Member for Exploits did not mention about his trip to the Burin Peninsula – he did not mention it at all. What he did not mention was the plant in Marystown. He did not mention that plant.

I wonder why he did not mention the plant in Marystown. Why didn't he mention the plant in Marystown?

MR. FORSEY: I only had twenty minutes (inaudible).

MR. BALL: He had twenty minutes. The member opposite says he could not mention it because he only had twenty minutes. I say, Mr. Speaker, that is not right. He did not mention it because he only had twenty minutes. He had a lot of time to talk about it.

Why he did not mention it is because that plant is now closed. That plant is now closed, I say, Mr. Speaker. As the MHA for Exploits stood up in his chair and talked about all the great things that were happening on the Burin Peninsula, what he did not mention was that the plant in Marystown was closed.

The member opposite for Exploits talked about all the great things that were going on. He talked about the things in the Burin Peninsula. He talked about the glove factory. He talked about Newfoundland and Labrador Styro. What he did not talk about was the paper mill in Grand Falls-Windsor, right next door to the member.

I say, Mr. Speaker, why would that member not talk about the Abitibi mill in Grand Falls-Windsor? Why would he not talk about that? The reason why he did not talk about that is because that mill is just like the plant in Marystown, it is closed. As a matter of fact, we have had members who have went out there and talked about a demolition. We are going to take that down and remove that environmental liability. Then some other ministers were saying

we do not know; we have to see where the priority is.

Well, in some areas of the country right now people are removing those environmental liabilities and they are actually making money on it. It has happened in Nova Scotia. It has happened in New Brunswick. So there are opportunities there. I encourage the members to get on with it; let's get it done.

The other thing that the Member from Exploits talked about, which was inaccurate, is that I had made a statement about centralizing health care because I talked about centres of excellence. He said I had mentioned streamlining health care – not at all. What it does is it shows a lack of vision, I say, Mr. Speaker, because centres of excellence is not reducing health care. It is not cutting health care. It is not streamlining health care. It is making good, efficient use of our health care professionals. That is what I say it is, Mr. Speaker. That is the difference between centres of excellence, using health care professionals to their extent, to the best extent that we can.

Now, it is unfortunate that they do not like to listen to new ideas. Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? These are not my ideas. The idea of centres of excellence did not come from me. Do you know where that idea came from? It did not come from the previous Parliamentary Secretary for Health. It did not come from the previous Health Minister. Where it came from is listening to health care professionals, talking with health care professionals, I say Mr. Speaker. That is where that information came from – when people do matter.

It is ironic that the MHA for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune just mentioned that people matter. She must have been paying a lot of attention to the Budget Speech, because guess what? Those are the exact words that I used: People do matter.

AN HON. MEMBER: First time for everything.

MR. BALL: The Member for The Isles of Notre Dame talked about – that is not the first time; we have been using people matter for a long time.

So centres of excellence, I say, Mr. Speaker, is not laying people off. It is not closing down health care centres, not at all. It is using our health care professionals like they want to be used, like they would like to be challenged, I say, Mr. Speaker. It is a greater and more efficient way to deliver health care services in our Province.

Other provinces do it. Other jurisdictions do it. It involves primary health care. It involved using our health care professionals. It is a great way to deliver health care services in our Province. Do you know why I say that? The MHA for Bay of Islands knows all about this. The Minister of Health knows about this. The former Minister of Health knows about this. You can go into just about any hospital in this Province right now and what do you see? You see people who are medically discharged. The last numbers that we are getting from the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association, and others, are saying that it costs about \$1,800 a day to use an acute care bed. Using one acute care bed is about \$1,800 a day.

Why do we have acute care beds? Why would you do that? You do not put acute care beds in place because people are there waiting for placements for long-term care, or they are waiting for an appointment somewhere, they are waiting for an MRI, or waiting for a CAT scan, or waiting for an ultrasound. They go there because they have an urgent need. They need to access medical services.

What you need to do is put the community services in place so those people who are medically discharged can go back into the communities where they belong, where they want to be, where the communities are there to support them. That is what primary health care centres are all about. They supply the supporting services for the individuals, for the people who want to be closer to home. That is what centres of excellence of health care are all about. It is not about cutting. It is not about reducing. It is not about streamlining. It is not about downsizing, I say, Mr. Speaker. It is about making efficient use of our health care professionals. That is what centres of excellence are.

Primary health care centres across our Province is one way of doing that, I say, Mr. Speaker. This is not a new idea; it is something that is in place in many jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister for IBRD was on her feet as well and she said we have come so far since 2003. We have come a long way. We have come a long way, the minister said. Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? We have come a long way. The minister is right; we have come a long way since 2003. Do you know why we have come a long way? We have come a long way as a result of \$18.9 billion in oil royalties. This is the money that was used to make those investments, to make those expenditures, as the minister mentioned. I have to agree with you. I have to agree with that.

It is not about diversifying the economy. It is not about creating new sources of revenue. As a matter of fact, prior to – and I will get into this a little bit later too – I think it was 2003 to 2004 we did not have enough oil royalties coming into this Province for it to be a line item in our budget. There was not even enough coming in for it to be a line item, yet just a few years ago we saw a surplus, our oil royalties reached \$2.7 billion. That is the difference, Mr. Speaker. It is not because of vision by this government. It is not because they had the ideas to generate sources of revenue. It is because the revenue was inherited. It was part of the inheritance in 2003; \$18.9 billion worth of inheritance, I say.

AN HON. MEMBER: The only thing they were good at was writing cheques.

MR. BALL: Yes, that is right. The only thing that they were good at was writing cheques.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am going to get into this a bit too – I have forty minutes left. Investment means return. You look for the return when you make the investment, and we will speak a little bit later about what the per capita debt is in our Province and what the return has been, and we will also talk about where that compares to other provinces. It will not be me saying this; it will be supported by documentation from this current government.

Mr. Speaker, the minister also talked about a plan; that you had to plan for this to happen.

Well, it kind of reminded me of a plan that the Auditor General went looking for a few years ago. As a matter of fact, the plan was around an infrastructure plan. The plan was around \$5 billion. Now if you are going to spend \$5 billion, you should have plan. You should have a plan in place because \$5 billion is an awful lot of money. That was more than the full budget, the whole budget year, the whole revenue source back in 2004 – \$5 billion.

They said they were planning. They had a plan. The AG was interested in this plan. The AG went looking for the plan. Now, the AG is a pretty powerful person in our Province, and we have had some good AGs. The AG went looking for the plan and guess what he found? There was no plan.

AN HON. MEMBER: What?

MR. BALL: No plan. No plan for the AG; \$5 billion worth of infrastructure spending in our Province, and no plan. They look at us and they say oh, that is the Opposition just being critical. That is the Opposition not being positive. That is the Opposition being a realist. If you say you are planning, if you say you have a plan well then produce the plan. What I say, Mr. Speaker, is, simply saying you have a plan does not mean you have one. If you are just simply saying you have one, it do not mean that it is something tangible, that it is there.

All I am saying is, Mr. Speaker, if you are going to talk about a plan, then produce it. We went looking for plans. As a matter of fact, we have asked for a lot of it.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. BALL: Now, the MHA for Terra Nova is over there talking about our plan right now. I could go on and on about this, but that is the plan. It had to be an invisible plan, of course. It was not there.

Then, just a few minutes ago, the MHA for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune talked about that we were going to lower salaries.

AN HON. MEMBER: What?

MR. BALL: I do not know where that came from. I have no idea where that came from, because it certainly did not come from me. She also talked about cutting health care –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Verge): Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. BALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Given the language that the member was talking about, I get the idea they feel that this government was responsible for actually putting oil in the ground, for actually putting the minerals in the ground. As a matter of fact, during a debate here just last week when we were talking about this very same thing, one of the ministers said: Well, we did not sign those oil royalty deals that turned out to be a value of \$18.9 billion. No, we may not have signed them, but we did what?

It took us to extract them. Here we go. It was amazing when I heard that. I could not believe it because that tells me it was indicative of a mindset when someone says: Do you know what? It took me to extract it. Well, I can tell you one thing right now, there is a lot of work that goes into putting those deals in place and it is not this government that is responsible for extracting them at all, Mr. Speaker.

The other thing the MHA for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune talked about was the fishery. She talked about the Liberals running the fishery into the ground. Mr. Speaker, I say to the member opposite, read this document. It is called *The Economy 2014*. Read the document. It has your logo on it. Read the document, because in the document on the fishery it says in 2012 there were ninety-nine plants in the Province – ninety-nine. I say to the member opposite, how many do we have there now? How many plants are operating here now?

She talked about the Liberals running the fishery into the ground. In 2013, there were eighty-six plants. It is right from your own document, I say to the MHA for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune. So you talk about who is running the fishery into the ground.

I also want to ask the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune about a plant in her own district, which happens to be in Harbour Breton. Mr. Speaker, I would like for the member to stand up and tell me if I am wrong, I could be wrong, but what is happening with the Harbour Breton plant right now? Is it open or is it closed? Stand up, I say to the member.

She also talked about –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. BALL: Yes. Well, I can say, Mr. Speaker, and they know, and the MHA opposite knows, that plant is not operating. She also talked about the halibut fishery.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BALL: She also talked about the halibut fishery and the investment made. Well, what we got back from a \$3.5 million investment was a \$50,000 lease with no escalation – with no escalation. Has that resource increased in price and increased in benefit? Writing into that lease was no option at all, I say, Mr. Speaker, for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to share in that value on the up side. I say, Mr. Speaker, there is one thing I will agree with, people do matter. People do matter to us and we will continue to say it.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is what Coleman said.

MR. BALL: No, the incoming Premier likes to say everyone matters, as he took the spin from where we were.

Mr. Speaker, the MHA for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune also mentioned that business confidence has dropped in the Province and she is blaming that on the Official Opposition. Well, Mr. Speaker, in a few minutes I am going to go through some economic indicators in this Budget document and I am going to tell you why that has changed, but before I do I am going to go right back to the Budget document itself. Mr. Speaker, the first thing I want to talk about is the five things you need to know about the Budget

in 2014; five things you need to know about the Budget.

As a matter of fact, there are some good things on there, some real good things on here that every party in this House of Assembly has been advocating for and asking questions on. Full-day Kindergarten, as an example, benefits for seniors, and on and on it goes. There are quite a few things here. Student loans, as an example. These are things we all support. As a matter of fact, these are things the government actually resisted for quite some time but we asked a lot of questions, as the Official Opposition, about those very –

MR. JOYCE: (Inaudible).

MR. BALL: Yes, I heard it today too, thank you. I say thanks to the MHA for Bay of Islands.

Someone made mention today about a tuition freeze, who put the tuition freeze in place? There we go again, Mr. Speaker, let's give credit where credit is due. It was not this Administration. This Administration has kept that program going but it is not this Administration that actually put that tuition freeze in place. As a matter of fact, it was the previous Administration that actually rolled back tuition freezes, I say, Mr. Speaker. Let's get our facts straight here. That is all we are asking for. Get our facts straight and give credit where credit is due.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to go right into the Budget here just for a few minutes now. First of all, the Budget document, I will go right back so we can – the Budget for this year is about \$7 billion. I encourage people, they should read this. They have read *The Telegram*. They have read my speech at the Delta. Now read the Budget, because that is where the information came from, I say, Mr. Speaker. You have to vote on this. You will be voting on this later on tonight. So do not vote on the speech; vote on your Budget document, I say, Mr. Speaker.

The revenue for 2014-2015 is \$7 billion. In this golden age when we are flush with cash we are going to post a deficit of \$537 million. That is the first thing, I say, Mr. Speaker, and guess what? In the next two years – well, three years

in particular – with a 10-year Sustainability Plan we are going to reverse all of this, Mr. Speaker. In the 10-year Sustainability Plan, next year we will pretty much be at a balanced Budget and the year after it will be close to balanced again. That is the sustainability they are talking about.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to spend some time on the economic indicators because this is actually a sore spot with the government. As a matter of fact, I have a sense that next year this page will not even be part of it. I have a feeling that page 16 in this year's *The Economy 2014: Shared Prosperity, Fair Society, Balanced Outlook*, they are going to delete that. That will not be there. You are going to have to request this next year.

If you go back into the election year 2011 – one of the things we want to talk about, and I have to say, household income in this Province has gone up significantly. There is no question about it. In 2011, household income, on average, was \$19,620 and the forecast for 2017 is \$23,383. Now I am going to tell you, in those six years, if you factor in inflation and the value of the dollar, I am going to guarantee you, that is not an increase. If you factor that in, that would not be an increase.

Mr. Speaker, retail sales are pretty much the same thing. Capital investment will actually decrease by \$4.8 billion. Members opposite would say that is as a result of the megaprojects, but do you know what? In 2011, the capital investment in our Province was \$7.5 billion. In 2017, according to this year's Budget, the capital investment in our Province will be \$7.489 billion. Six years later, if you factor in inflation, guess what? Even if you did not factor in inflation, Mr. Speaker, it is less. That is all I am saying, Mr. Speaker.

When people talk about us being negative, what we are doing is using their own document; therefore, what they are saying is that their own information is negative. That is all we are doing here. We are just using their own information.

Mr. Speaker, let's talk about the population. I just talked about the Conference Board of Canada and what they said about between now and 2035, but their own document – and I say to the MHA for Bonavista North, maybe he should

pay attention here to this one, because in 2011 our population was 525,000 people. This government, their own documents say – through their own economic indicators – in 2017, the population in this Province will be 524,000 people.

MR. A. PARSONS: It is going down?

MR. BALL: It is going down. I say, Mr. Speaker, six years later the population will be decreasing.

Mr. Speaker, this is the Budget. This is what I am reading from, *The Economy 2014*, Newfoundland and Labrador, right there. This is not just the Liberals; this is not just the Official Opposition saying this. This is this government saying this. This is a Budget they will vote on very shortly and a Budget that they are going to support, their own economic indicators. Mr. Speaker, there is a lot into this.

Someone also mentioned about the labour force. Someone mentioned about the size of the labour force. Of course, that is the number of people in our Province who are available to go to work. That is the size of your labour force.

In election year 2011 – we had an election in 2011, do you remember that? In the 2011 election year the labour force in our Province was 258,000 people. This government is telling us, and telling the people in Newfoundland and Labrador: Have confidence in me because we are going to do what is right. Saying you are going to do what is right does not necessarily mean you are going to do what is right, because the size of the labour force in 2011 was 258,000 people.

This government is telling the people of Newfoundland and Labrador: Trust me, support me, because in 2017 I am going to take your labour force right down to 251,000 people – 6,500 people less. So trust me, have confidence in me, because I am going to strengthen your labour force. That is what you said.

Now let's talk about one very key –

AN HON. MEMBER: They can smile.

MR. BALL: Yes.

Now, let's talk about one thing, Mr. Speaker, housing starts. That is a very important economic indicator. Housing starts are very important. As the Member for Exploits mentioned, we have Newfoundland Styro out there. They make things that people build houses of, and on and on it goes. It is very important indicators of how the economy is performing.

Let's look at the housing starts. In the election year 2011, housing starts in our Province were 3,488. In 2017 – this is a confidence, this is what Budget 2014 is telling us – housing starts will be 1,892.

AN HON. MEMBER: What?

MR. BALL: It will be 1,892. I say, Mr. Speaker, this is not me saying this.

This government will vote on this Budget shortly and they are going to support it. What they are going to support and what they are going to be asking people in our Province is to accept that housing starts will almost be 50 per cent of what they were in 2011. They are actually going to fall, I say, Mr. Speaker, and we are supposed to have confidence in that.

The Member for Baie Verte – Springdale stood up here last Thursday and talked about how the sun was going to shine. This is what he was saying: the sun is shining on the Province. If the sun is shining and everything is so bright, why is it that the housing starts in our Province are going to decline almost 50 per cent, I say to the member opposite? Why is it?

MR. A. PARSONS: Where did he get his numbers?

MR. BALL: The numbers came right from this book, right from *The Economy 2014*.

MR. SPEAKER: I remind the hon. the Leader of the Opposition, you cannot use props, Sir.

MR. A. PARSONS: It is the Budget.

MR. BALL: That is the Budget we are speaking to, I agree. I will put that right there.

Mr. Speaker, let's talk about the unemployment rate. The unemployment rate is a very important number, a very important statistic in our Province. What was the unemployment rate in our Province in 2011? The unemployment rate in 2011 was 12.7 per cent. It was 12.7 per cent, I say to the members opposite, in 2011. In election year 2011, the unemployment rate in our Province was 12.7 per cent.

This government is asking the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to support them because the unemployment rate in 2017, according to their own numbers, will be what? It will be 12.6 per cent. They are asking the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to have confidence in our plan, believe in our plan, and believe in our vision because what we are going to do is keep the unemployment rate exactly where it is. Have confidence in us, believe in us, and support us, because what I am going to do – what the government members are asking is we are going to decrease housing starts in our Province, we are going to decrease capital investment in our Province. Mr. Speaker, people in Newfoundland and Labrador understand this. They understand this –

AN HON. MEMBER: That is a smaller population, too.

MR. BALL: With a smaller population is right, Mr. Speaker.

There are so many things, Mr. Speaker, and guess what? Anyone at all can read this document. It is publicly available. This is not a document we have put together at all. This is a document that has taken hours and hours of hard work by many of our public sector employees to put this in place.

The Minister of IBRD mentioned about agriculture, too. I just have to speak to this because where I come from agriculture certainly is an industry in my district. This very document again, and I will read from it. In 2011, there were 510 farms in our Province. This is where we generate the food we eat. We do not do a very good job of it because right now about 95 per cent of that is actually brought in from outside.

In 2011, there were 510 farms in our Province. In 2006, we had 558 in our Province. So, once again – and no pun intended here – we are not growing the agriculture industry in our Province; not at all, I say, Mr. Speaker. In 2006, it was 558. In 2011, it is down to 510. Mr. Speaker, this is very important for us in our Province right now when you consider food security and the challenges we have to get fresh fruits and vegetables into our Province. This is an area we have to continue to use to grow our economy.

The other thing about agriculture, Mr. Speaker, is the farm area in our Province declined from 89,441 acres in 2006 down to 77,349 acres in 2011. Mr. Speaker, I could go on with this Budget. There is quite a bit of stuff here. There is a lot here.

I will speak to the fishery just for a few minutes here now. Right now, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the US markets –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BALL: The members opposite do not like to hear this stuff of course. They do not like to hear this at all because I guess they have not read their Budget. That is all I can say because all reviews – I have not looked at one other document here yet except the government's own Budget. There is all kinds of great information here.

As a matter of fact, when you look at the fishery right now, Liberals still see, the Official Opposition still see that the fishery has a good opportunity for us. As a matter of fact, right now our number one market is the U.S. at almost 40 per cent. We do significant work in China, the United Kingdom, Russia, Vietnam and Denmark, but what we are missing, what people who are in this industry are telling us that we are clearly missing is a marketing opportunity here. We have to develop a marketing plan so that when the fishery transitions from where we are today, from the shellfish to a ground fishery, that indeed we will be positioned for that.

The Minister of IBRD also mentioned about the CETA agreement. Now, I have not met anyone yet who has read that so-called CETA

agreement. I have asked a lot of people, have you actually read the agreement? I have not met anyone yet who has actually read the agreement because in that agreement the fishery is certainly impacted.

We have supported the CETA agreement based on what we know of it, but we have some questions. When we ask questions as the Official Opposition and we say: When it comes to minimum processing requirements, did you even do an analysis on the value of it? They say, no, we have not done the analysis. Well, you have to ask yourself what was being negotiated and why indeed things happened the way they did. That is a fair question, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to getting that answer at some point, but it is not there. We have not seen that answer coming from this government; like many other questions we have asked and have not been able to get.

Mr. Speaker, I have about nineteen or twenty minutes left here and I want to move on to a few other things that I wanted to talk about. I will go back to oil royalties and the volume. I want to raise this tonight before I finish up because this is very critical when you make decisions for the future of our Province. In 2011 and 2012, that was the year we had almost \$2.8 billion in one year; in 2011-2012, \$2.8 billion in royalties. It is an awful lot of money, I say, Mr. Speaker. Just to put that in perspective, that is almost \$54 million a week. That is over \$7.5 million a day.

When this government talks about its vision, when this government talks about its investment, you have to wonder where this opportunity actually came from. These are programs that were put in place many, many years ago. If you go back to 2003-2004, you will find out that in that year the royalties were just under \$127 million for the full year compared to \$2.8 billion in 2011-2012. Now you can make a lot of investments, you can spend a lot of money when you look at the difference there. It is over \$2.5 billion in the difference, Mr. Speaker.

Before people take credit, give credit where credit is due. In this case, this money was inherited is what is actually being used. When you say it takes this government to actually extract it, I say, Mr. Speaker, that is not the

correct attitude that people in Newfoundland and Labrador want to see in our elected officials.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I mentioned it earlier. It was in 2002-2003 when we did not even have enough oil royalties coming in to actually have a separate line. It was just mixed in because there was not even enough there to create a separate line. It was not until 2003-2004 when we created a line item for offshore royalties. In that year it was around \$127 million. That will let you know the magnitude of where this has come from.

The other thing I looked at when I was looking at the Budget is just seeing how the economy has grown and why we are where we are. Guess what the price of Brent crude was in 2003? When you talk about planning, when you talk about making investments, when you talk about doing due diligence, when you talk about creating revenue, in 2003 the price of Brent crude was \$25.06 on average. Now I guess the government – not only did they put the oil in the ground, they actually controlled the world price of oil to bring it up. It had to be, because if you are going to take credit for this you may as well take credit for all of it.

In 2011-2012, when we did \$2.8 billion in oil royalties, what was the price of Brent crude then? I already said that in 2003 it was \$25.06. Well, the year of the \$2.8 billion royalty the price then was \$111.26 – just imagine, on average. That was the price of Brent crude.

So, Mr. Speaker, let's give credit where credit is due here. There are a lot of things that had to happen, a lot of things that had to occur to get us in this position where we have had \$18.9 billion in oil royalties to spend on the roads, on the hospitals, and on the things that this government has spent money on.

Mr. Speaker, let's look at the projects themselves. For instance, Hibernia, Terra Nova and White Rose, the three major projects that we have creating offshore royalties right now. Hibernia right now is at about 37 per cent. So we have used around 63 per cent of that oil field. Terra Nova right now, there is about 41 per cent left. We have White Rose with about 43 per cent left.

Mr. Speaker, do you know what? There is still an opportunity here. There is an opportunity here with proper planning, with proper management, for us to get this right. We can get this right.

Mr. Speaker, I do believe that in the future it will not end there. I am hopeful, like everyone in our Province is hopeful, that there will be other reserves. That other things will come after this and, indeed, that we will continue to have a level of prosperity that we can actually share with everyone in this Province. To date, we have pumped about – we have, as I said, \$18.9 billion. That is based on the three projects that are in place. Hebron, by 2017, hopefully that will start generating some oil royalties for us as well.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to speak about mining. Mining of course is a significant contributor to our Budget as well. Looking at the mining industry over the last twenty years, we went about twenty years with not much increase at all. As a matter of fact, I went right back to 1984. In April, 1984, the price of iron ore in US dollars was \$11.31.

In 1984 it was \$11.31. In 1985 it was \$11.49; in 1986, \$11.36; 1987, \$10.94; 1988, \$10.51; 1989, \$12; 1990, \$14; 1991, \$15; 1992, \$14; 1993, \$12.58. Mr. Speaker, these are all the numbers. So you can see that iron ore pricing globally did not really change a whole lot because in 1984 it was \$11.85; in 1995, \$12.27. Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on. In 2000, it was \$12.99.

In 2005 it went to \$28; in 2006, \$33. Mr. Speaker, it was not until 2008 that it went to \$60. In 2009 it stayed around \$60. In 2010 it was \$172. What I can also say is not one member of government had anything to do with that. Not one member of government had anything at all to do with that price of iron ore, Mr. Speaker.

MR. J. BENNETT: They were not even elected.

MR. BALL: I agree with the MHA for St. Barbe; no, they were not even elected.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the \$18.9 billion in this golden age when we are flush with

cash – one thing I also want to bring up here again today too is we have talked about Ottawa. We have talked about the Atlantic Accord and how the transfer payments have been down and all of that.

One thing that never gets mentioned is that yes, we did collect \$2 billion, but the \$2 billion that we collected with that one-time payment in 2005, how did that happen? That happened with a Liberal Prime Minister, but it also happened – we took five years off. We actually changed the termination of it ourselves; that was negotiated, or the government did. It was supposed to be terminated in 2017 and they moved the date back to 2012. That is where that value came from.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to look at the net per capita debt. That is what every Newfoundlander, every man, woman and child, as I have been saying, in our Province owes. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, in 2011-2012 for every man, woman and child in Newfoundland and Labrador it was \$14,875. This year, as a result of this Budget, that will grow around \$4,000 to \$18,662. Our net per capita debt in this golden age when we are flush with cash with \$18.9 billion, our net per capita debt in this Province is actually growing. It is not even growing because our population is decreasing, because we are going to maintain our population. It is growing because of borrowing.

When you look at our neighbours in Atlantic Canada, let's talk about PEI. In that same time frame they have grown theirs by \$1,000. If you live in PEI, back in 2011-2012 you would have owed \$13,247, and next year you will owe \$14,223 compared to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. PEI is gone up by \$1,000, Newfoundland and Labrador is going up by almost \$4,000. Mr. Speaker, they do not have oil, I have to say.

The story is the same in Nova Scotia, too, by the way. As a matter of fact, their net per capita debt is \$14,870 compared to \$18,662 here in our Province. They were pretty much where we were just four years ago. It is pretty much the same thing, I say, Mr. Speaker. Nova Scotia does not have the oil that we have.

New Brunswick, it is the same thing. As a matter of fact, when you go back over all the provinces in Canada, guess where we lead? We lead in the increase of per capita debt for any province in Canada. We are going up almost \$4,000. As a matter of fact, the only one that is even close to us, Mr. Speaker, will be Alberta, and they actually have a surplus. We are growing our per capita debt in this golden age, I say, Mr. Speaker. We are actually growing our per capita debt in this golden age. With this huge inheritance of \$18.9 billion put in place by the hard work of another Administration, we are still increasing our per capita debt.

Mr. Speaker, let's talk about privatization of the Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation. Let's talk about this for a few minutes because this is something that we could look at, I am told. This is an equity investment we could look at. That is what we are being told. Well, Mr. Speaker, we are not going to look at that because that is generating \$154 million a year. That is the equity investment.

Now, by extension, if you are willing to sell off an agency that is generating \$154 million a year, if you are willing to sell it off because you want to take the cash – this is what the incoming Premier has said, take the incoming cash. It is an experiment that worked in Alberta. Those were the words that were used, an experiment that worked in Alberta. We could sell it off and put that money into health care. We could sell it off and put that money into education. It is generating \$154 million, but if you are going to do that you are willing to sell off any of your investments, I would say, Mr. Speaker. If you are willing to sell off this investment, then by extension you should be willing to sell off any investment.

Mr. Speaker, he is not thinking about selling off Nalcor is he, by any chance? I would not think that would be the case. No, that would not be the case I am sure, Mr. Speaker.

The other thing I want to mention, too, is the Member for Gander – I just caught the tail end of his speech earlier today. The Member for Gander, I must say, I have known that guy for a long time. We go back a long time. He talked about the rural development plan back at the turn of the century, I guess it was. He talked

about a rural development plan, but what he did not talk about when he talked about moving bureaucrats around, which I thought was a little ironic – he talked about a previous Administration moving bureaucrats around as a case for rural development.

I am surprised the Member for Gander did not talk about some other bureaucrats who were moved around just last year when it was this government that said: We do not need four English speaking school boards, we need one school board. The Member for Gander, what did he say? We have to get those bureaucrats closer to government. That is what I heard.

Instead of keeping it even in his own district, what he did is he relocated that to St. John's. When the Member for Gander talks about moving bureaucrats around, I say to the members opposite, that is exactly what you have done. That is exactly the decision. As a matter of fact, we went looking for the savings of \$12.8 million that we were told, almost \$13 million, and guess what? We have not seen it yet. It is almost a year later. Where is the analysis on getting that done?

Mr. Speaker, this gives me a great opportunity tonight to actually talk about many things. It seems to be that there needs to be some discussion around centres of excellence in health care that are not reductions, that are not laying people off, that is spending the money wiser, spending the money smarter, Mr. Speaker. That was the case the member right here opposite me tonight from Bay of Islands, that was the reason we did a lot of research on where the next radiation unit would go because it is clear when you look at the trends in cancer, unfortunately, in our Province, there would be a need for another radiation bunker.

When we did our research – and we talked to people in Ontario, we talked to people in Alberta, we talked to people in BC, we talked to people in Nova Scotia – it was very clear that this could be done in Western Newfoundland and Labrador. That was the reason why, after a lot of research. I have to tell you, there was a time in January when I said maybe this government is right. I cannot imagine that this government is making those claims, making those statements based on significant research

with the resources that they would have in government, that indeed they must be right. That is what I was thinking

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, as I was thinking about this; there was more than once I had to say: Yes, this government must be right. There has to be something that we are missing, but when we talked to people in Ontario, when we talked to people in Nova Scotia, when we talked to people in BC, they were saying: No, this can be done. As a matter of fact, the CEO who was here and just left, that same CEO was part of the plan in 2009 in Ontario. He was part of that plan in Ontario, and did a great job up there. People are very happy with what happened in Ontario, Mr. Speaker. So that was the reason why.

I compliment the previous CEO of Eastern Health. As a matter of fact, I sent her a letter and congratulated her, and thanked her for her years of service in the Province. I did do that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when we are talking about investments in health care, we are talking about centres of excellence. We are talking about making better use of our health care professionals. We are talking about investments in our front-line workers.

Mr. Speaker, after all that research into radiation in our Province, guess what? We finally got another consensus in this House of Assembly. We got a consensus because now government actually supports the research we have done on behalf of the people in this Province. They say: Well, we are not sure. One may not be enough. We might need two yet. I say, Mr. Speaker, we do have a social conscience. Economic prosperity is something we all strive for because that is how we will pay for our social programs.

Mr. Speaker, I only have a minute or so left. I am not going to get into much of the other stuff. I wanted to talk about Humber Valley Paving. I wanted to talk about CETA. I wanted to talk about snowmobiling and opportunities in tourism, and all of the other opportunities that we have in our Province to create economic development.

What it takes is making wise decisions on behalf of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. What it takes is a vision. It takes planning, I say, Mr. Speaker. It takes planning that is a tangible plan. One that you can actually hold on to; you can put your hands on it, not an invisible plan. So that when the AG comes looking for that accountability, we can actually give them a document. We can give them what he needs to review the work that we have done.

Mr. Speaker, I am not here to take credit where credit is not due. I will give credit where credit is due, and right now as a Province we have seen tremendous growth. We have seen a lot of growth in the last ten years. Fortunately, so far most of the growth has come from developments that have been put in place by a previous Administration. The next Administration will get an opportunity to take advantage and enjoy some of the opportunities that have been created by some other Administration, Mr. Speaker, because I do believe in this Province and I do believe there are great days ahead for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you for your time, Mr. Speaker, as I conclude my Budget time.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

MR. CORNETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is a great privilege to stand in my place this evening to speak to Budget 2014, Shared Prosperity, Fair Society, and Balanced Outlook.

Mr. Speaker, I am especially honoured and humbled to stand in my place and represent the great District of Port au Port, the great cultural District of Port au Port, I may say, in this historical House of Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to, first of all, highlight some of the investments in my district. When you look at the District of Port au Port – I just want to let the people in this House and the people across the Province know some of the

communities that are in my district. Communities like Cape St. George, De Grau, Red Brook, Marches Point, Sheaves Cove, Lower Cove, Ship Cove, Piccadilly, West Bay, Lourdes, Black Duck Brook, Three Rock Cove, Mainland, Abrahams Cove, Campbells Creek, Felix Cove, Port au Port West, Aguathuna, Boswarlos, Point au Mal, Fox Island River, Port au Port East, Kippens, and Stephenville. Those are the communities that make up the beautiful and cultural District of Port au Port.

Mr. Speaker, over the years since I have been elected to represent the people of Port au Port, since 2007, our government has made major investments in the District of Port au Port. Look at investments in roads, road upgrades, ditching especially. When I look at some of the roads that were done over the past few years, Mr. Speaker, we have seen resurfacing of sections of road to Cape St. George. We had roadwork at armour stone down in Fox Island River. We had roadwork done on Father Joy's Road in Port au Port East; road repairs in Boswarlos and Aguathuna. We had road alignment in Marches Point. We had replacement of culverts in Red Brook. Paving in Stephenville, paving in Piccadilly, and in Cape St. George.

Over the years we certainly have seen our fair share of roadwork in the District of Port au Port. Mr. Speaker, we will see more work again this year. This year we will see the paving of Route 463 from Lourdes to Three Rock Cove. We will also see paving of Route 460 from Gaudon's Bridge in Kippens going west on Route 460. Also on Route 460, paving in Rouzes Brook to Cornetts Brook out in De Grau; and on Route 460, Mr. Speaker, some paving and recapping was done from Red Brook to Marches Point.

Mr. Speaker, I am also very pleased of the work with the communities for water upgrades, extensions, and improvements throughout the district. Over the years we have seen water improvements in the Town of Cape St. George, the Town of Lourdes, and the Town of Stephenville. We also seen water upgrades in Piccadilly, Mainland, and Sheaves Cove. This year we will see some work again as we improve water systems throughout the district. Mr. Speaker, I wait for the official announcement from our Municipal Capital Works for this year.

Also, a highlight this year was when the Minister of Transportation and Works came to the district on – I believe it was March 28, shortly after the Budget was released. He spoke to a packed house at the Chamber of Commerce dinner. It was on short notice, Mr. Speaker. The Chamber of Commerce sold out their dinner at midday on a Friday afternoon.

The Minister of Transportation and Works, along with myself, and with the former MHA for St. George's – Stephenville East, announced something that was asked for a long time, lobbied for a long time. The minister announced that day that construction will start this year on a new bypass road on Route 460, as we call it, White's Road.

What the bypass road will do, Mr. Speaker, it will bypass the communities of Gull Pond, Noels Pond and Coal Brook and will come across to the ramp at Stephenville. That will be about five or six kilometres long. It was much lobbied for, much asked for, and, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that this government can deliver on that promise and that commitment.

Mr. Speaker, I am also very pleased as well – I did a member's statement not that long ago on this. The Stephenville Theatre Festival is celebrating its thirty-sixth anniversary. The Stephenville Theatre Festival is a summer festival. It is in its thirty-sixth year. It is an economic generator, Mr. Speaker, and it runs for about four to six weeks during the course of summer. This year it will run from July 11 to August 10. I am very pleased that it is active. It is alive, it is well.

Looking at the line up for this year's festival, this year's season looks to be very promising and something that I can now tell the people of the Province to come to Stephenville and take in a show or two at the Stephenville Theatre Festival. Some of the shows that will be highlighted at the festival this year: The Nobleman's Wedding; The Birthday Party; Jack Meets the Cat; The Country Show; Music from Home; A Night With...; Two Horse Tales; Never Forgotten – which is, by the way, a play that local playwright Jerry Doyle is developing about the resettlement program in Lourdes during the 1930s. During the summer, the

Stephenville Theatre Festival will workshop the play and host a public reading by the actors.

Mr. Speaker, the trilogy will also be playing, and that consists of three plays: Falling Trees, Building Houses, and Wasting Paper. Mr. Speaker, like I said, this goes on for four weeks. Of course, the finale is a gala which is always a showstopper. I encourage people out there, visitors and tourists who are coming to our Province, to come to Stephenville during the time and take in a show or two.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I also want to thank the board of directors who have worked hard. I want to thank them for their commitment to keeping the Stephenville Theatre Festival successful and alive. Mr. Speaker, I also want to say welcome and hello to Lois Brown who is the new artistic director, and Pamela Morgan who will be the musical director. I am very pleased as well, when we talk about the Stephenville Theatre Festival, of our government's commitment to the Stephenville Theatre Festival.

Mr. Speaker, just a short few years ago the Stephenville Theatre Festival was receiving a \$25,000 grant annually, and within the last four years this grant has now increased to \$35,000. I want to thank the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation for the grant to assure the success of this festival.

In April of this year, I had the pleasure of joining my former colleague, the MHA for St. George's – Stephenville East – I wish her, as well, a happy retirement. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the former MHA for St. George's – Stephenville East announced her retirement here today and I certainly wish her well. I had the great privilege of working for her as a Constituency Assistant, and also, Mr. Speaker, working with her as we shared Stephenville in our districts.

She owned half of Stephenville in the District of St. George's – Stephenville East and the other half of Stephenville was in the District of Port au Port. I wish her well in her retirement and I say thank you for your years of dedication, hard work and commitment, not only to the people of the Province but also to the people she served from St. George's – Stephenville East.

In April, I had the pleasure of joining the Premier and the former MHA in a great announcement, Mr. Speaker, for the whole south west coast of the Province. The Premier was out and announced that there will be a new courthouse built in Stephenville. There is a process to be followed. It will take a few years to build the courthouse. Mr. Speaker, again, a very well-received announcement in Stephenville.

In fact, that day when we made the announcement the room was filled to capacity as the people waited with anticipation of what the Premier was going to announce. Of course, Mr. Speaker, having announced in the old courthouse, there was a lot of anticipation that it would be the announcement of a new courthouse. It was very welcome news and I thank the Premier and this government for that announcement.

Over the last few years as well, Mr. Speaker, we have seen improvements to the medical clinics that are in my district. We have seen great improvements to the Lourdes Medical Clinic. It has been thirty years since the medical clinic out in Lourdes had been renovated. We spent close to \$300,000 in the renovations. Now it is a state-of-the-art medical clinic and served by a great population.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to say that we just opened up a new medical clinic in the Town of Cape St. George. I was very happy to represent the Minister of Health and Community Services at the time at the grand opening. This is not a medical clinic that is owned by the Department of Health and Community Services or Western Health, but it is a leased facility. It is a ten-year lease, and I am very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to have a modern state-of-the-art facility in the beautiful Town of Cape St. George to serve its population as well.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at these two facilities which take care of all the Port au Port Peninsula, these two facilities are serviced by a doctor, a nurse practitioner, and community health nurses. So, I am very pleased to have that in my district.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have worked with the Towns of Port au Port East,

Port au Port West-Aguathuna-Felix Cove. There was a time when, not too long ago, just a couple of years ago, in fact, Mr. Speaker, those two towns were having difficulty recruiting and retaining firefighters in a volunteer capacity to serve the towns. So, in working together collaboratively with the towns and with Fire and Emergency Services, and the Department of Municipal Affairs, these two towns came together and formed one fire department. Now, Mr. Speaker, it is called the Port au Port Regional Fire Department. This fire department will serve those two towns, but also it will serve the local service districts as well in the catchment area of those towns.

I was very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to be with the former Minister of Municipal Affairs – my hon. colleague, the MHA for Gander, who was minister at the time. We were out to Port au Port East to make an announcement to both towns and the fire department on the granting or approval of a brand new fire truck. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that the fire truck will be delivered to the town and the new fire department within the next few days.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that a new fire truck was acquired for the Town of Lourdes to service their catchment area. Also, the Town of Stephenville received a fire truck. Mr. Speaker, in the last couple of years three brand new fire trucks in the District of Port au Port.

Mr. Speaker, a program that does not get a lot of talk, a lot of mention in the House of Assembly, but certainly in the districts across the Province it is something to talk about and very much welcomed in the fall of the year, and that is the Community Employment and Enhancement Program. Over the years since I have been elected, my district has seen a lot of these programs every fall of the year. A lot of money is put into the District of Port au Port. The goal of this program is to create employment for people missing hours or weeks to qualify for EI. Also, Mr. Speaker, very key to this is the enhancement of infrastructure in our communities.

Over the years we have seen the Town of Lourdes receive grants. Looking at the work that was done to their town hall, Mr. Speaker, it

just amazes me. There was work done on their church as well.

We look at Our Lady of Mercy Complex in Port au Port West, which is a tourist destination, Mr. Speaker. We look at the work that has been done there over the years in the complex itself and the church, and also the walking trail. They have a beautiful, accessible walking trail at Our Lady of Mercy Complex grounds and I am very pleased to see that in our district.

Our Lady of Mercy Complex will be celebrating, now this year, our fiftieth anniversary. Mr. Speaker, it is called the Port au Port Agricultural and Craft Fair which will be held the last weekend of September or the first weekend of October; no date settled yet. Again, I encourage people out there, if you want to come to see a great fair, come to Port au Port West.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to talk about some of the things in the department. I have about five minutes left to talk about this Budget. When we look at employment and training programs, in 2013-2014, a total of \$179,056,048 was invested into employment and training programs to support over 19,000 individuals. Included in this funding, Mr. Speaker, over 12,000 individuals were provided with direct benefits in the form of training and/or employment supports.

Mr. Speaker, over \$18 million was provided to 142 third party organizations that provided career and employment supports to our clients. Over \$20 million was provided to more than 3,000 employers or third party organizations to create direct employment opportunities for individuals.

When we talk about employment and training programs, some of the things that were done, or are being done, are skills development supports, wage subsidies, training and wage subsidy supports to apprentices, summer employment jobs for post-secondary and high school students, Job Creation Partnerships, self-employment supports, training and employment supports to persons with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, a little earlier we had the Leader of the Opposition up on his feet for his full hour to

speak to the Budget. He ranted and raved about the past Liberal Administrations and the great things they did during the 1990s. If he is going to put that to his claim to fame and be a follower of those leaders of the 1990s, he should also be aware of some of the things that former Premier Wells did. We do not have to mention that. Just ask the public service how they were treated under former Premier Wells. If he is going to take a claim to fame from the past Liberal leadership, maybe he should take the claim to fame about the Upper Churchill as well, of his former colleague, the late Premier Smallwood.

Mr. Speaker, in his remarks a few weeks ago – I believe it was at the Delta – he used the LLW. I call it the LLW; those are the Liberal leader's words. In expressing his true feelings about this Province, he said this Province, the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, which we love so much, he said that Newfoundland and Labrador was the last, the lowest, and the worst.

I have a son who is in second year university at Memorial University of Newfoundland studying engineering. I tell him every day that the world is waiting for you. There is a world of opportunity for you upon graduation. This Province, Mr. Speaker, is not last, this Province is not the lowest, and this Province is not the worst. In fact, on this side of the House, and I am sure the majority of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians want to think of this Province and this government as putting people first, moving forward, and being the best that we can be. That is our mantra. Of course, people matter. Absolutely, people matter.

Mr. Speaker, my time is running short, so there are just a few things more I want to talk about. When we talk about the economy of the Province, I want to talk about some of the indicators. Our economic growth as a Province is at a level unseen by any other government. Our government's social responsiveness and sound economic management has enabled us to get to this point.

Mr. Speaker, Real Gross Domestic Product growth is at 0.5 per cent. In 2013, Newfoundland and Labrador was strongest among provinces in economic growth at 5.9 per cent. I tell the hon. Opposition Finance critic, 5.9 per of economic growth. There was

employment growth of 0.3 per cent with average employment of 233,500. In 2013, the average employment in our Province was 232,800. That is a record high for our Province, a Province of a little over 500,000 people.

Mr. Speaker, the stable unemployment rate was at 11.4 per cent in 2013. It was the lowest it has been since 1973 with more people working in the Province than ever before. Household income growth was at 3.4 per cent to \$22.8 billion. Average weekly earnings increased by 2.6 per cent to \$951 in 2013. We are the second highest among provinces after Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, it is not doom and gloom in the Province. We are not the lowest –

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I remind the member his speaking time has expired.

MR. CORNETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the time to speak on Budget 2014. I can tell you that I will be supporting Budget 2014.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for Virginia Waters.

MS C. BENNETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I celebrate what has been a very interesting four weeks in my new role as an MHA here in the House of Assembly serving the people of the District of Virginia Waters, I am amazed at the debate and the ability of some of my hon. colleagues to talk for twenty minutes and not even touch the debate, which is the Budget.

Thomas Jefferson said, “The whole art of government consists in the art of being honest.” Certainly, the facts as they were outlined by the Official Leader of the Opposition, out of this government’s own Budget documents, indicate the rosy story that is being told by the members opposite has some flaws. What I would like to talk about tonight, as we debate the Budget, are

things that I am hearing from the people in Virginia Waters.

The seniors who live in my district are worried about getting quality health care. One story in particular is one of my constituents who spent the evening at the Health Sciences in a closet on a gurney. It is certainly not the type of health care that he expected to receive at age seventy-five.

I would like to talk about the young people in my district who fear they may never own a home, despite the fact that both people are working. I would like to talk about the taxpayers in my district who continually talk about and are worried about this government’s fiscal mismanagement. I would like to talk about those families with children who are worried about being able to find quality child care when they need it. I would like to talk about the people who are worried about the future; people who are not interested in yesterday, people who are worried about tomorrow.

A few weeks ago I had the opportunity to listen to the Premier-in-waiting, Mr. Coleman, on a local radio show talk about, in his words, the buoyant economy, and the incredible opportunity for so many people around the Province. He went on to say that people in the Province have jobs. What is fascinating about that comment is that you have two distinctly different economies happening in Newfoundland and Labrador, as the members on the opposite side of the House well know. You have an incredible amount of jobs and job shortages on the Avalon Peninsula. You have unemployment rates in rural Newfoundland that are, in fact, the worst in Atlantic Canada at 19 per cent, and the worst in Canada at 19 per cent. Mr. Speaker, one of the fascinating things I have learned in the last four weeks is how incredibly short-sighted the debate in the House can be when we do not talk about the full picture and we only talk about pieces of the pie.

In the current Budget Estimates, government is projecting total revenues, combined of provincial and federal money, of \$6.5 billion. This is actually a decline of \$0.9 billion, or 12.4 per cent. The current revenues are represented by about 89 per cent of provincial revenues, with

federal revenues representing about 10.1 per cent. There has been a significant decline in the federal revenues to the Province, somewhere in the vicinity of about 40 per cent over two years.

The top three revenue sources have well been discussed in this House. Number one is offshore royalties at 36.5 per cent. Last year in the same budget period, offshore oil revenues were about 37.6 per cent.

It is interesting when we talk about the Conference Board of Canada's recent report, which has been referenced by the hon. members from the opposite side; the Conference Board of Canada indicated that it clearly was raising concerns about government's reliance on volatile oil revenues and at the potential for long-term employment opportunities as well. It went on to say that large-scale megaprojects may be driving economic growth in the short term but even government's own economic indicators revealed the long-term economic growth is dormant after 2015.

The Official Leader of the Opposition highlighted point by point the facts in this government's Budget document that validate what the Conference Board of Canada is warning. The Conference Board of Canada also warned that over the next twenty years the population will drop to less than 500,000 people with a prediction of declining economic fortunes during this time.

As was referred to earlier today and during the debate, the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council in its Atlantic report entitled, Major Projects Inventory 2014, released last week, sent some pretty dire warnings to the people of the Province about the fiscal management of their tax dollars. Newfoundland and Labrador's net debt will increase by \$807 million in 2014-2015, yet it only represents 26.1 of GDP.

If the oil and gas industry was excluded from GDP, Newfoundland and Labrador's debt to GDP ratio was 36.3 per cent. Moody's, last week, released a report on provincial debt where it challenged provinces to take a look at their habit of mortgaging the future to take care of today. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the people in my district who are talking to me are not interested in mortgaging the future anymore.

APEC went on to say that economic activity in Newfoundland and Labrador is showing further signs of slowing after several years of strong growth, and spending growth will push up Newfoundland and Labrador's deficit to \$538 million in 2014-2015. It went on to say that Newfoundland and Labrador projects the deficit because program expenses have grown twice as fast as revenues.

Mr. Speaker, here are some other facts about the Budget. Net capital expenditures are estimated at \$1.1 billion, or 15.3 per cent of net expenditures. This is 69.6 per cent greater than the revised net capital expenditures in 2011-2012. Some would argue that this government has a practice of budgeting and not being able to get the money out the door for the programs and services that it promises.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member who spoke before me spoke about his son. It is exciting to hear about young people who are taking opportunities and educating and learning and studying. Well, the fact is that in our Province we have a serious gap in math skills, and those are the skills that are required by the industries that are growing, which this side of the House of Assembly says are going to be the job creators for all our young people, despite the fact that we have had in excess of almost 5,000 young people leave our Province. I certainly hope the hon. member's son is not one of them.

Mr. Speaker, as we went through some of the Estimates, one of the things that certainly surprised me was when we asked questions about assessing and analysing trends of dollars spent. Maybe the Minister of Finance can answer this question: Where are the trend reports around the spending on line by line items so that a decision can be made on multi years versus single years?

Good fiscal management is not about making political promises to get elected. Good fiscal management is about making sure you steward the taxpayers' money in a way that ensures you have the capital to invest in things that are important to people, things like health care.

The government chose to send out a wonderful piece of propaganda to many of the households in Newfoundland and Labrador that talked about

five key things. It talked about, number one, shared prosperity, fairness and balance. Mr. Speaker, I am really confused as to how you can talk about shared prosperity, fairness and balance when there were almost 1,100 people eliminated in last year's Budget. They had their lives turned upside down by this government; yet, in this year's Budget total salaries increased by 13 per cent. What was the panic about last year?

Investments in the social sector as a per cent of expenditures are down from 64 per cent to 59 per cent. The young people who needed help years ago to be able to get the jobs at Muskrat Falls, building the Hebron structure –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS C. BENNETT: – did not get that education and training when they needed it and now we are trying to play catch up. On top of that, in this year's Budget government is borrowing \$1 billion. I ask: Where is the balance in that? As I mentioned earlier, it is a concern of the people in my district for sure.

The other piece that was spoken about was creating first-rate education opportunities. I mentioned the math scores, Mr. Speaker, and providing quality health care, and I mentioned the experience of my constituent at the Health Sciences Centre.

The document went on to talk about building strong communities. This government has had a habit of downloading responsibilities on to municipalities, including the capital city, without providing the necessary resources. I am not sure that is a definition of how to build stronger communities.

Mr. Speaker, point five on the propaganda piece was encouraging a vibrant economy. Mr. Speaker, again I say, with continued high unemployment in rural Newfoundland at 19.5 per cent, and workforce challenges in urban centres, there is a disconnect between the skills needed now and in the future. That is not my definition of encouraging a vibrant economy.

Mr. Speaker, as we think about the Budget and we debate this, many people are asking the question: what is the plan for tomorrow?

Members opposite have asked what our party's plan is for tomorrow. What I can say is that it will be the responsibility of government, just like it is their responsibility to steward every single penny in a way that is respectful of the taxpayers who pay it. It is not good enough to stand up and celebrate what you feel are the contributions that you have garnered for your district if at the same time you have put the rest of the Province and other parts of the Province at a disadvantage.

Mr. Speaker, as I stand here on the beginning of week five as an MHA here in the House of Assembly, I am shocked that the members opposite are too busy reading from key message tracks rather than recognizing that today in our Province people are still waiting for the promises their government made in the past. Evangelical pontifications can be dangerous. They sometimes end with people following the evangelical speaker into the abyss. Drinking the Kool-Aid can be dangerous.

Mr. Speaker, setting clear, long-range aspirations for performance, intensifying efforts to measure performance and comparing performance within jurisdictions, putting performance data at the heart of decisions about making policies and delivering all of the public services that you promised, holding regular collaborative discussions on performance with those accountable for delivering progress, including front line workers in health care, establishing comprehensive, sustained performance improvement programs that are led by deeply engaged leaders, that is what needs to happen. That is the future for Newfoundland and Labrador. That is what the people of the Province are expecting their government to offer.

As I conclude, Mr. Speaker, I will share this quote. The Budget Speech seemed to be filled with quotes, so I thought I would share one as well, "The government is merely a servant – merely a temporary servant; it cannot be its prerogative to determine what is right and what is wrong, and decide who is a patriot and who isn't. Its function is to obey orders, not originate them".

I fear from the comments from my constituents that this government has forgotten. That as it is talking about what they feel they have done, they have forgotten to listen to the people of the Province who have genuine concerns, like seniors, young people, taxpayers who are worried about taxes and increasing debt loads, dual-income families, and people who are worried about the future, who are not interested in yesterday, people who are worried about tomorrow.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure to rise in this hon. House and have a few words on the Budget. Before I do, I want to take the opportunity to wish the Minister of Environment well on her retirement. We all know in this House of Assembly, despite the fact that we may banter back and forth and we may have different views and opinions on things – we certainly do not agree on everything that is for sure - one thing we all can agree on is that politics can be a tough racket. It does have an impact on your family life. I do want to wish her well in her retirement, and thank her for her service to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of things I could speak on, so I am going to try and take them one at a time here. I am not going to concentrate on the Budget per se. I think my colleagues have certainly spoken to a number of issues, pointed out a number of issues and concerns we have with the Budget as it relates to the debt and as it relates to future projections which all seem to be trending down while debt is trending upward.

A few of the things I want to just touch on – and I spoke about these in the House before, Mr. Speaker. I just want to get it out there for the record again. First of all, I just want to speak about the Peak Pond development. I was contacted by some people in my district who actually had summer homes out in the Peak

Pond area and Reids Pond area. There is a proposal that has been brought forward to put a waste transfer facility at that location. I presented a number of petitions on behalf of not just the cabin owners and the livyers, because there are actually people who actually live all year round in Peak Pond and Reids Pond.

In addition to that, we have been getting petitions coming in from people from Whitbourne, Dildo, and all of those other communities in the area who have real concerns about this transfer facility which is also including in the proposal an organics collection facility. Of course, they have concerns about environmental issues. They have concerns about rodents, odour, unsightliness, and litter. There is a whole list of issues around the actual wildlife there, because they do have moose, ducks, rabbits, loons, and geese, and all that up there.

Mr. Speaker, nobody is against having a waste transfer facility. There are six other facilities across the Island. The reason for having them, of course, is so that people have a location where they can bring their bulk garbage so it does not end up in the woods. We do not want that to happen. That is why it is being put there.

Everybody supports the need for such a site. I think the location is the issue. I am recommending, and the residents have been recommending, we need to look at industrial sites in the area. The former Whitbourne dump would be an ideal site. I know they had looked at it at one point in time, but apparently I understand there was some private individual who had put in a proposal to do something at that site. I think that has since gone off the table.

I think they should look at that site. If not that site, then I am sure there are other industrial sites, whether it be some rock quarries or other former industrial sites. It does not make sense to destroy the environment in that beautiful pristine area when there are other industrial sites or former industrial sites they could use.

I certainly encourage the government to look at that, to work with Eastern Waste to find a more suitable site. I will continue to bring this issue forward on behalf of the residents and the cabin

owners, as I said, a number of them from my district.

Mr. Speaker, talking about waste management, I just wanted to raise an issue, bring it to the attention of the Minister of Transportation and Works, an issue around garbage. It may seem like a minor issue, but I think it is worthy to raise for sure. I am speaking about the Outer Ring Road, Mr. Speaker. If you go along the Outer Ring Road, the median there is a real, total mess. There is garbage in it everywhere. We have seen two car accidents I believe, last week – two separate car accidents. There was one last week where somebody ran over a piece of pipe or something that actually ended up going through the grill of the car or whatever.

There are a couple of issues there. Well, first of all, it certainly needs to be cleaned up. It is the responsibility of the provincial government. There is traffic going back and forth there all the time, going back and forth to and from the airport, a lot of tourists and so on, and it is very, very unsightly. So I encourage the government to deal with that.

The other issue, of course, is where is the debris coming from? I believe much of the debris is coming from trucks that are bringing garbage to the Robin Hood Bay facility. I think that, obviously, those trucks are not properly covered and so on. I do believe there are regulations around proper covering of those trucks that are transporting garbage. I encourage the government, through the RNC or maybe Highway Enforcement, to start looking at that and enforcing it. Then that would alleviate the mess and it would alleviate the safety concerns that are created from debris out there. I did want to make a mention of that as well.

Mr. Speaker, another issue which I have brought forward here now in terms of petitions in the House of Assembly, and I wanted to speak on again just briefly, is the 1.6 kilometre school bus rule. This is something I have had a number of calls, e-mails, and discussions with parents from my district, and I know my colleagues have as well on this one point. I know the Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace has raised this issue as well, and it is around the 1.6 kilometre rule for busing.

Mr. Speaker, this really comes down to a safety concern, particularly when you have children who have to utilize sidewalks and roads and so on. Some areas do not even have sidewalks, for one thing. Of course, then you are into areas perhaps where there is a lot of traffic. I know in my district, for example, there are four-lane roads, high volumes of traffic and so on, and small children, if they are walking, are required to have to cross these busy roads. Like I said, some areas do not even have sidewalks. That is a real safety concern. Of course, this is made even more dangerous of a situation in the wintertime when you have snow clearing issues and the sidewalks are not snow cleared.

We heard a number of issues raised by residents in the City of St. John's, for example, this past winter, people complaining about the fact that sidewalks were not cleared. Now as you can imagine, if you do not have the sidewalks cleared, you have very young children having to get to school, they do not have sidewalks to walk on, that is a real recipe for disaster, Mr. Speaker. I think that is something that really needs to be looked at.

I know specifically in my district, as a result of the school reorganization in Mount Pearl with St. Peter's Elementary and Newtown Elementary, one of the issues – there were many issues there and I am going to speak to that as well, there were a number of issues. One of the issues is the fact that there were a number of families who, for example, moved in close to Newtown Elementary. Say for argument's sake they moved in on Munden Drive, they wanted their kids to go to a neighbour school. Now because of this change that is going to happen in September, they can no longer go to the school right next door. Now they have to get the kids over to St. Peter's Elementary and vice versa. That may require busing for some because not everybody, unfortunately, has a vehicle.

While we have a great economy, there is no doubt, there are people who are not necessarily doing so well and getting the kids to school is a real issue because they do not have a vehicle. The problem is, even though they have to go to different schools, they are within the 1.6 kilometres. There could be someone on Munden Drive, their child could just basically go down the street to the school, now they have to go to

St. Peter's Elementary, crossing over four-lane roads, busy roads, but they are probably 1.2 kilometres away.

When we are talking very young children, K to Grade 6 children in particular, it is a real safety concern. It is something that has been raised a number of times with me. As I said, I have presented petitions, as have some of my colleagues, and we will continue to do so and continue to push this issue. Interestingly, government did issue a study on that. I forget the name of the company that did it – Deloitte. They spent \$75,000 on a school bus study the provincial government did.

One of the recommendations that came from that report was that the 1.6 kilometres should be eliminated. Unfortunately, it was never done. That is why it is interesting, a lot of times when you see studies that are done – we talk about money, right? There are all kinds of money that has been spent on studies, but the problem is a lot of times you will hear the minister get up and say on a particular study: Well, we accepted the study. We accepted the recommendations. That leads people to believe that you are going to actually implement the recommendations. That is not what it means.

When they say we have accepted it, it just means, thank you very much, we accept your report. It does not mean we are going to implement what is in the report. It is interesting because you spend all this money on these studies, on these reports, you would think the whole purpose of it is to find out: What are the issues? What are the recommendations to correct those particular issues or concerns? Then you would think they would implement them. No, it is not the case. Spend a pile of money on a study, accept it by simply saying thank you very much, but do nothing with it. That is what happened in this particular case.

We still have that safety issue ongoing as it relates to the 1.6 kilometre rule for school busing. Since I have raised this and brought forward petitions on behalf of constituents I represent, I have been getting calls now and e-mails and so on from people in St. John's, people in the Goulds, Paradise, and other – I actually have a couple of others from people in some of the rural parts of the Province as well.

So it is definitely an issue, definitely something that government should be looking into for sure.

Mr. Speaker, another issue which I have raised and presented petitions on and so on, I want to again bring attention to it, is the issue around blue zone parking. Of course, we know the whole purpose for blue zone parking is to provide access for persons who have mobility challenges, whether that is to a public facility or whether it is to private facilities. Two years ago in the House of Assembly there was new legislation which came forward, everybody agreed with it, we voted unanimously in favour of it, and two years later we still see many, many commercial establishments around the city, around the region, around the Province, that are not in compliance.

They either do not have blue zones, or they do not have enough blue zones, or they are not the sufficient width, and in many cases they do not have permanent signage. The purpose of the legislation in particular dealt with the permanent signage.

MS PERRY: (Inaudible).

MR. LANE: I would ask the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune, if she has something to say, then when she has her opportunity she can get up and say it. I did not interrupt her. I would appreciate the same courtesy.

Anyway, as I was saying, Mr. Speaker, that is why it is was put in place, to have proper regulations to ensure people had access. We have seen examples all over the place where that is not happening, and it comes down to enforcement. Again, I am just going to call up the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador to start enforcing their own regulations. Not only are we not seeing it enforced in commercial establishments, it is not even happening in government-owned facilities: the St. Clare's Hospital, the Health Sciences, workers' compensation building, a number of liquor stores, and AES offices. I have been around and looked at them, and they are not in compliance.

I have to say that Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, which was not in compliance – I

received a message from NLHC last week with the picture showing that they are now in compliance. They had the blue zones, but they did not have the signs. Now they have the signs. I am glad to see that Mr. Simms and the people at Newfoundland and Labrador Housing obviously have been listening and they corrected it. That is good for them.

I would ask that all other departments do the same so we can provide proper access, by law, by our own regulations for the people who need it and deserve it. I do not think it is too much to ask. It is not a big cost or anything involved. It is only a matter of somebody to actually do what they are supposed to do and put it in place.

Mr. Speaker, another issue which I raised today and I asked a question on was bicycle helmet safety and the need for legislation here in the Province. This has been asked for by my colleagues over the last couple of years because it is a safety issue. It is something that has been endorsed by the Canadian Medical Association and the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association. I believe we had some physicians, as well, at the Janeway who spoke out about it a year ago saying that we really should have bicycle helmet legislation.

To date we do not have it. We are dumping it over on the municipalities, municipalities that do not necessarily have the infrastructure in place to deal with it and to enforce it. They do not have the resources. Even then, it is like a bylaw, and I am not sure what kind of teeth the bylaw would actually have and how hard it would be to find somebody or deal with somebody who is not compliant.

I am calling on the provincial government here again tonight to implement bicycle helmet legislation as they have in most other provinces. I was encouraged that the Minister of Service NL did say they were looking at doing a review. I am hopeful that once the House convenes again in the fall that there will be bicycle helmet legislation in place, or it will be brought forward for us to debate. I hope so and will certainly be watching that for sure.

Mr. Speaker, I only have a couple of minutes left, but I wanted to, as well, speak about the seniors. This has been referenced as well. It is

very important that we do all we possibly can as a government to ensure our seniors are looked after. We realize and everybody acknowledges the fact that economically, certainly on this part of the Island, we are doing well overall. There is no doubt about it. Indicators are showing that this is going to taper off. Nonetheless, in this particular area we are doing pretty good - I do not think people could deny it - but not everybody is doing good.

Because of the price of housing going up, the price of rent going up, the price of fuel going up, the price of food going up, and everything else, people on fixed incomes, such as our seniors, are actually falling further behind. Granted, the government does have a number of programs in place: the Residential Energy Efficiency Program, the Provincial Home Repair Program, the energy efficiency grants, and the Home Heating Rebate. There are a number of good programs that the government has in place, and I applaud the government for each and every one of them. I think it is a good thing; I support it 100 per cent.

That being said, there is still more that we need to do. I have said it in this House many times: money does not grow on trees. I will say it over on this side like I said on that side: money does not grow on trees. We need to ensure, though, that we prioritize. We need to prioritize what we are doing to ensure that seniors, the disadvantaged and the low-income people in our society, are not falling through the cracks, and that they are being looked after. We need to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I am down to my last thirty seconds so I will just end off by saying there is no doubt there are good things happening. As our leader said, we are the first to acknowledge it and give credit where credit is due for good things that are happening, but everything is not rosy. Everything is not perfect. When we are bringing those issues forward, we are not being negative; we are only performing the role that we were given to perform, to bring those issues forward to the government with recommendations.

MR. SPEAKER: I remind the hon. member that his time has expired.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to get up here, every time I get up, for the beautiful District – I always say – of Cape St. Francis. It is truly a beautiful district.

MR. JOYCE: (Inaudible).

MR. K. PARSONS: The Member for Bay of Islands, you should come down some time and see how beautiful it is. I will take you out jiggling someday.

MR. JOYCE: I had a house down there.

MR. K. PARSONS: You have a house down there.

MR. JOYCE: I did.

MR. K. PARSONS: It is a beautiful area.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of things to say first tonight. I think we live in the greatest Province in Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: I think the people in our Province are unbelievable.

Mr. Speaker, I have to thank the Whip tonight. He gave me the opportunity to leave the House here tonight. In my district there was a huge fundraiser. There is a young girl; she is going to Montreal for an operation. They had a card game down in Torbay tonight for her.

I came down over Piperstock Hill and I saw the cars parked on the side of the road. I said, wild; I could not believe it. When I got inside, Mr. Speaker, the upstairs of the Holy Trinity Parish Hall was full of tables. They even had four

tables set up downstairs in the storage room so they could have the people. It was unbelievable.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, that is what Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are all about. We are about helping each other. We are about doing things when people need it. It is everywhere. We see it in every community. When some disasters happen in communities, you will see people coming together and helping out their neighbours or helping out this little girl who needs to go, and she is going to be in Montreal for four months.

I have to thank most of my colleagues, actually. I had some tickets upstairs and a lot of them bought. There were some colleagues, when the tickets were not there, who put in donations. I brought them down there tonight and they appreciated that. I am not sure what the amount was tonight, but I know it is going to really, really help that family out.

Mr. Speaker, this weekend as well - I mentioned it a little earlier today - every year I am always amazed with the Janeway Telethon. I watch the little ones coming on with their cheques, and different community groups. I do not know if it is done in every province; I am not sure if it is or not. Do you know something, Mr. Speaker? It makes me proud to be a Newfoundlander and Labradorian.

When I look at the names coming up, and I see them from one end of this Island to the other end, from the top of Labrador to the South Coast of Labrador, everywhere in this Province, sometimes I look at the names of the communities and it always amazes me - I do not know where that place is – trying to figure out where they are. Do you know what? They raised \$2.9 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: I tell you, it is unbelievable for the children and for the young people who need it. Do you know what? We talked today – I am going to speak a little bit now, because this is my third time up on the Budget. My first time up I was mainly basing everything on education and what we are doing with education, how we

are doing for the children, but tonight I am going to have a few words to say about our health care system.

Mr. Speaker, I listened to the Leader of the Opposition tonight, and he went on with his stuff. They are going to be nay and we are going to be aye. That is the way it is, and that is the way politics runs.

I can tell you one thing, and I bet there is no member on that other side who can tell me what the biggest difference is, since 2003, in the people in Newfoundland and Labrador, and the people from Newfoundland and Labrador who live away. We have pride, and we are so proud of our Province. We stand up now; when we are out in the rest of Canada we have our chest out because we are from Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, I can remember, I spent twenty-seven years with a company going back and forth to the mainland and going up and doing course after course after course. I do not know how many times I walked in with ten or twelve fellows from all over Canada, and the first thing they wanted me to do was tell a joke. I found that offensive, to tell you the truth, Mr. Speaker. I really did. I am as funny as the next fellow. I like telling jokes. I love listening to jokes. Anyone who tells me a joke, they love to tell me because I laugh so much at them. Do you know something? They were doing it because Newfoundlanders are funny.

Do you know what? After a few years, since 2003-2004, before I got in here I was still doing those courses and the attitude was changing. I talk to a lot of my friends who live on the mainland and they tell me the conversation around that water fountain now is not about a Newfoundland joke. It is about how the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador is doing, how they are leading Canada in so many different categories, and how the people in this Province are making a great wage. The income is up.

I am not saying it is the fault of the Liberal Party or the PC Party that is doing it all. Do you know

what, Mr. Speaker? It is the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. The confidence they have in this place, the investments they are making in this place.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, our workers, our people are unbelievable. You can go anywhere in Canada, you can go anywhere in the world. I have a brother who works over in Saudi Arabia. He will tell you: let me tell you something, there is no better worker anywhere in the world than a Newfoundlander or Labradorian, because they are known all over the world for their great work skills and their ethical work. They are just great workers. That is just the way we are. That is the way we were bred.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to mention something. The hon. Member for Carbonear – Harbour Grace mentioned tonight about limited servicing. I can remember first when I came in I had a beef about limited servicing when I was mayor of Flatrock, but then I got to realize what it was all about. What it is, is new development going in your town.

Mr. Speaker, it is different than it was years ago when the land was not worth anything, but the land is worth a lot of money now. That developer should be made to pay for the cost of that road going in. He is not government. He is going to sell his property. He is going to make a profit, not the other taxpayers in that community.

When I realized how it worked – and I am sure out your way there are areas where land is worth a whole lot more and limited servicing putting in a road – not the town to put it in, the developer should put it in. That is the way I looked at it. I thought the same way as you first when I got into it, but as I became mayor I realized how important it was, that people who do developments in these towns, not the taxpayers to pay for the roads going in, but they pay for it.

Mr. Speaker, before I talk a little bit about the health care system, I want to talk about seniors. This weekend I had a very, very busy weekend. One of the busiest I think since I have been in here. I had the opportunity to drop off five

Home Repair Programs to people's homes. My district is about twenty-five kilometres from one end to the other end and I am right in the middle of it. It is a great opportunity if somebody calls up, but not all the members can do that.

It is a great opportunity for me to take the whole application and bring it down, give it to them and let them fill it out and explain what they have to do, the number they have to call for the feds to get their paper and stuff like that. It is a great pleasure to be able to sit down with our seniors. I know that not everything is rosy. No, not everything is rosy. Do you know what? Five thousand dollars of that Home Repair Program to do windows, to do doors, to do siding, to put a new roof on their house, they really appreciate this investment. That is not a waste of money. That is a cost that we are making to seniors. They are being able to stay in their own homes.

Our seniors are the backbone of our whole society. They are the backbone of everything we have. They are the reason we are doing as well as what we are today. I know everyone here talks about seniors and stuff like that, and I have a great time. I wish tonight that we were not sitting here because I would be right down with all those seniors tonight.

When I walked in that hall tonight, do you know who the majority of the people who were in there playing cards? They were seniors from the area. Every one of them comes out and supports, and that is the way they are. It is great for us as a government to be able to give something back to them. These grants are great. The REEP and the Home Repair Program is something that is fantastic for the seniors. I would like to have a magic wand to be able to do what we can all the time for our seniors because like I said, they are the heart and soul of our whole society.

Mr. Speaker, I said I was going to speak a little bit about our health care system. We all went through the health care system and we know how busy it is when you go into the Health Sciences or St. Clare's and places like that. Do you know one thing? We invested 36 per cent of our investments – our whole Budget is invested into the health care system.

Newfoundland is different than most provinces in Canada. We go out the Trans-Canada Highway, we go down and we come back up. We go out further, we go up and we come back down again. That is the way it is on the Bonavista Peninsula or whether we go down to Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune.

Mr. Speaker, in the last number of years – and I would like to see if the Opposition thinks it is a waste of money, all those dialysis machines that we put in so people do not have to come up from Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune to Grand Falls, or people do not have to come from Bonavista – I think the new one is in Bonavista now – and have to drive up to Clarendville. Those are great investments we are doing in our health care system and it is costing money, but do you know what? It is money well spent.

Rural Newfoundland is getting older. There is no doubt about it, and as you get older the cost of health care goes up. Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? I am sure that most of those people who have all of these health centres – I know there are health centres all over this Province. We are there for the people who are living in rural Newfoundland and making sure there are health care facilities so they can avail of these facilities so they do not have to drive all over the place.

Our health care system, as far as I am concerned, along with education, are the two major things that we should be investing in, and we are investing in, Mr. Speaker. I look at the money we are investing in hip replacement. Our hip replacement and knee replacement, now we are the best in wait times all across Canada. I would say ten years ago we were probably the worst. That is where they would want us to be. We were probably the worst in all of Canada, but now we are one of the best in all of Canada in all of the investments we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, we are investing in family care. This year it is \$40.4 million that we are investing in our family care projects for our children, for our young people in our Province. Mr. Speaker, major investments. There is \$24 million to enhance cancer treatment. We are making huge investments in all different parts.

Mr. Speaker, do we have enough money to do it all? Should we invest more? I do not know, but you know, Mr. Speaker, there is a pie there and our health care system gets the majority of that pie, and so it should. Our education system gets a portion of that pie, and so it should. Then there are other parts that we have to put out there, too.

When I look at health care, I look at what we are doing – it is a great investment we are doing in our active living, healthy living for our seniors, for getting them out on outings and different programs that they have in their organizations. It is so nice to be able to give them \$1,000 or \$1,500 so they can go. All of the groups, there are four of them in my district, and I have to say, Mr. Speaker, they are doing really, really well.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking at the time and I wanted to get to this part tonight – talking about squandering money. I was Mayor of the Town of Flatrock when we bought a fire truck. That fire truck was split 50-50. The Town of Flatrock had to come up with 50 per cent and so did government put in their 50 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, since we changed the ratio, towns like Flatrock, Pouch Cove, Logy Bay-Middle Cove-Outer Cove are doing more investments in fire trucks, fire equipment, and everything else because it is 90-10. Is that squandering our money, investing in our communities? That is what we have done; we have invested in the communities in the area.

To see this year in Pouch Cove – CBC News carried it a lot of times – the water down there is as brown as anything sometimes. Mr. Speaker, it depends when the flow is coming down through. This year, the investment this government is making is \$1 million in Pouch Cove to help with the water system. We are going to need some more money next year, but it is a 90-10. If that was seven or eight years ago it would have been 50-50, and the town would never have been able to afford it.

Mr. Speaker, that is what we are doing. We are not squandering our money. We are investing in our communities, we are investing in our education, and we are investing in our people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: Mr. Speaker, I look at the schools in my district. You talk about squandering money; well, I can tell you right now – and I understand the money probably was not there in the 1990s, but Holy Trinity Elementary was sixty years old. You walked down the hall and all you heard was squeak, squeak, squeak, all the way down the hall. The corridor was about this wide; you had to wait to get around the lockers to go down there.

There is a new school there. There is another new school on the way. We have invested \$1 million in St. Francis of Assisi over in Outer Cove to have new windows, new doors, and a new roof on it. It is a beautiful school, a great little school.

We have also invested in Cape St. Francis where they put a new modular classroom because the growth down there is unreal. This year \$10.4 million has been invested in a new school for the area. Mr. Speaker, that is not squandering money. That is investing our money and it is investing the right way.

I would like to know how else you would do it. I have heard them over there tonight, all night long, and listening to their speeches. They never once came out and said what we would spend differently, how we would not build a Torbay Bypass Road. The Torbay Bypass Road cost \$23 million.

Mr. Speaker, every morning I used to listen to VOXM or CBC as soon as I got out of bed to see what is happening in Torbay. It is backed up to the Foodland would be the first thing you would hear in the morning. Not anymore; a \$23 million investment. It is not squandering money, but it was well-invested money in our communities.

That is what we have been doing. We have been investing our money not only in my district, Mr. Speaker, but in every district in this Province. I do not care what district you talk about. Every district in this Province since 2003 can stand up here tonight and show where the investments were done in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I look at transportation, and again investing money. We invested money. The bridge in Outer Cove was falling down; there

were big slabs coming out of the middle. It cost \$2.5 million to put a new bridge in there. It had to be done. That is investing our money wisely, and that is what we have done. We have not squandered money.

How do we squander money? By giving our municipalities a better rate, 90-10, than to have 50-50 so they do not have to raise their taxes all over the place? We have the lowest taxes in all of Atlantic Canada. We have put \$500 million back into the pockets of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. That is squandering our money? I do not think so, Mr. Speaker. I do not think it is squandering our money at all.

Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the hon. Member for Mount Pearl South and he has been up a good few times. The other day he told me I was bullying him. Anyway, I have a few things - and I listened. I am a pretty good fellow, because I always listen to Hansard; I always want to go in and I read everything that is there. I would like to just read a couple of little things here tonight from Hansard.

Mr. Speaker, let me see, "Do you know what? The only thing red that the Liberals left the people of Newfoundland and Labrador in 2003 were the books. That is what they left, the books. We were in the red. They had the Province on the verge of bankruptcy... The Province was on the verge of bankruptcy. The infrastructure was falling to pieces. The roads were falling to pieces. The bridges were falling to pieces. The ferries were falling to pieces."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Who said that?

MR. K. PARSONS: Hang on, now. Hold on, now; just one second. The mould in the school, he talked about, "The health care facilities were crumbling to the ground. That is what they left. So we certainly do not need to sit here and take any lessons from the Liberal Party..." of this Province. That was one year ago.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Who said that?

MR. K. PARSONS: The hon. Member for Mount Pearl South. Now he is over there and he is hugging, and we are bullying him.

That is not the best one, Mr. Speaker. He left stuff behind one day. He left stuff behind. Let me read this one; this is really good: more people working than ever before, lowest unemployment rate, second highest average wage in the country only to Alberta, the highest disposable income in history, new buildings, new homes, and new vehicles - Jags and Hummers. That is what he was driving around, Jags and Hummers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: This did not happen by accident, he said. No, this did not happen by accident. This was wisely investing our money and making good deals.

MR. JOYCE: (Inaudible).

MR. K. PARSONS: Hold on, now; the hon. Member for Bay of Islands didn't hear the best yet. That is not the best. I will tell you, I am willing to give this document to the hon. Member for Burgeo - La Poile, because he is the fellow who should have it.

The next thing, there is a big asterisk here, it says: Parsons. Whoa! CETA. Then it goes to another thing there. It says: twenty-four hour snow-clearing - now I have to read this because I have a job to see it - tell him to ask daddy why his government did not implement this. I am sure when they bring this upstairs there may be someone up there who will want to do it. There is still more.

AN HON. MEMBER: He can ask daddy now I guess. He can ask daddy now.

MR. K. PARSONS: Yes, an attempt at humour, sarcasm. Who is he talking about, I wonder? He said: the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Oh, my God. Mr. Speaker, I received e-mails and calls, but he said: ordinary taxpayers will benefit. We are paying down our debt. Rural Newfoundland is doing well, Mount Pearl is doing well, and so is Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, this was only six months ago. This was not yesterday. This did not happen yesterday. I am sure the hon. members across the way, if they want it, they can have it. Do you know what?

AN HON. MEMBER: You should tell the Member for Virginia Waters about (inaudible).

MR. K. PARSONS: Oh, there is a little thing there too. I wrote down a little thing about the Member for Virginia Waters. What else did she use?

MR. JOYCE: Tell (inaudible).

MR. K. PARSONS: Hold on. I do not have enough time to do the hon. Member for the Bay of Islands, but I do have enough documents here in my desk to give him when he wants to see it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. K. PARSONS: A lot of it is from the Member for Bay of Islands, so I will give it to him later on if he wants. The hon. Member for Virginia Waters, let me see, what is it with her? She is anti-Mount Pearl. That is his thing on her. She is for amalgamation and she is anti-Mount Pearl.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great night in the House of Assembly. I got it all off my chest tonight and I am going to sit down and take my place.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to the Budget tonight.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MITCHELMORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly, a lot can change in a very short time. I really want to speak about the failed economic document that is here presented before us, because the Member for Cape St. Francis talked about and talked about the Member for Mount Pearl South.

Let's just look at the Newfoundland and Labrador Consolidated Change in Net Debt, Net Debt Summary, and Debt Transactions from last year just to this year. Within a very short time frame, six months or so, all we have to look at is what the former Finance Minister liked to talk about which was net debt. Net debt was at \$9 billion last year. Where is this government putting us in net debt? Nine billion and eight hundred million dollars this year, that is \$800 million in net debt. That is increasing the expenditures and the debt for the people of the Province.

Let's look at the debt at the beginning of the year at \$11.6 billion. It is going to be just shy of \$13 billion. This is a government that loves to borrow. They love to spend, spend, and spend. They are fixated, actually, on spending; they have a borrowed Budget. One billion dollars in this year's Budget of the \$7.5 billion in the Budget is actually borrowed. They do not have the money to pay for it.

If we look at the economic indicators moving forward, if we look at real GDP, it is declining. It is going down from 5.9 per cent, to 0.5 per cent, to nothing, to getting into the negatives in 2016. Household income is also going down; in 2016, it will be -0.8 per cent. Retail sales are also trending down.

We are seeing a real lack of vision moving forward from this government. No strategy really to diversify and grow the economy so that people have greater household incomes in future years so that we can increase business confidence. The economic indicators just here on the Budget on page 2 are showing exactly that.

We look at the housing starts and how they are significantly declining. Let's just look at how much they are declining. In 2010, they declined 3.3 per cent. In 2012, they declined all the way to 2013, 26.3 per cent. They are going down.

The Consumer Price Index is going up, so inflation is kicking in. The unemployment rate is also going to go up by 2016, and employment is going down. Capital investment, after government spends and spends and spends in the megaprojects that are planned, is also going down in 2016. If we look at where the trend is

going, it is nowhere positive. This government does not really have a lot to be proud of as they move forward and look at Budget 2014.

I want to talk about health care. What we really want to do is get better value for our health care dollars. This year's Budget is increasing health care by \$100 million. That is no small amount of money when we are talking about spending over \$3 billion on health care.

Why do we not look at utilizing staff, utilizing resources more efficiently, and providing better health outcomes to have a healthier population so that we can bring that number down, rather than see it increase and balloon year after year after year? I talked about it in the House of Assembly, how we could better utilize nurse practitioners, especially if we already have them on staff. The Strait of Belle Isle Health Clinic could utilize a nurse practitioner clinic from 9:00 o'clock to 5:00 o'clock so that it can deal with a physician shortage and provide continuity of care. This is something that can save taxpayer dollars.

We talk about echocardiogram service. We have two ultrasound machines at the Curtis Memorial Hospital. They are being underutilized. We have staff who could provide the service who just require minimal training, but yet we refer hundreds of people out each year.

One medevac could pay for this service, but yet we are willing to use medevac after medevac, or compensate people through medical travel, or basically take the money out of people's pockets and their family's on these when it is a basic diagnostic service for known and suspected heart disease. Why can't this service be offered? It could save significant amounts of money.

AN HON. MEMBER: Shame.

MR. MITCHELMORE: It is shameful from this government.

Another thing that we have seen – which is a real move back from this government – is looking at the privatization of midwifery when we already had it offered in a publicly-funded setting in our health care authorities. For over ninety years it has been offered.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MITCHELMORE: Through midwifery, if we look at it, a Facebook page was created: A Midwife Helped Me Out. A midwife helped me out as well, and a lot of other people. Most people on the Northern Peninsula actually were born by midwives. In doing so they reduced the cost to the health care system, but also provided better health outcomes because of the relationship that is built, the trust that is built, and also the pre and postnatal care that is offered.

Midwifery is something that is vital and important, and government is dragging its heels on that. In 2010 it introduced the act itself but did not move forward on it. Now they are looking at privatizing midwifery. This is a government that does not look at how they can utilize the staff, the resources, and the model they have to provide better health care outcomes. It is shameful.

The Member for Cape St. Francis talked about how we have the lowest wait-list for hip and knee replacement. Another area where we could actually utilize more resources is that we have a fabulous hip and knee replacement physician on the Great Northern Peninsula in St. Anthony. Why don't we utilize that person more often?

We could be dealing with more surgeries, more OT time so that people get better care and reduce those wait times even more. Yet what we are seeing is a chronic backlog of hospital beds being blocked because there is lack of a long-term care facility and a lack of planning. When we talk about that and when we bring that forward, there is no plan for bricks and mortar, no plan for pilot projects as to how we can utilize our smaller clinics and utilize the space that is there to provide care and reduce overall costs. There are things that this government is ignoring, but yet willing to balloon the health care budget year after year after year in unsustainable spending.

We look at physiotherapy and we look at occupational therapy. There is a list there in the Budget, but we need to look at: how do we recruit? How do we look at implementing and

adding more staff in the physiotherapy field, especially in rural and isolated communities when people are waiting years for referrals? This is something that is completely inadequate. I could go on and on. I could spend the whole twenty minutes talking about health care, but I have to move on to so many other areas that are missing and lacking in the Budget.

We only have to look at the Department of Municipal Affairs. The Member for Cape St. Francis talked about how 90-10 is a wonderful thing. Well, it certainly is, but I will tell you one community, one municipality in my district that is not pleased with it is the Town of Conche. The Town of Conche had a pilot project for having chip seal done in their community at 25-75. Before, it was 90-10, and that failed in less than two years. They were on the hook for their 25 per cent payment. Now the road has to get paved again.

For a very small community having to pay the municipality for a program that was failed by government, that they have to pay and pay and pay, it is incredible; a complete rip-off. The people of Conche are still waiting for pavement on Route 434 multiple years later after a \$6 million investment. When are they going to put the blacktop on and create that multi-year plan to pave?

When we look at the fishery we see what is really missing in the Budget is really there is no strategy there. It is a let us blame Ottawa approach versus really obtain joint management, which is something that the Official Opposition has been pushing. Government says we will monitor the situation, using the basic talking points and language from the federal government. It is a back and forth blame game basically.

We are seeing reduced investment and government looking at cherry picking the areas where they say we are doing well. We are investing in research. Investing in research is a great thing. It is a federal government responsibility. Yet when it comes to things like the incomes of fishers who are adversely impacted by ice and who have exhausted their EI for several weeks – those people who are very vulnerable – government is standing firm here. This government is saying that is a federal

government responsibility; we do not really care. We are not going to step up and step in here as we have in the past for other industries that have gone and had difficult times.

We have seen where the provincial government has compensated the severance in AbitibiBowater. They have stepped up in areas where government normally would not step up, but they are not willing to step up for the people here who need ice compensation. Yet, they are going in the federal jurisdiction when it comes to research.

We have seen a lot of failed policies here in the fishery when it comes from the current government; a significant reduction in processing plants. We are not moving forward on the secondary and tertiary processing that is needed. Let's face it, we have not seen all the details on CETA, but we need to have the conversations on how we are going to capitalize on the opportunities that can exist in the European marketplace. I think we need to start having these public forums and how we look at – if we are even going to get this \$400 million fund now after Cabinet secrecy at the federal level.

Those are a lot of concerns there with the fishery at this point. I did not even touch on the fact that the minister is unable to get meetings with the federal minister on topics of shrimp reductions, crab quota reductions, and the ice compensation. It is a continuous failed record where there is a poor relationship with Ottawa. It is a blame Ottawa, but it is not willing to work and find solutions or even step up in many cases.

We look at in St. Anthony, for example, the closure of Coast Guard radio and the removal of services. We have seen it in other areas where they have not been able to – for the search and rescue, able to get things moving there. It is a complete failure. This government has a very poor track record.

They have a poor track record in the forestry. We see the Great Northern Peninsula forestry resources are just stagnant when they should be generating tens of millions of dollars annually creating and generating revenue for hundreds and hundreds of people. Also, in Central Newfoundland and Labrador, the government

has been completely failing the people of Central as well when it comes to the timber assets that are there. There should be pelletizing plants there; there should be a fingerboard plant. There should be a great ability to integrate and create a sustainable forestry plan that will work with the current players, the entities that are there, the sawmillers and also Corner Brook Pulp and Paper.

There really needs to be a thorough plan; yet, all that is talked about in forestry is that there are 5,500 jobs. I would like to see those 5,500 jobs as to how they are accounted for and calculated in forestry. There is only a few million dollars invested in forestry, a pittance really. We need to look at saying where we can go because I think really government is failing the people of the Great Northern Peninsula and Central Newfoundland and Labrador when it comes to forestry. Also, we look at the Labrador forestry resources that are just rotting with the cutting of Muskrat Falls. It is poor planning, no planning, just a complete failure there.

We look at tourism again. It has been brought up in this House around Marine Atlantic. How we are letting the fees continuously rise, how we are letting service be eroded. There needs to be a real plan about improving service and making sure there is maximum employment, maximum benefit for Marine Atlantic, for the people who are working in this Crown corporation, and also people who are using the service from a commercial level or from a visitor level, and our other ferries because this government talks about its strategies.

What have we seen? Two ferries in the ferry replacement strategy that is, I would say, close to a decade old now. We need to see those ferries. We need to make sure they have the capabilities to service the people of Labrador, the Northern Peninsula, and the other Island communities.

There is also no strategy around looking at the cultural and tourism assets that we have in the Province. We have not mapped them. We have not looked at our best assets overall and how we can package and sell them, and we need to do that. If we did that and engaged the stakeholders, rather than just have these one day meetings or whatnot and everything is all right.

We need a thorough plan and there needs to be a partnership with Memorial University to really validate that for our tourism industry.

I hope the new Tourism Minister will take that initiative up, because he certainly has the authority to do so, and create a vibrant tourism industry that is going to reach 2020, because with all the things – when we look at our crumbling road infrastructure, when we look at reductions in ferry services, when we look at all the things that is happening when it comes to cutting back on ads, when it comes to the things that would grow the tourism industry in Newfoundland and Labrador, we need to see something new, a new initiative. This government is very weak on initiatives and following them through.

We have seen failed announcements in the Atlantic Gateway. We talk about Arctic opportunities but we have not seen anything concrete laid forward.

When we look at the cellular RBI, the Rural Broadband Initiative, we need to really see the communities that do not have coverage and how we are maximizing and making sure that proposals that are put forward are creating the biggest economic benefit for the regions that are underserved and how we can expand cellular coverage, working with Bell Mobility that has wireless spectrum. They have to provide coverage to 97 per cent of the population; also, when it comes to the wireless opportunities for Wi-Fi too, to move forward on that. I think we can get there. I think the Minister of IBRD wants to get there.

I am looking forward to seeing where we are going to go on this because there are a lot of gaps, there are still 200 communities. There is a long way to go. I look forward to working with the minister on this because I think she has the vision to get there, to cover off these communities and working with the stakeholders. Let's get engaged; let's make sure that we can make that happen.

When it comes to investments though, we are really lacking attention in our youth and youth investment. I challenge the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement and youth engagement to go back

and look at the Youth Retention and Attraction Strategy and the forty-one initiatives that were there, and how many your government has cut, how you have cut the Youth Advisory Committee, and how you are failing the youth of the Province. Of all the initiatives that you had planned – go back and engage, re-engage, and prepare our youth so that when they look at education opportunities, when they look at employment opportunities, when they look at becoming involved and engaged in their municipalities or their communities and volunteer, or in other capacities, that they have every opportunity available to them.

Do not announce something, take all kinds of credit for it and abandon it a few years later and say it is still working, because it is not. I would say the same thing for the Poverty Reduction Strategy. That needs a second look. You need to go back. There are still a lot of people who are facing significant challenges here in this Province. You cannot just have piecemeal things without looking at and constantly evaluating. We need to see that.

In the Budget, there is \$2.1 million announced for the 911 strategy that is going to actually go and basically take money out of the pockets of consumers here, especially when it comes to billing cellular coverage. I am still trying to get information from the minister to see how that is going to work since the operators are already charging for the 911. I could see it if they were just looking at the land line piece because that would be something that would be easier to do.

Are you announcing money in this Budget that you are going to recoup in fees after and trying to take credit for spending this money that you are only going to take through a fee that you are charging every Newfoundlander and Labradorian basically with a cellphone or a land line? These are types of things that are of concern.

When it comes to looking at major infrastructure investments, the Member for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune talked about a \$10 million road infrastructure investment in the District of the Coast of Bays region. When we look at the road infrastructure and bridge repair program, there are over 800 bridges in the Province that need

some sort of work. There are a significant amount of roads.

If we had an evaluation of the crumbling infrastructure in the Province it would be over \$1 billion, I would estimate that. I would think that is a fair assumption. Eighty-one million dollars in a provincial road and bridge repair program is not going to get you there. Even with the federal government looking at the bridging program through major infrastructure, we need to look at how we are going to get there and do the real assessment. A multi-year plan is really going to be needed.

There are a lot of failings in this borrowed Budget, where you have \$1 billion that is increasing net debt and increasing public debt. The debt at the end of the year, the public debt, will be at \$13 billion. That is not a legacy this government should be proud of after ten years of being in power where they are spending, spending, spending. It is really out of control.

It is so much out of control that they had to borrow \$1 billion. If anybody had to look at their incomes that they are bringing in when they are looking at working, and they had to borrow about more than 10 per cent of their overall income in debt and finance that, and have to debt service that over a period of years, they would be in for real challenges for retirement.

We are making sure in this current Budget that our future generations, our children and our grandchildren, will be paying for this. It is really poor planning, and I say shame on this government.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

I am very happy to stand here and speak to the main motion of this year's Budget. It is always a pleasure to be able to stand up and speak at any juncture in this House, speaking to this Budget that this government has brought down.

There are a lot of different issues that I would like to bring forward.

Sometimes it is hard to tell whether you want to speak on behalf of your district, if you want to speak on behalf of your critic roles, or if you want to speak maybe in response to some of the messaging that you hear from the other side. What I am going to do, first of all, is start with a topic that is very important to me. I want to bring it up here in the House, because it is not brought up enough, and that is the topic of Marine Atlantic. That is something I have raised here in the House, and it is going through some serious troubles now.

I could talk about some of the members on the other side. They are talking about – I heard something, big news today, about having three flights to Heathrow, how great this is, and how good this shows our economy is, when at the same time we have just cut a number of crossings of rubber tire traffic from the mainland into this Province. I am finding it hard to jive the two when people talk about how great and wonderful things are when people are losing jobs. Our tourism numbers – I am going to go to this book for a second, this blue book. Oh yes, the Budget, this blue book that they put out. We had a total of 99,000 automobile visitors from last year, down 5.9 per cent over 2012 and the continuation of a persistent trend, and below 100,000 visitors for the first time since 1986. I heard somebody talk about air travel. We will get to that.

MR. S. COLLINS: (Inaudible).

MR. A. PARSONS: The Minister of Tourism is criticizing me for talking about tourism numbers being down when people in my district are losing jobs. The Minister of Tourism should stand up out there and talk about the people in my district who are going to lose jobs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. A. PARSONS: We should talk about that. If he wants to stand up and call me on a point of order, by all means. I am getting a number of calls on this and I am not done on this yet.

What I want to talk about is the fact that this is a huge area. It falls under federal jurisdiction; we all know that. There are a number of topics that fall under federal jurisdiction that affect every single one of us here in the Province. Even though they do not affect us – sorry, not that they do not affect us, it is not that we control them, but we have an opportunity to speak to them on behalf of our constituents. One example is the fishery.

We had an all-party committee suggested by the Leader of the Opposition. The Premier said that is a good idea and we are going to send them up to Ottawa. They went up and advocated on behalf of the fishery, especially when it comes to the shrimp. I asked about this topic the other day, because it is huge. It is huge for every single person in this Province, whether it is tourism, whether it is trucking, whether it is the actual people who are working there, or whether it is the goods that are coming into this Province.

I suggested to the Premier that maybe - what is this Province doing to advocate for it? At first I thought I had gotten somewhat of a positive reply because he did stand up and answer the question in the House and said, "I will be seeking a meeting with the Prime Minister to discuss a number of issues, especially the shrimp allocation quota...." That was one of the things. When he said that, I said: This is a good thing? he is going to go up to Ottawa and get that meeting with the Prime Minister and discuss Marine Atlantic which affects every single one of us in this Province.

However, today in the House it was a different story. I think it was our leader who actually stood up and talked about ice compensation. He said: What is going on here? What are you doing? You keep saying you are going to do this; you keep saying you are going to do that. What are you doing? He said: We are going to make every effort – this is today, the Premier's words – to ensure that the feds live up to their constitutional responsibilities.

He said he was going to meet with them about ice compensation, he was going to talk about the shrimp allocation, and he was going to talk about a commission when it comes to Aboriginal women. Do you know what? Those are three very important topics, and I hope the Premier

gets his meeting with the Prime Minister. Nowhere among that was Marine Atlantic. Our highway to the mainland was not mentioned at all.

I am calling again on this government because it seems like they do not quite get it. This is a huge issue affecting us, but they do not really care. You only have to look at some people's remarks in the past. The only time I have ever heard a Cabinet minister, other than the other day, talk about it was the former Minister of Transportation who wrote a comment this summer that we should move the port out of Port aux Basques. That was the former Minister of Transportation. That is what he had to say. I am wondering if that is the same attitude that is pervading the department right now. I am wondering if that is still going on here – the lowest numbers since 1986.

There has been a lot of commentary on the other side about how we are being negative. We are being negative. That is all they are is being negative, but I am looking at their own book, I am looking at their own numbers. If I am being negative by looking at their own numbers, what does that make the crowd on the other side? Delusional? What is it? You cannot have it both ways.

I think the Leader of the Opposition did a great job tonight standing up talking about the economic indicators and he went through them. Yes, looking good, but the question then became: How is it looking next year? How is it looking the year after? That is the problem because we have a crowd who is not looking into the future. They are not looking into the future to see where we are going. It is the rear-view mirror approach.

It is an important topic. I am going to continue to bring it up. I would invite any members, especially the Ministers of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs and Tourism, if they want to come with me and come out to Port aux Basques, see how this industry affects everyone, and talk about how important this is, because there is a lot of work that needs to be done.

I am going to move on here because there are so many things that I would like to cover. We can talk about health care, which is one of the critic

roles that I am responsible for. It is something that we have a considerable amount of debate about in this House considering the huge expenditure of funds. The biggest part of our Budget goes to health. We have had an opportunity; in fact, we spent all of a Question Period last week asking questions about different areas of health care. I think we did a good job of shining a light on some of the issues that we have here.

No doubt things have improved in certain areas since 2003. The crowd on the other side sometimes gets a little touchy and thinks that we are criticizing everything, but we are not. We are shining a light on the issues that are raised to us by our constituents, including constituents of members on the other side, because a lot of times they cannot talk about it so they come to us. We are only raising the facts as they are presented to us by members and people all over this Province.

I am going to talk about the dental plan. It is something that we hear a lot about. Yes, we improved the cap this year, we increased the size of it, but we actually left the same amount of money there. There are actually less people accessing it.

We talked about the adult denture plan, which again I have had an opportunity – and the minister, to his credit, sat in the House here during Estimates and he has answered the questions. I have to give him credit for that. When we had the Estimates he had not been in his portfolio long, and there is a huge amount of information there. I know that he has put a significant amount of work into it, no doubt. It is a huge portfolio. When you talk to the people in the department, and the question was very simple. If there is a cap on the cost of dentures, and that cap is lower than the actual cost of the full set, why could you not get the full set at one time? Why could you not?

The reason we ask that and the reason we bring it up – and I know members get tired of hearing about it – is because it is so ridiculous it is hard to reason with. It is hard to digest it. It is funny, because I have heard from somebody involved in that industry. He said: Do you know what? I will give this crowd credit. This is someone

who is intimately involved in that industry – I will give them credit.

When they brought it in we had an awesome plan, but the next sentence was: and the next year – and this is his words – they eviscerated it. Now this is a professional. This is someone who has come to me. He is not just saying it is all bad, he is saying some good as well. Again, this is someone who is actually doing the work. Someone who has done it and is part of it, and this is what he is saying. That is why we are bringing this forward. I know sometimes people do not want to hear it, but it is what it is. The truth is there.

Now, I am just going to move forward here because there are so many things I could talk about. There are just a number of topics. I could speak for a second about – I heard a comment tonight from the Member for Port au Port. The Member for Port au Port is a fine gentleman, but I think he stretched it there tonight when he said the Leader of the Opposition should wear some of the blame for the decision of his colleague, Joey Smallwood. I think that is a bit of a stretch. To that, I say to the Minister of Tourism, did you ask Sir Richard Squires before you cut down his trees? You should wear some of the blame on that. This is how ridiculous it gets sometimes.

MR. DALLEY: (Inaudible).

MR. A. PARSONS: The Minister of Natural Resources is going to talk about it now, and I am hoping he will get up and speak to this and have a few words to say. Maybe we will pretend James is here and see how that goes. We could talk about that.

MR. DALLEY: Bring it on. We will get (inaudible) too, if you want.

MR. A. PARSONS: See, now he is getting soft. He is trying to get a little saucy there, but all I can say is I am hoping you are better prepared when you get up than you were with *The Telegram* – better prepared.

I am going to continue on here because there are so many other topics to get to. One of them, and I would be remiss if I did not talk about my other critic role, and that is Child, Youth and

Family Services. That is a department that is very sensitive. There are a lot of good things and bad things going on in that department. I want to throw out the good and the bad.

The good news is there are good things going on. Actually, I have talked to the former minister on this. We have had a lot of conversations. I have had conversations with the new minister. One of the things you have to give them accolades for is the Foster a Future program. It is a great step. I know the minister, and I know the Leader of the Third Party actually attended the AGM on Friday. This is a good thing.

Anything we can do to improve that, is improving the lives of the children in our department. At the same time, we can never stray too far from what the Child and Youth Advocate told us before Christmas, which is there are serious concerns in the department when it comes, especially, to the burnout of front-line staff. That is one thing we need to take care of, and I know the minister is going to make sure that it is a priority, because the burnout of front-line staff leads to reports by the Child and Youth Advocate. Like the one we saw and talked about in the House here before Christmas, sixteen, where we had the tragedy on Springdale Street.

So, I say to this minister, there are good things going on in the department, there is no doubt. You have good staff, but let's make sure they have the time to do their work.

Now, I am going to continue on here. I want to talk about my district, which is Burgeo – La Poile. There are a lot of good things going on in my district. We have some projects going on. I do not think the other crowd can take too much credit for it, although they have talked about putting the oil in the ground, or in causing the price of oil to go up, but I will digress.

There are good things going on when it comes to major fabrication projects, but there are a lot of issues, too; issues that are the same in my district as they are on the other side when it comes to the condition of our roads, and that is a huge issue. I, like many others, have a significant amount of roadway in my district. What really troubled me last year, and we are

just finding this out now, is that I had certain portions of road that were supposed to be paved last year – supposed to be, that is the key word, supposed. There was a contract put out, and a certain company took it over, named Humber Valley Paving. They got the contract. Do you know how much of that work got done, Mr. Speaker? Take a guess. Zero, there was not a bit done.

We have to talk about the roadways, because I am facing it in my district. I know the other members are facing it in their districts, and it speaks to the greater level. This is an issue that is going to get some more scrutiny. We have to talk about this because I have questions. I am not the Justice critic. The Member for St. Barbe has been doing that and he has been doing a great job.

One of the things when it comes to Humber Valley Paving and when it comes to their contracts, all I am going to say is that I have yet to see – and I can only speak to files that I handled when I was practising law. I know the Attorney General it will probably be the same thing, and the Premier back when he was practising law would be the same thing. I have yet to see a file where you make a decision involving millions of dollars – I have not seen a file yet where you have tens of dollars being discussed where you get a legal opinion and that legal opinion does not exist. It is not on paper.

Maybe we are reaching, I do not know. I guess the Auditor General is going to find that out soon when he does his investigation. I am saying to you now, it is not a good practice when we have contracts that are given and then cancelled, spanning eight days involving millions of dollars, and the advice that you take to make that decision is not recorded.

The first question I would ask is, when you look back a year from now, how are you going to know what the logic was? How are you going to know what the rationale was? How are you going to know what the reason was? You are not. So then the question becomes, why? Why was it not put down on paper? It begs the question: Why was it not put down on paper? That is a serious question, and I am hoping the Auditor General can find out. Usually the Auditor General deals with what is on paper. In

this case, it does not seem like there was much put on paper.

Going back, that was the same company that handled the paving out in my district. They handled a lot of paving on the West Coast, none of which got done on that contract last year and that is unfortunate. All we can hope is that things will be better in 2014 and that the work is going to get done, but I am wondering who is going to do the work. Let's just wait and see because right now we do not know. Let's just hope that it gets done.

Another area I am going to talk about is cell service. Cell service is actually amazing in that tonight I am going to link it to the hospital in Corner Brook. You are going to say, well how do you link cell service to the hospital in Corner Brook? I am going to tell you how. They are both things that were promised by this government that they could not give us and that we are going to do our research on to show how it can be done. That is the link between the two of them there.

I do not need to talk about the Corner Brook hospital because we have already heard from the Leader of the Opposition and we have heard from the Member for Bay of Islands on a number of occasions talking about it. They were ridiculed on numerous occasions by members on the other side; the Premier, the former Minister of Health, lots of people on the other side telling us how it could not be done. The numbers were not there to justify it; do not do it.

All I am saying now, Mr. Speaker, is that the current Premier likes it and the incoming Premier likes it. I know the Member for Humber West likes it; he spoke out for it. I was there at the meeting when his letter was read out, and people were happy. What happened there to make this all of a sudden feasible? What happened?

We are not done on that. I am hearing that a retirement is going to come up soon. That is good because what I was told, before that retirement happens there is going to be a piece of steel in the ground. I am looking forward to seeing that piece of steel in the ground. It looks like it might be the summer; it looks like it

might be the fall. Let's wait and see what happens.

Tying it back to cellphone service is something that affects us and affects members on the other side. When we asked questions about it last week, the Member for The Straits – White Bay North asked the question: Where is the cellphone plan? This is something you promised, or as the former Finance Minister would say, it is not a promise, it is a platform. He asked and the minister actually looked over and said: What would you do? It could be a trend; it could be the same minister just likes to ask questions.

AN HON. MEMBER: It was the same minister.

MR. A. PARSONS: Yes, the same minister could say: What would you do? What we are going to do is go back to the drawing board. We are going to get the work, and hopefully we are going to find out a solution to this problem that plagues not only members on this side, but members on the other side as well.

Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of other topics but unfortunately my time is running out, especially when it comes to health care: diabetes, smoking cessation, and ambulances. There are a lot of health issues that are very important to all of us here and we are hoping that something can get done. We have nurse practitioners down on the South Coast. We are trying to work on that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Midwives.

MR. A. PARSONS: Midwives are an issue. Midwives are still waiting to get taken care of. We are going to have plenty of time to do that over the course of the next days and months and, well, I am not going to say years.

Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to have this opportunity to stand and speak again. I look forward to having my points rebutted by members on the other side.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Member for the District of Bay of Islands.

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I say to the Member for Burgeo – La Poile, good job. Good job, I say to the member, in bringing up the issues on behalf of your constituents.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I feel humbled to be representing the people of the District of Bay of Islands as I have over a number of years. In this Budget there are a lot of major issues, a lot of major concerns. There is an increase in debt. There is pension liability that the government refuses to try and tackle, which is going to be the greatest single stranglehold on all of us in Newfoundland and Labrador over the next number of years and down the road. It is going to be our greatest liability. We, as a group, have to tackle it somehow.

Mr. Speaker, I just look at the Bay of Islands and some of the issues there. Roads are a major concern. I heard one of the members there on Open Line just recently saying every district gets money every year. Go back to 2013 and the Bay of Islands never got anything, and in 2012 it never got anything.

When the Member for Exploits wants to get on Open Line and make statements about the Bay of Islands, know the facts. I am not standing for a member to get on Open Line to make statements that are not true. I challenge anybody to come up with the documentation.

Mr. Speaker, last year we had major flooding down in the Bay of Islands. There was nothing done. I have to give the current minister a bit of credit; he stepped in and tried to do his best and made the road as safe as possible for the year. There is still no work being done on that side. I ask the members opposite: What is so positive about having floods and having people drive over unsafe roads because your government will not fix it as you are in a Liberal district? You tell me, what is so positive?

Council is after writing, after writing, and after writing the ministers, Mr. Speaker, trying to get flood damage from 2013 fixed. They still cannot get it fixed. Yet I am not allowed to stand up here because I am going to be negative.

There is a major spot on John's Beach. I give this current minister credit again; he committed

to me – there is one in McIvers and there is one out by Coppermine Brook. He said we have Geotech; when we get the reports we will do what we can to fix the roads. That is the most that has been done in years there, Mr. Speaker. I have to give this current minister credit for looking after that.

Hughes Brook Hill; major, major repairs are needed, Mr. Speaker. This minister, after sitting down with them, committed to do it. That is the kind of stuff. This is the first year there was ever any real work done in the Bay of Islands in a number of years.

I have to raise the concerns of the people. There are a lot of problems with water and sewer, Mr. Speaker, throughout the Bay of Islands. Again this year not a lot of money was spent in the Bay of Islands. There is some that may be spent if York Harbour and Lark Harbour amalgamate. If not, there is very little money again.

There is a major problem with water. They just had a fire in Frenchman's Cove; there is no water there, no fire hydrants. Over in Summerside there is a major problem with sewer, Mr. Speaker. When you talk about the big wealth, don't say everybody has wealth and all the services. They are not being delivered to every part of this Province; I can assure you of that.

Mr. Speaker, let's talk about the new hospital in Corner Brook. I am proud I stood on that for two years and fought and fought and fought. I am proud. I am very proud of it. Now all of a sudden we are going to get another radiation unit. We are going to get two radiation units, according to the current Premier. Guess what? He promised a PET scanner, but the incoming Premier Frank Coleman said no, we are not putting one there, so it is going to be another fight.

I am going to see if the Member for Humber West is going to stand with me again because when the incoming Premier Frank Coleman stood in Corner Brook he said, I am not sold on a PET scanner. That is our next fight, Mr. Speaker. Everything you have to do with this government you have to fight. I am going to see if this outgoing Premier is going to have it done before he goes and if the Member for Humber

West is going to stand with us again, Mr. Speaker, because it will be done. I guarantee you it will be done.

Mr. Speaker, we look at the ultrasound units. They had six and they are going down to three. There were supposed to be two and they got it up to three. Wait times are going to go from 147 days to 300 days. I am supposed to stand here and be positive? What is so positive about diminishing 50 per cent of the ultrasound units? Can someone here tell me what is so positive about it?

The Minister of Health at the time, Mr. Speaker – oh, we are going to have a mobile unit. He is telling everybody in Western Newfoundland you are going to have a mobile unit; it is taken care of. Under the Freedom of Information, 91 per cent of all patients in Corner Brook who got ultrasounds were in-patients. He is going to take one mobile one, which is substandard anyway, and going to do 10 per cent. What an excuse. Someone tell me what is so positive about cutting the ultrasound machines. Please tell me because I just find it hard to find.

Mr. Speaker, this gets my goat; it really gets my goat. Myself and the Leader of the Opposition were here, and the Minister of Health was still here. She can stand up, if she wants, and say if I am wrong. The three of us were here. It is still the wrong decision in Corner Brook, to put radiation in Corner Brook. We heard it.

Let me tell you something, Mr. Speaker. I will tell you this: if the Minister of Health at the time is so strong that what her Premier and what the incoming Premier did, resign. If you really believe that strongly, resign. If not, don't try to convince me that it is not the right decision, but I cannot say anything. Either stand up for your principles or stay quiet; let us get our radiation unit.

If you want to be principled, stand up and resign, because what the Premier did to that minister was shameful. Now it's being left to her - going on for years saying the numbers do not count, the numbers do not mean – walk in, oh, we are putting two there now. By the way, get out of the health department now; we have to get someone who is going to do it for me. It is shameful. For her to make comments to me

tonight across this House to us saying it is still the wrong decision - resign.

Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? She will not resign. Do you know why? She believes what I fought for, the Leader of the Opposition fought for, what members over here fought for is correct but still she cannot let her pride go for the people of Western Newfoundland. She has an opportunity here now to resign. She can even take my time if she wants to announce her resignation.

Mr. Speaker, the members of government always say you have to give credit, all is good. I have to ask a question, Mr. Speaker, when we are talking about all is good. I ask the members opposite, the government members, tell me what is so positive about DarkNL? I would really love to know. The members opposite, I want the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale to stand up. You stood up here today and everything is half full.

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

MR. JOYCE: I ask you to ask the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale, Mr. Speaker, ask him to stand up. Seeing senior citizens taken out of their homes at minus twenty in the middle of the night, what is so positive about it?

People equated what happened here in Newfoundland to a Third World country, we are running out of power; equated us to a Third World country, yet we cannot go asking questions. Here is the chance, Mr. Speaker, to the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale: Was it positive watching these seniors getting moved into a hotel at 3:00 or 4:00 o'clock in the morning at minus twenty-four? Was that positive? Is that all right, everything is good in this Province? How many houses in this Province are with water pipes frozen? Damage, is that positive? We cannot ask questions.

Mr. Speaker, here is an opportunity, the Member for Baie Verte – Springdale got up here on his high horse and started giving all of us a big lecture. There are two or three others, the Member for Bonavista North and the Member for Bonavista South were up. Here is a question – you can have my last ten minutes, either one of

those three can stand on their feet after voting for the Budget – how much money has gone into Muskrat Falls? Tell me. You voted for it, you know. Here is your opportunity; not a chance, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to let the people out there know, they do not even know how much money they voted on to put in Muskrat Falls. It is shameful. It is absolutely shameful, Mr. Speaker, that people on the government are going to lecture us when they do not even know what they are voting for. Here is an opportunity, stand up and tell us: How much was spent on Muskrat Falls? Either one of those three or four members have the opportunity, but they cannot do it because they are told, here is what you have to do, here is what you have to read, go read it, go vote for it.

Mr. Speaker, look at Muskrat Falls. How much money was put into Muskrat Falls that should have gone into maintenance so we would not have DarkNL? How much? Now all of a sudden Nalcor is saying we should have done the preventative maintenance, yet we have to be positive.

We have to be out here, we have to be positive watching seniors dragged out of their homes, pipes bursting in people's houses, people in the dark, we do not know if people have medications, but we have to be positive. When there are positive things to say I will be the first one, but do not ask me to stand up here and drink Kool-Aid and expect everything is rosy when it is not.

If any of them wants to get on to rant anymore, think about the seniors who had to be dragged out of their homes all across this Province. Think about those seniors; and all because money for maintenance was going into Muskrat Falls and we had no one to oversee it. No one was there standing up saying: Why are we not making sure that our electricity system is stable? Why? It is because they are so caught up on Muskrat Falls.

MS DEMPSTER: How about the jobs?

MR. JOYCE: The jobs – I hear the Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair saying: How about the jobs that were promised? People cannot get the jobs. That is only a promise, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, they talk about positivity. I will ask them some questions. I just asked one about DarkNL.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. JOYCE: I will give any of them the opportunity to stand up. They cannot handle it, Mr. Speaker. If you are not saying everything is good, if you are not patting their back, they do not want to hear it.

I ask the member for Windsor-Springdale, the Member for Exploits, Bonavista North or South – they are the ones on the high horse. If anybody else who wants to stand up, tell me what is so positive about laying off 1,800 people. Here is your opportunity, stand up and tell me. Tell me what is so positive about it. I am supposed to like that, Mr. Speaker? I am supposed to be positive?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, tell me –

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. JOYCE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I need protection. They cannot handle the truth. I ask the members opposite, tell me what is so positive when you are up in Corner Brook – and I am getting calls on a regular basis of twenty, twenty-five people on stretchers in the emergency room at the hospital in Corner Brook. What is so positive about that? Am I allowed to ask questions on that?

Mr. Speaker, I am not saying everything is bad, but everything is not perfect. Our role is to ask questions. Our role is to lobby.

I will give you a good example. The Member for Baie Verte – Springdale, please God, you talked about your son having a baby at your new hospital, perfect. Just imagine if your son – please God, it will never happen – ever has to go to radiation. He can go in the daytime now in

Corner Brook and get it, instead of having to go to St. John's and be six or seven, eight or nine weeks away from his son. That is the kind of stuff that is positive. That is the kind of stuff we are bringing up, but you forget the stuff that we lobby for on behalf of our constituents, which you should have been a part of.

Mr. Speaker, look at the food bank increases across the Province. We are supposed to be positive about it? We are supposed to stand up and say everything is great and we cannot bring it up, Mr. Speaker. Is that what we are supposed to do?

I will say to the Member for Lewisporte, the last time you were over there you told me to shut up and you wrote me and apologized for saying it. So you be quiet now, you might have to write another letter to apologize. If you want me to do it, I will take out my phone and I will read it right here where you wrote and apologized. So do not go starting because you might have to apologize again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. JOYCE: Mr. Speaker, just to let you, I should have written you because he did have his robe on. I should have done it, but I said no. I really thought he meant it when he wrote me and apologized, Mr. Speaker. We have to be a bit cordial here. You should never tell anyone in this House to shut up. Everybody has the opportunity to speak here. I can guarantee you the Member for Lewisporte is not going to keep me quiet. I can guarantee you that.

Mr. Speaker, we were just talking about the mental health strategy. When you talk about the government, are we supposed to me happy there is no mental health strategy in the Province? Are we supposed to sit back and say everything is fine? How foolish, Mr. Speaker. We cannot do that. We just cannot do that, Mr. Speaker. We have to ask questions on it. We have to try to develop a mental health strategy. We just cannot let it go the way it is going. We just cannot do it, Mr. Speaker.

As I mentioned, Route 450 and the damage to the roads. It is dangerous. I have to give the

current Minister of Transportation and Works credit. He is working on it, I have to say.

When they asked about some things that are positive, what is so positive about taking over a mill in Grand Falls-Windsor that is going to cost us \$200 million? Someone tell me, what is so positive about that?

The Member for Grand Falls is saying the tender is going to be called but we have not seen it yet. It is going to be torn down and we are responsible for the environmental liability, Mr. Speaker. We are responsible for the liability. Does anybody here want to tell me what is so positive about that and I am supposed to jump with joy?

They let go of \$30 million, the former Minister of Natural Resources spent up in Parsons Pond, drilling and trying to get into the oil business. It is \$30 million wasted, absolutely wasted, Mr. Speaker, and you want me to be positive.

AN HON. MEMBER: Exploration.

MR. JOYCE: Yes, someone said exploration, \$30 million. Who do they think they are Jed Clampett all of a sudden, to go out and try to get some oil in their backyard? Mr. Speaker, you do not take \$30 million from people who need it for the hospital or for the roads somewhere. That is what you have oil companies for. You will get that \$30 million from revenue.

That is the difference, Mr. Speaker. When you want to get royalties that is how you get your money back. You do it in royalty regimes. That is how you do it, Mr. Speaker. That is how it is done. That is how all the other jurisdictions do it.

The infamous office in Ottawa, they spent millions and millions of dollars on that and I am supposed to be positive about that. I am supposed to say: Oh, yes, it is a great office up in Ottawa. It has been shut down for four or five years, Mr. Speaker. For four or five years there is not a soul up there, and they are paying for the rent, paying for someone to pick up the newspaper. I am supposed to be positive about that.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of issues going on. I will just name a few more before my last – I heard a lot of people here, a lot about the last, least and worst. A lot of members opposite brought that up because –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. JOYCE: The last, least and lowest was it? I tell you what someone told me, we are the last, least and worst.

I will tell you what someone told me, Mr. Speaker, when they heard members opposite up talking about that, Carmel Turpin gave them all their little speaking notes. Here is what you have to say. You have to attack the leader, and here are the three words you have to use: last, least and lowest.

Here is what someone called me on, Mr. Speaker. Humber Valley Paving, he said, we are going to be the last to get the money we are owed, we are going to get the least amount, and it is the worst company to deal with; when you want to talk about last, least and worst.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transportation and Works said it the best. Here is what he said, and I quote: You have to know who you are doing business with. That is what the Minister of Transportation and Works said about Humber Valley Paving. That is what he said. You tell me what is positive about all these people, small business mom and pops across Newfoundland and Labrador who are stuck with money? Tell me what is so positive? Tell me.

MR. VERGE: It is a beautiful Province. It is all positive.

MR. JOYCE: Yes, the Member for Lewisporte says it is all positive. If I had to drink the Kool-Aid it would be all positive too, I guarantee you. I tell you there are a lot of people hurting because of this. Let's get this straightened up, Mr. Speaker. I can assure you there are a lot of people hurting on this.

Mr. Speaker, when you want to stand up – and they all can stand up. I gave every one of them the opportunity to use my ten, fifteen minutes to stand up to answer the question. The former

Minister of Health, if he does not agree with the Premier, resign or stay quiet and help us do it.

If either one of the four or five backbenchers want to tell us how the money is spent, or tell us how much is put in Muskrat Falls, not one of them stood up because they do not know. They are just told: Walk in, here are a few words to have a say, stand up and vote.

Mr. Speaker, at least we have a say here, the people on this side, if we have something to say we are going to say it. We are very open. I enjoy a good debate, but I guarantee you one thing, the Member for Lewisporte is not going to muzzle me because he tells me to shut up. I am here to represent the Bay of Islands and I will do it to the best of my ability.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. JOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services, that we adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that the debate do now adjourn.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

On motion, debate adjourned.

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

MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, that the House do now adjourn.

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

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Motion carried.

The House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, at 1:30 p.m.

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